

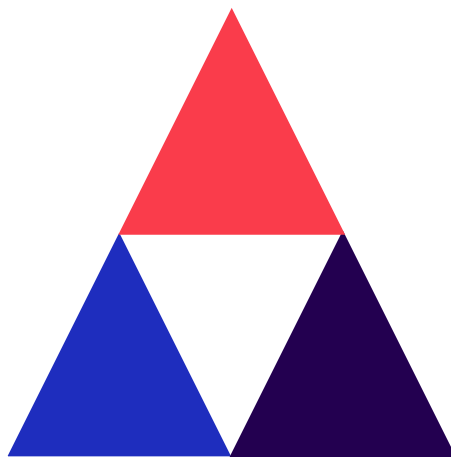


International  
Labour  
Organization

▶ GDFWS/2020/8

## ▶ Report

**Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in the World of Sport**  
(Geneva, 20–22 January 2020)



Sectoral Policies Department  
Geneva, 2020

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## 1. Introduction

1. The Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in the World of Sport was held at the International Labour Office in Geneva from 20 to 22 January 2020. The Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) decided to convene the Forum at its 329th (March 2017) and 334th (October–November 2018) Sessions. The purpose of the Forum was to allow the tripartite constituents to discuss current and emerging issues related to the promotion of decent work in the world of sport, with a focus on the working conditions of athletes, with the aim of adopting points of consensus, including recommendations for future action by the ILO and its Members.
2. The Chairperson of the Forum was Ambassador Michael Gaffey, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. The Government Vice-Chairperson of the Forum was Ms Manon Post (Netherlands), the Employer Vice-Chairperson was Mr Mthunzi Perry-Mason Mdwaba (Mr Mdwaba was replaced during the last sitting by Mr Paul Mackay) and the Worker Vice-Chairperson was Mr Jonas Baer-Hoffmann (Mr Baer-Hoffmann was replaced during the last sitting by Mr Brendan Schwab). The Secretary-General of the Forum was Ms Alette van Leur, Director of the Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR), the Deputy Secretary-General was Mr Akira Isawa, Deputy Director of SECTOR, the Executive Secretary was Mr Oliver Liang, Head of the Private and Public Services Sectors Unit, who was assisted by Ms Margherita Licata, and the Coordinator of the secretariat services was Mr Taher Mohammad.
3. The Forum was attended by 125 participants, including 51 Government representatives and advisers and 16 Government observers from 48 member States, as well as ten Employer and 28 Worker representatives, and 20 observers from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and invited international non-governmental organizations. Eighteen persons also registered as members of the general public.
4. The Chairperson welcomed the participants to a meeting on an important subject that had not previously been covered by an ILO sectoral meeting. He emphasized the significance of sport as one of the noble pursuits that unified humanity, and which was practiced by all nations and cultures in some form. Over the past century, the world had come together in friendly sports competitions, such as the Olympic Games and the Football World Cup, which had become significant global events. Sport also had a political dimension, with many democratic movements emerging from sport, starting in the nineteenth century, as had been the case in his own country. While sport was often seen as a quintessentially passionate pursuit of excellence, it had also become a significant economic activity. Sports competitions and the related manufacture of sports equipment, the broadcasting of sports events and training, coaching and support services for athletes generated employment for millions and added significant value to local economies. For athletes, sport provided opportunities for personal development, careers and the opportunity to pursue their passion. The significant economic dimension of sport also raised important questions relating to decent work. Professional athletes were not only essential for sports competitions, but were also workers in the business of sport. While many top athletes enjoyed conditions that allowed them to live a comfortable life, and even enjoyed conspicuous wealth, many athletes faced decent work challenges which were deservedly gaining international attention. He therefore hoped that the Forum would make a significant contribution to promoting sport that both provided economic opportunities and ensured social justice and decent work for athletes.
5. The Secretary-General recalled that sport was not a new topic for the ILO. A number of international labour standards promoted sport and sports facilities for workers, and sport continued to be an important strategy for the United Nations system to promote health, well-

