



THIRTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues

1. The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues met on 11 March 2002. The Chairperson was Mr. Rimkunas (Government, Lithuania) and the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr. Jeetun and Mr. Zellhoefer respectively. It was decided by the Officers of the Meeting that discussion of agenda item 2 “Composition and purpose of sectoral meetings to be held in 2003” would take place in the afternoon to allow for fuller discussion.

I. Report of the Working Party on the Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme (Geneva, 28-29 January 2002)

2. The Committee had before it a paper¹ on the report of the Working Party on the Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme.
3. The representative of the Director-General (Ms. Paxton, Executive Director, Social Dialogue Sector) introduced the report of the Working Party on the Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme, which met in January 2002 at the request of the Governing Body. Productive discussions had taken place leading to important areas of consensus. It was agreed that the 22 sectors currently defined would continue to receive attention. The autonomy of the groups with regard to determining the representation at sectoral meetings was confirmed. The activities of the programme should be constituent-driven and based on transparent and meaningful consultation. Flexibility was considered desirable with regard to the manner in which meetings would be conducted – the meetings on hotels and tourism, civil aviation and commerce had provided innovative approaches – as well as in the choice of non-meeting activities focused on each sector. The stop-start approach, with little follow-up activity between meetings, should give way to programmes providing the greatest possible impact in each particular sector. Integration should be improved between sectoral activities and the other departments within the ILO, particularly with regard to follow-up. Greater government representation was strongly desired. One option was to open meetings up to all interested governments. Resources were limited and therefore

¹ GB.283/STM/1.

trade-offs would be necessary, since it was not possible to have both meetings and follow-up. There was consensus within the Working Party on the need for more follow-up and that any savings realized from reductions in the size or frequency of meetings should remain within the Sectoral Activities Programme. Ms. Paxton confirmed that:

the flexibility requested by the Working Party with respect to unutilized resources in the Sectoral Activities Programme's budget exists. Resources allocated to cover the costs of sectoral meetings are within the budgetary envelope for the social dialogue strategic objective, and their use and redeployment within this sector is under the direct responsibility of the Executive Director. Any savings resulting from a modification in the programme of meetings in the current budgetary period can be retained for other sectoral activities without further endorsement by the PFAC.

Among the possible approaches to be considered were: (a) to keep any savings generally within sectoral activities and determine, on the basis of consultations, where the money was most needed; (b) to divide any money saved more or less equally among the 22 sectors and consult the particular constituents. The Working Party had agreed that the reforms should be fully implemented by the 2004-05 biennium, but that changes should begin in this biennium. Ms. Paxton briefly introduced the proposal for a "one-stop sectoral window". The prototype which was to be presented to the Committee was not yet operational and currently there was no funding earmarked for this project, which would require 14 Professional work-months to launch and one full-time staff member to maintain.

4. Ms. Anamaria Vere of the Sectoral Activities Department briefly described the structural limits of the current sectoral activities web site and presented the "one-stop window" prototype to the Committee. Its modular structure allowed for ease in adding and deleting information as well as new services. Page layouts were consistent and navigation tools were always present to enable the user to move easily from one information source to another. Among the new features of particular interest to users were: (a) the links to sectoral information found in other parts of the ILO, for example, those related to working conditions, labour standards, or occupational safety and health; (b) links to ILO databases, such as ILOLEX and NATLEX, or to the Committee on Freedom of Association, which would run sector-specific queries; (c) an online bibliography of library resources compiled by sector; (d) links to relevant sites outside the ILO, along with short texts describing the Organization or the type of information available on its web site; as well as (e) the possibility of setting up list servers and electronic discussion forums. The "one-stop window" would enhance the department's Web presence and would allow constituents to benefit more fully from the potential of the Internet.
5. A representative of the Government of Germany, speaking as a Government representative on the Working Party, noted that there had been increased participation in the Working Party from the Employers' and Workers' sides. While the Working Party had agreed that there would be no change to the number or organization of the 22 sectors, in fact, some merging of sectors could have been envisaged. The need to encourage government participation had been recognized. Some governments believed that tripartite delegations were one means of encouraging government participation, and that conditions could be established for the groups to retain their autonomy in choosing their own representatives, but the Working Party had not received that suggestion with enthusiasm. There should be flexibility in respect of the composition and agenda of meetings as well as non-meeting activities. The civil aviation meeting had demonstrated flexibility in opening participation to all governments. One proposal was to give up resolutions and to focus solely on conclusions as the output of the meetings. The speaker urged the Committee to consider, discuss and further develop the ideas contained in the report of the Working Party, but not to envisage another meeting of the Working Party. The discussion on agenda item 2 offered the possibility to consider and recommend new modalities.

6. Mr. Jeetun, speaking in his capacity as an Employer representative on the Working Party, said that the Employers' group had welcomed the opportunity to participate in the frank, useful and fruitful discussions. The meeting of the Working Party had been short, highly productive and effective. A good spirit of mutual understanding had reigned. There was a need for early and ongoing consultation with the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups, so that sectoral activities could continue without problems. Sectoral meetings were a unique forum, open to the world of work. Any activities or reforms to be undertaken should be constituent-owned and led. Government participation needed to be increased, particularly when a sector was of importance to the country. The speaker congratulated the Office on the "one-stop window".
7. Mr. Zellhoefer, speaking in his capacity as a Worker representative on the Working Party, thanked the tripartite members of the Working Party, the Office, and Mr. Cockroft of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and Mr. Jennings of Union Network International (UNI), who served as advisers to the Workers, and noted with satisfaction that the Working Party had arrived by consensus at suggestions to improve both the relevance and the visibility of sectoral activities. A serious sectoral programme must be a cornerstone of the ILO. It enabled the ILO to be in contact with the constituents from the industrial, services and public sectors, collect vital information on changes in the labour market, on constituents' needs with regard to promoting social dialogue, and on the practical implementation of and possible proposals for standards. The current system based exclusively on sectoral meetings without resources for meaningful follow-up needed to be changed. The areas of consensus outlined in the report could lead in the right direction. The key factor was the active involvement of the constituents in deciding, on a consensual basis, which should be the most appropriate activities to be developed in the four years' time that delineate the cycle of the current 22 sectors, and a comprehensive agenda of work for and within the ILO, starting for some sectors in 2003, but for all by 2004. This would lead to active participation of all three constituents and synergy among departments. The Workers' group believed that each of the 22 sectors should maintain and autonomously use its own budget line, with any changes agreed by the groups, not decided by the Office. The Office should develop guidelines for the budget-line allocations. In light of the four-year cycle for sectoral activities, it was important to initiate discussions on how to allocate funding to each sector on a four-year basis, rather than the standard two years. This should probably be discussed with the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee. Another question was the possible savings in interpretation and translation costs in the event that the constituents in a specific sector should choose not to have a regular meeting. The possibility of allocating those resources to the sector concerned should be discussed with the Official Relations Branch. The Office should prepare practical proposals for further discussion by the Committee. Government interest in sectoral meetings should be renewed. Opening participation to all interested governments was potentially a useful formula, if weighted voting mechanisms would apply. The Workers' group valued the participation of representatives of the particular ministries involved on each specific issue and asked whether technical cooperation funds could be used to enable some developing countries to participate more effectively. Recognizing the need for additional resources to put it into effect, the Workers' group strongly supported the development of the "one-stop window", which would be a useful instrument for constituents. The proposal should be linked to a comprehensive reshaping of the Sectoral Activities Programme, which would make clear the need to finance this activity. An additional session of the Working Party could be held, if necessary, before the next meeting of the Committee. The Workers' group approved the points for decision.
8. A representative of the Government of Ghana, speaking on behalf of the African Government group, stressed the importance of sectoral meetings in promoting social dialogue. Measures to increase the participation of governments were of particular interest. National tripartite delegations were desirable. The Office should explore the possibility of

making funding available to governments of developing countries to participate in meetings, which along with intensified follow-up activities would compel them to actively engage with the other social partners. The speaker called on the Office to explore ways of ensuring that African countries were able to derive the maximum benefit from the “one-stop window”, for example, through provision of technical and financial assistance in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

9. The representative of the Government of Thailand, speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific Government group, expressed support for the current programme covering 22 sectors. The group wished to see increased government participation and urged that by the 2004-05 biennium meetings be opened to all interested governments. The meeting topics should be narrowly defined in order to have more focused discussions and more fruitful outcomes. The Office should inform governments in advance of the participation of Employer and Worker delegates in sectoral meetings.
10. The representative of the Government of India endorsed the consensus which emerged from the Working Party. Any savings realized from the modification of the programme should remain with the Sectoral Activities Programme. The “one-stop window” providing a single point of contact for sectoral information, advice and services to constituents, was an impressive proposal, which would strengthen the mainstreaming of the programme. He supported a constituent-driven reorientation of sectoral activities as long as constituents had the flexibility to pursue a wide range of action programmes in line with the identified needs of the sector.
11. The representative of the Government of China supported the views expressed by the Asia and Pacific Government group. Sectoral activities formed an important part of ILO activities, should be more closely integrated with the work of other departments and should be given more attention. Tripartite national delegations to sectoral meetings were desirable. He supported the Working Party’s recommendations regarding consultation and urged that more funds be available for follow-up activities. The new approach should be implemented step by step.
12. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom asked for clarification of a number of points raised in the report of the Working Party: (a) the subject matters for further consultations; (b) details regarding the flexibility proposed with regard to meetings; (c) the types of mechanisms which might be considered to strengthen consultation; and (d) how the work would move forward. If invitations to sectoral meetings addressed to ministries of labour were also sent to other relevant ministries, it should be made quite clear to whom they had been copied.
13. The representative of the Government of France observed that before the Office sent copies of invitations to other ministries, it should consult the Ministry of Labour as to whom these copies should be sent.
14. The representative of the Government of the United States thanked the Office for the timely arrival of the documents, but regretted that the report of the Working Party was short and did not include the numerous innovative proposals contained in the November document. More information was needed on the new approach. Regarding government participation, attention should be focused on ensuring that governments’ views were heard at the start of the process, when determining the size, composition and topics of meetings. The speaker cited the consultations on standards as an example of a functioning mechanism to ensure effective government consultation. With regard to budgetary questions, he did not favour providing a fixed amount to each sector and preferred greater flexibility in the allocation of resources. Programmes must reflect current issues as well as the needs and desires of the tripartite constituents. He urged the Office to implement the

“one-stop window” immediately and expressed appreciation for the recent meetings on hotels and tourism and civil aviation.