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being, peace and development. The ILO was also involved in action to combat child labour in the sports apparel and equipment supply chain, and promoted sport as a means for skills development. The ILO was promoting decent work in mega sporting events. Nevertheless, this was the first ILO meeting devoted to the decent work dimensions affecting professional athletes. The media regularly reported the triumphs, successes or defeats of top athletes, and governments were well aware of the economic and social benefits of promoting sport and the sports industry. However, the media and the public were increasingly becoming aware of a number of decent work challenges facing athletes, including: challenges in exercising social dialogue, freedom of association and collective bargaining; discrimination, violence and racism against players; risks to young athletes, including sexual abuse; risks to the health and safety of athletes, including long-term physical and mental debilitation; the difficulties of maintaining employability after a career in sports, and many other challenges. The ILO, through its mandate and tripartite structure, was in a unique position to explore these issues from multiple perspectives.

6. The Chairperson noted that the participants agreed to consider the draft points for discussion set out in document GDFWS/2020/4 and to follow the draft timetable contained in document GDFWS/2020/3.
7. The Executive Secretary introduced the issues paper prepared for the Forum (document GDFWS/2020), entitled *Decent work in the world of sport*, which mapped the current and emerging issues related to work in the world of sport through the lens of decent work, based on international labour standards.

## II. General discussion

8. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, sharing his personal experience of the world of sport, including the lack of opportunities at the time of the apartheid regime in South Africa, emphasized the importance of sport in South Africa and across the African region as a source of inspiration and identity, as well as the health benefits for those practicing sport. The potential of sport to inspire nations had been amply demonstrated by the Football World Cup organized in South Africa in 2010 and the recent victory of South Africa in the Rugby World Cup. It was difficult to think of a better equalizer or leveller, which did not recognize royalty, elitism or country of origin. Instead, it required talent, infrastructure and resources to enable nations to compete fairly. It also required education for all, labour laws that operated fairly and guaranteed occupational safety and health, and action by governments to adhere to, implement and monitor laws.
9. Acknowledging the many challenges that exist in the world of sport, he called for solutions that took into account the aspirational nature of sport and its role in bringing people together. As recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, sport contributed to economic growth and the development of skills and principles, such as teamwork, cooperation, fair play and goal setting, which could empower individuals, were valuable for professional career development beyond sport and were relevant for the labour market and for society. Sport could motivate children and youth to pursue education, while also being a powerful platform for advocacy and awareness raising for gender equality and diversity. Moreover, sport was an important industry with the capacity to lift people out of poverty through employment and to contribute to economic development. While it was clear that there were many related issues in the sports industry, such as the working conditions of construction workers preparing for mega sporting events, service workers and conditions of employment in equipment manufacturing, which all raised significant questions, the focus of the present Forum should be confined to the specific issue of the employment and working conditions of athletes engaged in sport at the professional level. The other related issues should be addressed in separate discussions. The issues paper referred to the specificity of sport and to its diversity and complexity, which served to underline the fact that there could

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not be a one-size-fits-all approach, but instead solutions that took into account differences in the employment status and conditions of athletes. Moreover, there were many related areas in which the ILO had no jurisdiction, such as intellectual property, image rights and action to combat doping. The Employers' group appreciated the participation of sports bodies in the meeting and hoped that the opportunity would be taken to address not only the challenges faced by professional athletes, but also the opportunities offered by sport to promote tolerance and respect, and the contribution that sport could make to the empowerment of women and young people. The Forum should therefore focus on innovative approaches and ideas to promote decent work in sport, which might also be of benefit for discussions in other sectoral meetings.