15. The representative of the Government of Slovakia expressed his delegation’s support for the “one-stop window”.
16. The representative of the Government of Canada said that the ILO should build on recent experience to strengthen government participation in meetings. Limiting the scope or theme enabled governments to send knowledgeable representatives. When possible, tripartite delegations were desirable. In any case, governments should be informed of the Employer and Worker delegates invited to meetings in order to facilitate tripartite consultations in advance. Invitations should continue to be sent to the Ministry of Labour. The “one-stop window” was a welcome means to improve the dissemination of information. Her delegation would have appreciated further discussion of the action programmes proposed in November. Regarding the budget, strict allocations per sector would not ensure sufficient flexibility to immediately address pertinent issues.
17. A representative of the Government of Germany observed that the choice of a single subject for a meeting was critical in ensuring appropriate government representation. The focus should be either on employment policy or on working conditions, but not an amalgam of the two. Since the selection of topics was done in this Committee, Employers and Workers should take note of Governments’ views. Governments also needed to work towards agreed positions. Increasing government participation as observers would be a manageable option, whereas the feasibility of opening meetings to all who wished to join was questionable. Interpretation costs were an important consideration. Budgets should not be allocated equally among all sectors. Flexibility was needed. Governments would be assisted in their preparations if the Office would inform them of which Employer and Worker delegates would be attending meetings.
18. The representative of the Government of Namibia asked for clarification regarding the choice of a single topic. Would that not divert from the integrated approach foreseen in the Decent Work Agenda? Whereas some flexibility might be desirable, he would not support the exclusion of any of the strategic objectives.
19. Ms. Paxton responded to a number of points raised in the discussion. The Office was committed to consultations. Whereas employers and workers could be addressed through their secretariats, no clear mechanism yet existed for consulting governments. She asked the Committee for their views regarding the possible role of the regional coordinators in ensuring government consultations. It was also important to determine the matters on which consultation was desirable. She considered that they would relate to the meeting or non-meeting activities for each sector, the type, size, nature, composition and agenda of meetings, and whether or not a report was desirable. It might be necessary to waive the Standing Orders during an experimental phase to accommodate the new approach. If non-meeting activities were desired, governments should be consulted in advance, not at the end of the process. Discussions had shown that the selection of broad topics or multiple issues made it difficult for governments to send the best representatives. The Office would examine what possibilities existed to assist developing countries’ participation in sectoral meetings, recalling that earlier consideration of this matter did not have positive results.
20. A representative of the Government of Germany suggested that, based on these discussions, the Office submit a document in November with specific proposals on the issues raised, describing various options and their financial implications. Relevant ideas included in the November 2001 document which had not been thoroughly considered should be included. Alternatively, a tripartite working party with a larger number of participants could meet to consider these issues in greater depth.

21. After informal consultations and the circulation of draft proposals for new points for decision that captured the morning's discussions and the concerns raised, the Office proposed a new text. Modifications were proposed by the Committee, and the text was approved for submission to the Governing Body.
22. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body approve:*
- (a) *a new approach to the sectoral activities programme which would be geared to maximizing impact within the limit of available resources and which could contain both a meeting and non-meeting component as appropriate;*
 - (b) *inviting all interested Governments, to the extent practicable for this biennium, to participate in future sectoral meetings to which the Standing Orders apply;*
 - (c) *a further meeting of the Working Party on the Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme (with a new composition of two titular members representing the Employers, two titular members representing the Workers, and five titular members representing the Governments) to take place during the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference to:*
 - (i) *consider how the new approach should be implemented;*
 - (ii) *determine the programme for the economic sectors in 2003, including meetings;*
 - (d) *the preparation by the Office of a document for the consideration of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues at the 285th Session of the Governing Body covering the following issues:*
 - (i) *the mechanism and process for consultations on the implementation of the new approach as well as on the substance of the consultations which would take into account the question of the broader flexibility for the biennium of 2004-05, the flexibility for 2002-03, and an elaboration of non-meeting activities to be undertaken in specific sectors;*
 - (ii) *improving government participation in sectoral meetings and in particular the participation of developing countries;*
 - (iii) *the implementation of the "one-stop window".*
23. The Committee also recommends that the Governing Body, in implementing the new approach on an experimental basis and on the basis of consensus, apply *mutatis mutandis* the provisions of the Standing Orders for Sectoral Meetings for the meetings to be held within this biennium until such time as the Governing Body decides on new modifications to them.

II. Composition and purpose of sectoral meetings to be held in 2003

24. The Committee had before it a paper² on the composition and purpose of the six sectoral meetings to be held in 2003.
25. The Chairperson confirmed the proposal that the meetings scheduled for the autumn of 2002 and for 2003 be opened for participation for all governments, except for the “Meeting of Experts to Develop a Code of Practice on Violence and Stress at Work in Services – A Threat to Productivity and Decent Work”. Consultations on the subjects and purposes would continue prior to consideration by the Working Party in June 2002. The Working Party’s recommendations would be submitted directly to Governing Body at its 284th Session in June 2002, since the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues would not be meeting in June.
26. Mr. Zellhoefer pointed out that it would have been useful to have chronological listing of meetings, indicating the dates proposed for each topic. The Workers’ group was ready to discuss the suggestions made by the Office. However, he felt that his group could hold back on its specific proposals and wait for the outcome of the Working Party in June, as the Office suggested.
27. Mr. Jeetun noted that the Employers’ group was ready to discuss and approve the meetings on the chemical industries; food, drink and tobacco industries; and the meeting of experts in violence and stress in services. He suggested that these be discussed immediately, so as to expedite matters. Further consultations could then be held on the other three meetings, which would reduce the workload of the Working Party in June.
28. A representative of the Government of Germany stated that since the Office had proposed that all meetings be opened for participation by all governments, decisions on government composition for each meeting became unnecessary. He also sought clarification on the newly adopted points for decision on the first item on the agenda of the Committee (document GB.283/STM/1), specifically on the meaning of “to the extent practicable” in reference to inviting all interested governments in point 2 and “consider how the new approach should be implemented” in point 3(a). His concern was that certain restrictions on government participation may be implied, which would then require prior consultation. Furthermore, there may be a necessity to place certain restrictions in the future, and he stressed that the topic needed to be examined further when the Working Party was to meet in June.
29. Ms. Paxton explained that “to the extent practicable” referred to the composition of the meeting for May 2002 for which the letters of invitation to the governments had already been dispatched. Therefore it was not possible to open this particular meeting to all governments. As from the autumn of 2002, however, general sectoral meetings (excluding meetings of experts) would be open to all governments.
30. Mr. Jeetun voiced his concern about the tall order of work given to the Working Party in June 2002. The proposal to leave the consideration of the six meetings until June also implied that the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues was handing over all its decision-making capacity to the Working Party. Mr. Jeetun proposed that it would be better for the Committee to take the decisions concerning at least three of

² GB.283/STM/2 and GB.283/STM/2(Corr.).

the meetings at its present sitting, which would also reduce the workload of the Working Party in June.

31. Mr. Zellhoefer turned towards the Government benches for the Governments' views on the opportunity for further consultations prior to June 2002. As per the decisions taken regarding the first item on the agenda "Report of the Working Party on the Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme", a new approach to the Sectoral Activities Programme was being considered, incorporating both meeting and non-meeting components. Differences of opinion may occur on certain meetings, on follow-up activities or on time frames that would possibly impact decisions concerning other sectors. He proposed that all six meetings be discussed at the same time in the Working Party in June to facilitate overall planning.
32. Mr. Jeetun further noted that flexibility needed to be retained concerning the meeting and non-meeting components of the Sectoral Activities Programme. Noting once again his concern for the tall order of tasks expected from the Working Party in June, Mr. Jeetun indicated his willingness to approve a new point for decision for item 2.
33. A representative of the Government of Germany wanted clarification on how many times the Working Party was to meet in June 2002 during the International Labour Conference. He was concerned that the decision-making process regarding the six meetings would be a lengthy one, and for the Working Party to meet on the fringes of the International Labour Conference might prove difficult.
34. Mr. Zellhoefer indicated that it would be wise to initiate consultations as soon as possible, as there was indeed very little time to resolve all issues. He agreed with the Employers' group that the Working Party had a tall order of tasks, but since the new approach was in an experimental phase, the Office should not wait to start consultations.
35. Ms. Paxton read the new point for decision for item 2, and as there were no objections, it was approved.
36. *The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that the programme for the economic sectors contained in paragraphs 11-26 of document GB.283/STM/2 should be considered by the Working Party on the Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme at its meeting during the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference and the Working Party should make recommendations for approval by the Governing Body at its 284th Session in June 2002.*

III. Follow-up to sectoral meetings held in 2000-01

37. The Committee had before it a paper³ on the follow-up to sectoral meetings held in 2000-01.
38. Mr. Zellhoefer recognized that budgetary constraints had negatively affected the capacity of the Office to provide meaningful follow-up to sectoral meetings. For this reason, the Workers' group hoped that an alternative strategy might be put in place and resources found from savings as well as from other departments and technical cooperation resources.

³ GB.283/STM/3.

The information in the document could have been more complete, noting, for example, that the training manual on safety and health in agriculture had been written by the International Union of Food, Agriculture, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) with support from the Office. The document lacked a complete list of ILO follow-up actions requested by each meeting, such as the study on collective bargaining in agriculture. There should be a checklist for each sectoral meeting containing all agreed points so that the Committee would know what had been done and what remained unaccomplished. If the "one-stop window" is implemented, this information should be retrievable through the Web.