- 10.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson noted that every member of the victorious Springboks rugby team was a member of the players' union, which had been essential in negotiating with the relevant sports bodies for the protection and advancement of their own conditions and careers and the progression of their sport. Governments were also a key counterpart in this process. The careers of professional athletes were fraught with difficulties. They could easily find themselves in situations where their career was in jeopardy if they were not selected by one of a very limited number of employers in their field. Their careers only lasted a few years and they were under pressure to perform constantly to the best of their potential. Although those practicing sport at a high level might enjoy the privilege of representing their country, such privilege could also be used as a means of pressure to deny their rights. It was important to recognize the specificities of the world of sport, including the fact that, in most sports, men did not compete with women. But consideration of decent work in sport involved discussion of the economic opportunities of those engaged in sport. Where there were economic opportunities, rules applied, as set out in laws, which were in turn based on international standards, including those of the ILO. ILO rules required recognition of the right to engage in collective bargaining, which was of the utmost importance to those engaged in professional sports as their careers were so short and the risk of injury so great.
- 11.** The world of sport was undergoing far-reaching evolution. Cross-border competition had developed greatly following the Second World War, while in the 1990s broadcasting had radically changed the conditions in which sport was viewed, and digitalization and globalized trade were once again resulting in fundamental changes affecting athletes. Significant court cases in recent decades, such as those brought by George Eastham, Curt Flood and Jean-Marc Bosman, had advanced important principles, such as the removal of the maximum wage limit, freedom of choice of employer and the freedom of cross-border movement in the European Union. More recently, with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) becoming more active in the world of sport and the adoption in 2017 of the Kazan Action Plan, as well as the establishment of the Centre for Sport and Human Rights, a strong message was being sent out that action was required to ensure that human rights, including labour rights, applied to athletes. Governments had an important role to play in ensuring that collective bargaining could take place in sport, as sporting rules and regulations sometimes diverged significantly from the ordinary rules of law, including labour law. At present, collective bargaining was very fragmented in sport. While it was sometimes effective in team sports, it could also be suppressed by governing federations and the bodies organizing competitions. Until governments required a higher level of democratic legitimacy, it would be difficult to extend collective bargaining and effective advocacy to all areas of sport.
- 12.** The issues paper raised the question of the employment status of athletes, providing examples of disguised employment and bogus self-employment. In many regions of the world, a very large proportion of athletes did not receive their wages on time, and were often in any case paid at a lower rate than the minimum wage. A key issue included access to remedies, as highlighted in the report by John Ruggie, *For the game. For the world. FIFA and human rights*. The fact that women athletes in many countries were still considered amateurs prevented them from having access to social protection. Moreover, many women

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athletes were still subject to unacceptable conditions, including the need to take unpaid leave from their jobs to represent their countries. Sport was also suffering from a resurgence of the scourge of racism, including through social media. A further source of pressure for elite athletes related to their livelihood after their sport careers ended. The environment in which athletes operated was therefore very challenging and they had to cope with very high levels of pressure of various kinds, which resulted in many of them suffering from mental health issues. The risk of injury and concussion, the very frequent travel, and the general wear and tear involved in training and performing made sport one of the highest risk occupations. The essential question was therefore how to ensure that the standards of the ILO and human rights in general applied in the world of sport. Progress was being made in this respect in certain areas and the most important instrument in achieving that progress was collective bargaining. Assistance was required from the ILO and UNESCO to ensure further progress. The stakeholders should not lose sight of the fact that those sports with co-governance systems and effective collective bargaining rights were the most successful at the sporting, economic and social levels. All stakeholders would benefit from empowering this process.

- 13.** The Government Vice-Chairperson welcomed the holding of the Forum in view of the significance of sport, not only in social and economic terms, but also the role that it could play in uniting and inspiring countries. In recent years, there had been greater attention on the employment and working conditions of athletes, the challenge of ensuring the application of fundamental principles and rights at work to athletes, including the promotion of freedom of association and collective bargaining, and action to combat any instances of child and forced labour. Other areas requiring action included the safety and health of athletes, mental health issues and the lack of clarity of their employment relations. The Forum would be a crucial starting point for the future action of the ILO and its constituents in the world of sport.
- 14.** The representative of the Government of Egypt emphasized that sport was a universal language that contributed to educating people in the values of respect, dignity, diversity, equality, tolerance and fairness as means of combating discrimination. It was a huge industry that provided employment for millions of people in various sectors around the world and had a valuable contribution to make to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). His country considered sport as a fundamental pillar of its national development plans. The Ministry of Youth and Sports had launched several initiatives to enrich decent work in sport with the aim of bringing together all the stakeholders to promote fair play, education, income, safety and health, and freedom of expression in the field of sport. It also provided all necessary support to the Egyptian Sport Professional Syndicate, an organization focused on the social and economic welfare of its members in the various fields of sport.
- 15.** An observer representing UNESCO welcomed the organization of the Forum and recalled that the 2017 Kazan Action Plan constituted a robust road map and a good framework for discussion of the issues arising in the sector. It would be important to reinforce United Nations policy coherence and to balance the views of the various stakeholders when developing guidance and standards for the sector. The involvement of UNESCO in the sector was based on the belief in the effectiveness of sport in promoting the values of teamwork, combating racism and promoting gender equality. As part of its activities to promote gender equality, UNESCO was conducting a feasibility study on the establishment of a global observatory that would monitor the presence of women in the world of sport.
- 16.** An observer representing the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) recalled that sport was an important enabler for sustainable development, but that corruption and organized crime were threatening to undermine the essential Olympic principles. The Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (Abu Dhabi, 16–20 December 2019) had adopted a resolution on safeguarding sport from corruption, as a follow up to the 2017 resolution on corruption in sport. The 2005 Convention