39. Mr. Jeetun stated that, as the paper showed, follow-up could take various forms, including meetings, research, participation in conferences, or the presentation of papers. It was not always possible to follow up on all agreed points. Follow-up depended on available resources.
40. A representative of the Government of Ghana, speaking on behalf of the African Government group, noted that research and studies provided a wealth of information for follow-up activities, but conscious efforts should be made to reflect the realities in different regions of the world. To ensure a more positive impact, follow-up activities should be constantly reviewed, revised where necessary, and strengthened. Partnerships with other United Nations specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) should be enhanced.
41. The representative of the Government of Germany stressed the importance of follow-up to meetings. Even modest resources could give rise to useful follow-up. Citing the example of a meeting held in Bangkok in cooperation with the Universal Postal Union, he encouraged the Office to look for potential co-sponsors for activities. It was hoped that the Committee would receive regular information concerning follow-up activities.
42. The Committee took note of the information and of the comments on follow-up action carried out in 2000-01.

IV. Effect to be given to the recommendations of sectoral meetings

(a) Tripartite Meeting on the Social and Labour Dimensions of the Forestry and Wood Industries on the Move (Geneva, 17-21 September 2001)

43. The Committee had before it the *Note on the Proceedings*⁴ of the Tripartite Meeting on the Social and Labour Dimensions of the Forestry and Wood Industries on the Move.
44. Mr. Arbesser-Rastburg (Employer member) had been the Chairperson of this Meeting. He informed the Committee that this sectoral meeting was one of the best that he had ever chaired. The preparation had been outstanding, the participants were knowledgeable, and proper discussions in the plenary had facilitated the task of dealing with the resolutions. Unfortunately the Meeting had taken place only six days after the 11 September events, a tragedy which the Meeting marked with a moment of silence. He also regretted that although 20 governments had been invited, only 13 actually attended. On a personal note,

⁴ TMFWI/2001/11, appended to GB.283/STM/4/1.

Mr. Arbesser informed the Committee that after 43 years of service in this Committee and participation in countless meetings, this Committee meeting was his last as he was retiring. He held the Committee's work dear to his heart as it had great significance for both industrialized and developing countries, and wished the tripartite partners great success.

45. Mr. Jeetun thanked Mr. Arbesser-Rastburg for his valuable contribution and active participation over the years. His knowledge of the history of sectoral activities and his rich experience had provided guidance and was greatly appreciated, as was his support and warm friendship. On behalf of the Employers' group, Mr. Jeetun wished Mr. Arbesser-Rastburg all the best for the future. He also endorsed the points for decision.
46. Mr. Zellhoefer also thanked Mr. Arbesser-Rastburg for all the years of service and offered his group's best wishes for the future. In reference to the Meeting, he noted that the Meeting discussed the fact that the failure to address the challenges of globalization and to sustain the forestry and wood industry sectors would lead to the elimination of more than 5 per cent of the global workforce, estimated at 47 million. In the Russian Federation alone 1 million jobs were lost between 1990 and 1999. Contract and casual labour, on the rise in many countries and often accompanied by a decline in working conditions, was of concern to the Workers' group. It was important that the groups had been able to agree that contractors, subcontractors and their employees were entitled to the benefits of the principles and rights of the ILO Declaration. For the Workers' group, it was crucial that training for these workers be available, especially in occupational health and safety and skill development. A minimum social coverage certification, including reference to the relevant ILO Conventions and taking account of the ILO code of practice on safety and health in forestry work, was also necessary. The ILO should establish linkages with relevant United Nations agencies so as to ensure that social concerns were considered in international policy discussions. With these comments, the Workers' group approved the points for decision.
47. The Chairperson thanked on behalf of the Committee Mr. Arbesser-Rastburg for his long and highly appreciated contribution to the Sectoral Activities Programme and to the ILO more broadly and wished him well.
48. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body –*
- (a) *authorize the Director-General to communicate the Note on the Proceedings:*
 - (i) *to governments, requesting them to communicate these texts to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
 - (ii) *to the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
 - (iii) *to the international organizations concerned;*
 - (b) *request the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for the future programme of work of the Office, the wishes expressed by the Meeting in paragraphs 16-21 of the conclusions and in the relevant parts of the resolutions.*

(b) Joint Meeting on the Impact of Decentralization and Privatization on Municipal Services
(Geneva, 15-19 October 2001)

49. The Committee had before it the *Note on the Proceedings*⁵ of the Joint Meeting on the Impact of Decentralization and Privatization on Municipal Services.
50. On behalf of the Workers' group, Mr. Zellhoefer thanked Mr. Adyanthaya (Worker member), the Meeting's Chairperson. The Meeting touched upon some of the most controversial issues on today's labour market, with a discussion that denoted the tension and the different points of view. In the end, positive consensus was reached on important points of the conclusions, such as reforms needed to provide universal and equal access to all necessary public services. The reforms were to be guided by accountability, transparency and openness of government policies and actions. They needed to ensure equality of opportunity for all and, importantly, be based on the prerequisite of social dialogue. The Meeting also ended with a list of ILO activities for the years to come, including the implementation of action programmes at regional, subregional and national levels, and work with other United Nations agencies – in particular the Bretton Woods institutions – for promoting social dialogue when designing public sector reforms and developing a programme of research and advisory services in order to give guidance to governments and municipal services in identifying and considering all possible approaches to reforms. These needed to consider the social consequences of reform and respect for ILO standards. The Workers' group would be vigilant in order to achieve a positive and fruitful follow-up in all these areas. The points for decision were approved.
51. Mr. Jeetun, on behalf of the Employers' group, indicated with satisfaction that the Meeting had unanimously adopted the conclusions and approved the points for decision.
52. The representative of the Government of India commented that municipal services represented the expression of socio-economic cohesion, ensuring public health and the well-being of the population. The welfare role of government necessitated a change in vision and strategies towards more devolution and decentralization for the inclusion of market and private sector managerial experience. As a part of urban sector reforms, the Indian Parliament had already enacted a law for decentralization of democratic and financial powers to the grass-roots level. It was also proposed to promote public-private partnership for better delivery of municipal services. His delegation also supported the proposal of developing a programme of research to evaluate the factors in the reform process that contribute positively to efficiency, quality of services and security.
53. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body –*
- (a) authorize the Director-General to communicate the Note on the Proceedings:*
- (i) to governments, requesting them to communicate these texts to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
- (ii) to the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
- (iii) to the international organizations concerned;*

⁵ JMMS/2001/10, appended to GB.283/STM/4/2.

(b) request the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for the future programme of work of the Office, the wishes expressed by the Meeting in paragraph 11 of the conclusions.

(c) Tripartite Meeting on the Construction Industry in the Twenty-first Century: Its Image, Employment Prospects and Skill Requirements
(Geneva, 10-14 December 2001)

54. The Committee had before it the *Note on the Proceedings*⁶ of the Tripartite Meeting on the Construction Industry in the Twenty-first Century: Its Image, Employment Prospects and Skill Requirements.
55. Mr. Zellhoefer, on behalf of the Workers' group, emphasized that while the construction industry was quite large and employed more than 110 million people worldwide, construction work had become increasingly temporary and insecure. Jobs were outsourced to subcontractors with many workers lacking the rights to social security and collective bargaining. Respect for the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), all along the employment chain had been emphasized in the Meeting, with casual and temporary workers having protection equivalent to permanent workers. Since construction was a high-risk activity, occupational safety and health was a major area of concern. References to the Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162), and the Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167), were made, with special attention paid to the training of workers' health and safety representatives. The issue of transparency of public procurement was also crucial. Government and international financial institutions were to encourage socially responsible business practices in accordance with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94), and legislation on health and safety. Areas of work for the ILO had been indicated in the cooperation with other United Nations agencies (especially the World Bank), active involvement in Rio+10, and cooperation with HABITAT. Mr. Zellhoefer supported the points for decision.
56. Mr. Jeetun, on behalf of the Employers' group, indicated that the conclusions of the Meeting reflected a wide range of issues, such as the construction industry's contribution to the economy, employment practices, social dialogue, training, occupational safety and health and working conditions, and procurement. The role of the ILO had also been emphasized. With these comments, the Employers' group endorsed the points for decision.
57. A representative of the Government of Germany noted that the Meeting was, by coincidence, one of few where his country had been represented by a tripartite delegation. The conclusions, especially those concerning occupational safety and health and working conditions, were very relevant to this particularly hazardous sector. Procurement issues were important to resolve, in particular relating to subcontracting. Clearly defined parameters for subcontracting were necessary for this sector. At present the ILO was negotiating with the World Bank regarding procurement guidelines that would take into account the relevant ILO Conventions.
58. The representative of the Government of India stated that the provincial state of Kerala's efforts in ensuring basic rights, decent working conditions and social protection for

⁶ TMCIT/2001/12, appended to GB.283/STM/4/3.

construction workers had been noted in the Meeting as a positive example in a low-income country. He reiterated his Government's commitment to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, yet advised that the ILO should continue to stress that the Declaration should not be used for protectionist purposes. In India there were about 17.6 million construction workers, constituting one of the most vulnerable segments of unorganized labour. Legislation had been enacted to regulate construction workers' safety and health, and the National Commission on Labour was working on an umbrella legislation in line with ILO standards.

59. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body –*

(a) *authorize the Director-General to communicate the Note on the Proceedings:*

(i) *to governments, requesting them to communicate these texts to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*

(ii) *to the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*

(iii) *to the international organizations concerned;*

(b) *request the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for the future programme of work of the Office, the wishes expressed by the Meeting in paragraphs 18-21 of the conclusions and the relevant parts of the resolutions.*

(d) *Tripartite Meeting on Civil Aviation: Social and Safety Consequences of the Crisis subsequent to 11 September 2001*
(Geneva, 21-25 January 2002)

60. The Committee had before it the final report of the Tripartite Meeting on Civil Aviation: Social and Safety Consequences of the Crisis subsequent to 11 September 2001.⁷

61. The Chairperson of the Committee in introducing this item referred to the coincidence of the report being discussed in the Committee exactly six months to the day since the tragic events of 11 September 2001.