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against Corruption was the only universal binding instrument to combat corruption. The 2019 resolution identified several key areas of action to combat corruption in sport and both resolutions signalled the commitment of the international community to defend integrity in sport. The UNODC provided guidance and assistance to States Parties to combat corrupt practices and was developing capacity-building tools and publications together with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on reporting mechanisms. It also provided technical assistance and training for many countries and sport organizations. This was done in thanks to a project developed with the IOC and in coordination with INTERPOL. The UNODC was looking forward to working with the ILO and stakeholders to promote decent work in the world of sport and combat corruption.

- 17.** An observer representing the International Olympic Committee (IOC) expressed concern for the well-being and rights of all athletes and called on all stakeholders to cooperate in addressing them. As Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission, she welcomed the holding of the third edition of the Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne, where young athletes from diverse countries and socio-economic backgrounds were representing 79 countries. The true spirit of the Olympic Games in bringing athletes together in peaceful competition had been demonstrated in that context by the young athletes from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel and the United States posing for a photograph with the IOC President. It was of the greatest importance that athletes were involved in every aspect of decision-making within the Olympic movement and in sport in general, and that the representatives of athletes received their mandate from their peers and were accountable to them. All athletes who participated in the Olympic Games had the right to vote for the IOC Athletes Commission. The Athletes' Rights and Responsibilities Declaration, which had been developed in consultation with over 4,200 athletes from 190 countries and 120 sports and disciplines, covered issues that were critical for athletes and sport as a whole. She emphasized that there were many types of athletes, ranging from professional athletes bound by contractual agreements with a club or league, to amateur athletes, who constituted the majority. There were also many students and athletes employed by the police or the armed forces. Their circumstances varied widely, but they all had common concerns. Accordingly, there was no one-size-fits-all approach. The solidarity funding model endorsed by the IOC was vital and supported athletes from all National Olympic Committees and in all Olympic sports, with the aim of ensuring that all athletes benefited from the commercial success of the Olympic Games. The IOC distributed 90 per cent of all its revenues for the benefit of athletes and the development of sport throughout the world, including action to combat doping and corruption, medical prevention programmes and scholarships for athletes. However, the solidarity model continued to be challenged by commercial interests, with the risk of devaluing the Olympic Games with its broad range of sports and athletes from all 206 National Olympic Committees, as well as the Paralympic Games. She herself was a beneficiary of the solidarity funding and without it would not have achieved her dream of becoming an Olympic champion.
- 18.** An observer representing the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) emphasized that all those involved in sport had the obligation to achieve better working conditions for athletes. UEFA chaired the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Professional Football, which had succeeded in improving standards for the protection of players. The situation was not perfect, but was improving at the European level, and UEFA was committed to promoting the implementation of better standards in its member countries. The focus had also been on setting minimum medical requirements. UEFA had contributed to protecting player's rights also through other means. For example, club licensing and financial fair play regulations which included several provisions aimed at the protection of players such as the overdue payables were now in force not only for UEFA competitions but also for competitions organized by UEFA National Associations. Issues relating to women's football were also important, and UEFA had launched a five-year strategy to support women's football throughout Europe. The improvement of working conditions was a priority that needed to be addressed across the board in cooperation with the stakeholders. He

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considered that UEFA's cooperation with partners, including clubs, leagues and the International Federation of Professional Footballers (FIFPro), could offer an example to other sports for the promotion of social dialogue.