62. The Chairperson of the Meeting, Ambassador Elmiger (Government, Switzerland), also noted that exactly six months had passed since the destruction of the Twin Towers on 11 September. He asked delegates to think of the victims and the stakeholders in the industry who had been hit by the tragic events of that day. The civil aviation meeting held in January had addressed the most serious crisis to affect the air transport industry since the Second World War. Some 200 representatives of governments, airlines and trade unions had met to seek solutions which would return the industry to stability and profitability and encourage investments in improved infrastructure. Four hundred thousand jobs had been lost in direct and indirect employment. Hiring freezes, dismissals and voluntary retirement measures were expected to continue into 2003. The speaker highlighted a number of the

⁷ TMICA/2002/11, appended to GB.283/STM/4/4.

recommendations adopted by the Meeting, which were of a practical rather than a political nature. Workers and employers should benefit from the fundamental principles and rights at work, notably freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Governments should consider the funding of training and retraining as a long-term investment in the civil aviation industry. The roles of certain categories of workers, such as cabin crews, ground staff and air traffic controllers, in ensuring safety and security could be strengthened through training based on harmonized global standards. Social dialogue should be encouraged at all levels. Governments should recognize the critical role of civil aviation in the economy as a whole. The speaker noted in particular the ILO's mandate for further action. The Meeting had been properly managed with the flexibility needed to respond rapidly to the crisis situation. This included opening the Meeting to wider participation, adapting work methods, and calling on outside expertise. The Office had accomplished excellent work in a short time. This experience should be taken into account in the preparation of the documents for next November's meeting.

- 63.** Mr. Jeetun, on behalf of the Employers' group, thanked Ambassador Elmiger for his excellent chairmanship and the clear summary of the Meeting. The Meeting had demonstrated the ILO's capacity to respond rapidly and with flexibility. It had focused on a topical theme and had attracted good government participation. The Employers' group endorsed the points for decision.
- 64.** Mr. Zellhoefer, on behalf of the Workers' group, thanked Ambassador Elmiger for the role he had played in ensuring a positive outcome to a challenging meeting. This provided an occasion to rethink sectoral activities. The Informal Meeting on the Hotel and Tourism Sector: Social Impact of Events subsequent to 11 September 2001 (October 2001) had proven that with excellent synergies among constituents, it was possible to reshape an agenda for the Meeting that had originally been decided two years earlier. The decision to open the Meeting to wider participation had been timely. The Chairperson's summary had provided a good example of how to structure the presentation of the consensus including analysis of the employment effects of the cyclical downturn combined with 11 September, the need for training, retraining, concern for safety, security and health hazards, themes that all benefit from active social dialogue. Of particular importance in the recommendations concerning ILO action was joint action with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the formalization of a small standing tripartite strategy forum for aviation to provide guidance for activities in the sector. The Workers' group regretted that the collection of data on aviation-specific occupational safety and health research had not been taken on board. It was regretted that due to tight time constraints, the draft conclusions had not been available in the three languages in time for the Drafting Committee discussions. The speaker recalled that during the Meeting, the closing of Air Afrique without a proper social plan had been announced and he expressed the hope that a positive outcome might still be possible through social dialogue. The Workers' group approved the points for decision.
- 65.** The representative of the Government of Ghana, speaking on behalf of the African Government group, noted that the implementation of the recommendations of the Meeting would go a long way to addressing the problems of the industry. She commended the Chairperson and the participants for their work.
- 66.** A representative of the Government of Germany expressed his deep satisfaction with the Meeting and thanked Ambassador Elmiger for the important part he had played. Governments certainly recognized the critical public interest role of civil aviation and were already carrying out many of the actions recommended by the Meeting. With regard to joint work with the ICAO, the speaker questioned the feasibility of such requests. He had expressed at the Meeting his scepticism with regard to recommendation 45(g) concerning the participation of the ILO, through a Governing Body delegation, in the ICAO

Conference in March 2003, but since this recommendation had been adopted, it should be implemented.

67. The representative of the Government of Slovakia thanked the Chairperson and the Office for the effectiveness of the Meeting, noting the flexibility which it had demonstrated.
68. The representative of the Government of the United States joined previous speakers in expressing thanks to Ambassador Elmiger and to the Office. The Meeting could be considered a model for future types of meetings. His delegation supported the points for decision.
69. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body –*
- (a) *authorize the Director-General to communicate the final report to:*
- (i) *governments, requesting them to communicate these texts to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
- (ii) *the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
- (iii) *the international organizations concerned;*
- (b) *request the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for the future programme of work of the Office, the wishes expressed by the Meeting in paragraph 45 of the recommendations;*
- (c) *approve the recommendation in paragraph 45(g) to participate through a Governing Body delegation, in the ICAO Worldwide Air Transport Conference to be held in Montreal from 24 to 29 March 2003.*

V. Report of the Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics: Household Income and Expenditure Statistics and Consumer Price Indices (Geneva, 22-31 October 2001)

70. The Committee had before it the report of the Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics.⁸
71. Mr. Jeetun, on behalf of the Employers' group, stressed that surveys were vital in understanding the consumption behaviours and patterns in different countries. They were useful for governments in order to frame economic and social policies and to calculate consumer price indices. Surveys also served as indicators of inflation which led to wage adjustments, social security benefits and other purposes. The Employers' group appreciated the usefulness of the Meeting of Experts, and endorsed the point for decision.
72. Mr. Zellhoefer confirmed the Workers' group support of the historical and continuing work of the ILO on labour statistics, the revision of the international standards in household income and expenditure statistics (HIES), the ongoing activity in revising the consumer price index (CPI) resolution, the ILO's CPI manual as well as many recent

⁸ MELS/2001/R, appended to GB.283/STM/5.

developments on this topic at the international, regional and national levels. The discussion at the Meeting had been highly technical and was conducted in a constructive and mostly non-controversial manner. Paragraph 220 outlining special responsibility for the ILO was noted with interest, and he was therefore pleased to report that the Workers' experts at the Meeting approved the final text. The Workers' group was pleased to give its support to the point for decision.

73. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body take note of the report of the Meeting, in particular the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraphs 98-102 and 215-222.*

VI. Report of the International Symposium to Strengthen Workers' Participation in the United Nations System and Impact on Bretton Woods Institutions (Geneva, 24-28 September 2001)

74. The Committee had before it a paper⁹ on the report of the International Symposium to Strengthen Workers' Participation in the United Nations System and Impact on Bretton Woods Institutions.

75. Mr. Zellhoefer stated that the Workers' group did not usually comment on activities that were not tripartite. However since the Symposium had been a Workers' initiative, he thanked ACTRAV for organizing the event, which led to a frank and in-depth discussion of the issues between trade unions and representatives from the ILO and other United Nations institutions.

76. Mr. Jeetun, on behalf of the Employers' group, echoed Mr. Zellhoefer's statement and indicated that his group also did not like to comment on activities that were not tripartite. However, the Employers took note of the document.

77. The representative of the Government of India indicated that while taking note of the report, his delegation did not support the idea that adherence to core labour standards should in any way become a conditionality to the benefits being extended by the Bretton Woods institutions to the developing countries.

78. The Committee took note of the document.

VII. Other questions

(a) First issue

79. Mr. Zellhoefer, on behalf of the Workers' group, raised suggestions concerning the Tripartite Meeting on Lifelong Learning in the Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Industries (MEE), to be held from 23 to 27 September 2002. He proposed that the Meeting discussions could be planned around panel discussions instead of around discussion points

⁹ GB.283/STM/6.

formulated by the Office. The Workers' group looked forward to a well-researched report, but stressed that, to be able to carry out this research, it was necessary to have a database. Mr. Zellhoefer highlighted economic performance, recession and the social consequences as possible themes for inclusion. In respect to lifelong learning (LLL), the key issues were:

1. The appropriate curriculum for the different aspects of LLL (in part education versus training).
2. Who pays – programme funding, on or off work time.
3. Who decides – curriculum content, worker eligibility.

80. Mr. Zellhoefer stressed that the three partners had key roles to play concerning points 2 and 3 above, and proposed that the report could be structured along these lines.

81. The five themes proposed for panel discussions were:

1. The economic performance of the MEE industries: 2001 recession and outlook.
2. The social impact of restructuring the MEE industries.
3. Lifelong learning in the MEE industries: Concepts and examples.
4. The right curricula for the various aspects of lifelong learning.
5. The roles of the social partners and governments in lifelong learning and beyond in the MEE industries: Implications for the ILO.

82. Mr. Jeetun, on behalf of the Employers' group, supported the proposals made by the Workers' group, and the Governments did not raise any objections.

(b) Second issue

83. The Employer spokesperson gave the floor to the Secretary of the group to clarify a concern about the procedures governing sectoral meetings and in particular the Working Party on Resolutions. According to the Standing Orders of Sectoral Meetings, draft resolutions relating to the agenda item were to be referred to the meeting for consideration by the Working Party on Resolutions with a view to the possible incorporation of its substance in the record or conclusions on that section of the agenda item. There was, however, continuing misunderstanding on the meaning of "the agenda item". This misunderstanding inevitably prolonged the discussions on the receivability of draft resolutions at each sectoral meeting and wasted much time. The Employers' understanding was that the Standing Orders had allowed for resolutions to enable issues to be addressed that were not to be dealt with in conclusions. Should both the resolutions and conclusions deal with the same subject matter, this would give rise inevitably to double discussion including possible conflicting statements on them. The employers were seeking a clear understanding on the meaning of "agenda item" to make sectoral meetings more productive.

84. Mr. Zellhoefer, on behalf of the Workers' group, took note of the issue and as the subject matter would require thought and discussion, he proposed that an appropriate time be found in the framework of the future consultations to discuss the matter.

85. Mr. Jeetun referred to the representative of the Government of Germany's suggestion that consideration could be given to sectoral meetings only adopting conclusions and not resolutions. He proposed that this suggestion could be taken up in the future consultations.

Geneva, 14 March 2002.

Points for decision: Paragraph 22;
Paragraph 36;
Paragraph 48;
Paragraph 53;
Paragraph 59;
Paragraph 69;
Paragraph 73.