### **III. Consideration of the proposed points for discussion**

#### **1. What decent work challenges and opportunities do athletes face in the evolving world of sport?**

- 19.** A panel discussion was held on social dialogue. The panellists were: Kirsty Coventry, Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the IOC Athletes' Commission; Renate Hornung-Draus, Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA); Guillermo Iroy, Jr, Philippine Sports Commission; and Brendan Schwab, World Players Association. The discussion was moderated by Sophy Fisher (ILO).
- 20.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson explained that he was the General Secretary of FIFPro, which had 65 domestic unions as affiliates, 31 of which were from Europe, while the rest were equally split between Africa, Asia and the Americas. The national unions represented athletes from all spectrums and played an important role in helping players with a diversity of status and income levels to gain access to social dialogue. The main difference between amateur and professional athletes was the level of income, with many amateurs earning less from their sport than they needed to cover their expenses. No athlete would choose to be an amateur if there were other options. Sport was a growing industry and it should not be difficult to ensure that the athletes who created the spectacle received appropriate remuneration. One of the difficulties in many sports was to determine who was responsible for social protection, for example in the event of injury when athletes represented their country. There was little difference between individual and team sports in terms of the need for athletes to be represented, whether by unions or other forms of association. In sport, there were challenges across the board in relation to terms and conditions of employment. For example, even in men's football, the earnings of a majority of players were below the minimum wage. Studies showed that some 40 per cent of men footballer players around the world did not receive their wages on time. Many players suffered various forms of discrimination and risked being blacklisted if they tried to organize, and could lose their jobs as a result.
- 21.** Another Worker representative from FIFPro indicated that she played for the Argentine national women's football team. She explained that the organization of women football players in Argentina had been one of the key features behind the growth of women's football in the country. Before women footballer players in the country had organized, players in the national women's team had faced many difficulties, with no trainers or training, the payment of very low amounts which did not cover their expenses, poor training conditions, often on artificial pitches, with a much greater risk of injury, and sometimes long and arduous travel arrangements with no rest periods due to the lack of funding available to pay, for example, for overnight hotel accommodation. After the players had organized and achieved more media attention, they had been able to initiate negotiations for improved conditions with the national football association. One of the players had filed a court case against her club, for which she had signed, but was not receiving pay. The protests and organization had led to the development of a tournament for professional women football players, and their resulting success had resulted in much greater media recognition and better conditions, including contracts, for some of the players in the national team. However, despite the success, women football players in the country still feared that they would no longer be selected if they spoke up, and some sponsors gave players instructions not to engage in protest action.

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- 22.** The Worker representative from the National Union of Footballers of Cameroon (SYNAFOC) said that he had been lucky during his career to have played for very high-profile clubs, such as Real Madrid and Chelsea. However, he highlighted the challenges facing footballers in Africa. Although football had become very popular in Arica, footballers in the region continued to suffer from discrimination and racism, and their basic working conditions were not respected. Most professional players signed contracts, but were not provided with copies of the contracts, which often resulted in the failure of the other party to respect contractual commitments, including the payment of wages, which in turn made players more vulnerable to corrupt practices, such as match fixing. Although football players in many African leagues were organized, their representation was seldom effective. Their conditions were very difficult. For example, players often had to travel long distances in buses with tight schedules, with the risk of road accidents and insufficient rest periods. They were frequently not covered by collective insurance mechanisms in the event of injury. There was a great need for ILO action to ensure the application of minimum standards in sport in all countries.
- 23.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson referred to the phenomenal growth of sport in recent decades and the considerable economic, cultural and political influence of professional athletes in society as public figures and as role models, both during and after their careers. While some athletes had been able to improve their conditions, through wages, sponsorships and media rights, that was not true of all professional athletes, many of whom continued to struggle to make a decent living, and faced the late payment of wages, the absence of or poorly written employment contracts, and health and safety risks. Many athletes needed to take a second job to provide for themselves and their families. It was important to address both the challenges and the opportunities in sport.
- 24.** The 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work set out the constitutional obligations of ILO member States with regard to respect for fundamental principles and rights at work, irrespective of their level of economic development. The Declaration encompassed the essence of the fundamental Conventions, but did not impose on member States the detailed obligations of Conventions that they had not ratified, nor did it subject them to the supervisory procedures that applied when Conventions were ratified. The Employers' group fully supported the Declaration, which set out rights that should be applied in any civilized country. Sport, like any other industry, needed to respect these fundamental principles and rights. With regard to freedom of association and the effective right to collective bargaining, there had been an increase in athletes' unions and player associations at all levels of professional sport, including at the international level, offering new opportunities for social dialogue, such as the 2017 cooperation agreement between FIFPro and FIFA to improve players' rights. Social dialogue and tripartism were at the heart of the ILO, and strong, representative, independent and cohesive workers' and employers' organizations were indispensable for successful social dialogue. The representativity and accountability of such organizations was vital. Social dialogue could take diverse forms, including collective bargaining, consultations, the sharing of information and cooperation, depending on the circumstances. In the world of sport, as in other sectors, the most appropriate form of social dialogue would depend on the nature of the problem to be addressed. In relation to collective bargaining in sport, it was necessary to distinguish between individual and team sports in view of the difference in their structures. Individual athletes were usually not considered to be employees of their clubs, but tended to be self-employed and received prize money, appearance fees and sponsorships as income. As independent contractors, athletes had the right to join, or not to join, associations of their choice, but they did not have the right to engage in collective bargaining.
- 25.** He stated that the right set out in Article 4 of the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), to engage in collective bargaining with a view to "the regulation of terms and conditions of employment by means of collective agreements" only applied to workers in an employment relationship. As independent contractors, the coverage of

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individual athletes by collective agreements would raise a risk of free markets being subject to cartels. Athletes in professional team sports were usually considered employees and had the right to collective bargaining, as laid out in Convention No. 98. This was often the case with large sports associations, which regularly engaged in collective bargaining with players' unions in certain regions. However, in Europe, athletes in certain team sports had decided not to engage in collective bargaining, with their terms and conditions of employment being set out in individual contracts, taking into account the individual skills and abilities of the athlete. Hence, there was no one-size-fits-all form of social dialogue in sport due to the diversity of the stakeholders and forms of work relationship.

- 26.** He emphasized that there was no room for child or forced labour, or any other form of abuse in sport. However, issues did arise in relation to young athletes, including child exploitation, failure to respect the right to education, forced and excessive training, and trafficking, which all required attention. Sport offered the potential for inclusion and the integration of minorities, but discrimination continued to occur on various grounds, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion and ethnicity or nationality, even in countries where there were robust mechanisms to combat discrimination, and much still needed to be done to improve the situation. Great importance should also be attached to ensuring gender equality in sport. Women were still underrepresented in many sports and the media coverage of women athletes was unbalanced, despite the potential offered by sport to achieve greater equality.
- 27.** The Government Vice-Chairperson emphasized the immense diversity between the various sports, regions, and men and women athletes, and the issues relating to the development of children into professional athletes. Key issues included the diversity of employment relationships in sport, the difficulty in many cases of identifying an employer, the lack of statistics and data on professional athletes, the need for more social dialogue, the issue of child labour and the distinction between professional and voluntary participation in sport. Practices relating to transfers, and the respective fees, could affect results and competitions, and raised the threat of a type of modern slavery. There was a great need to improve social protection for current and retired athletes, and to focus on skills development for athletes, whose dedication to their sport could lead them to neglect the development of the skills that they would need for a successful professional transition following the end of their sporting career. Athletes with dual careers and who had developed a range of skills tended to be better equipped for employment when they retired from competition. Many athletes were subject to unstable terms and conditions of employment and independent contracts, which could lead to exploitation. There were substantial wage gaps between different types of sport, and between women and men, and in some countries there was no minimum wage applicable to professional athletes. Action was needed to address the safety and health risks faced by athletes, including mental health issues, and also to tackle issues of doping and racism. Athletes with disabilities often suffered discrimination, and there could be huge gender disparity in pay levels and the opportunities available to men and women athletes. She raised the question of the applicability of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), to the world of work in sport.
- 28.** The ILO Executive Secretary indicated that Convention No. 190 could be of relevance to sport, as it covered violence that could result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm. It applied to all workers irrespective of their contractual situation, including volunteers, and covered a wide variety of workplaces and situations, such as work-related travel, commuting and social activities linked to work. It took into account violence and harassment by third parties and made reference to whistle-blowers, who could play a role in sport in revealing cases of doping and corruption, as well as other forms of violence and harassment.
- 29.** The representative of the Government of the United States referred to the significant international attention on the human and labour rights impacts of sporting events, as well as

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on the impact of mega sporting events on local communities, the construction of venues and equipment manufacture. The issues surrounding decent work in the world of sport were complex, as each sport had a unique set of issues and stakeholders, and a diversity of opportunities and challenges. In addition, the national circumstances of professional sports could vary widely. In the United States, there was no central body overseeing and coordinating matters relating to professional athletes or the organization of sporting events, nor were there specific provisions in federal labour and employment laws covering professional athletes. However, some laws could be applicable under certain circumstances. For example, the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB) had played a prominent role in a number of cases relating to professional athletes in such areas as securing the settlement of back pay for professional football players in the 1990s.

- 30.** The representative of the Government of Algeria referred to the need for mechanisms to guarantee the application and implementation of labour standards in the world of sport, in particular on child labour, the right to organize, and safety and health at work. There was no single solution that could be adapted to all countries and contexts, and it was the role of governments to ensure a cushion of protection for all athletes, and particularly for those who did not compete at the highest level, for example in the form of minimum wages or a protection floor to cover athletes in the case of accident or injury. In Algeria, there was legislation covering elite athletes through which they could be recruited following the end of their athletic careers, for example as trainers, officials or inspectors. During their careers, athletes could negotiate their conditions, especially in the case of elite athletes. Skills development and training opportunities were available for athletes, under specific conditions which reflected the characteristics of their athletic career. The legislation in Algeria also provided for paid leave from work for athletes to represent their country and for health care.
- 31.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson emphasized the role of governments in holding sports federations accountable for the application of standards and called on them to do more in this regard, particular as governments often co-funded sports bodies. In social dialogue, while a diversity of approaches could be adopted, they should not undermine the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. It was incorrect to claim that collective bargaining was not widespread in sport in Europe, as illustrated by the many collective agreements concluded in European countries. However, one difference with the United States related to revenue share agreements, which did not tend to be negotiated in Europe. It was also important to emphasize that the exercise of the right to freedom of association did not require the existence of an employment contract, but merely a relationship of subordination, as demonstrated by the case concerning Mexican footballers, in which their right to engage in collective bargaining had been recognized by the Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA), even though they were not formally employees. It was clear that governments could play a very positive role in ensuring decent work for athletes, despite the challenges in some countries where the national legislation sometimes denied rights to certain categories of athletes, particularly when they were categorized as self-employed, such as access to social protection. Legislative changes might therefore be required in certain countries to ensure the full application of the rights and protections set out in ILO standards.
- 32.** The Worker adviser from Athleten Deutschland (German Athletes) described the situation in his country, where most athletes were not considered to be employees. As they had grown tired of not having a voice in the decisions that concerned them, they had created Athleten Deutschland to speak on their behalf, which was recognized by other sports federations in Germany, but not by the National Olympic Committee. A study in 2018 found that German athletes worked 56 hours a week, with 36 hours devoted to sports and the rest in other work and studies, and that they had a gross annual income of around €18,000, or €7.41 an hour, which was clearly below the minimum wage. Athletes were exposed to a high risk of injury, which could cut short their sporting careers, and there was an urgent need to invest in personal development and post-sport career paths. For athletes, losing a sporting career also meant losing part of their identity. An effective, supportive environment was required for

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athletes, which covered not only their physical, but also their mental health needs. The bodies responsible for sport should provide funding to improve the conditions and opportunities of athletes, particularly within the framework of collective agreements.

33. The Worker adviser from the Slovenian Professional Footballers Union said that better contracts, legal aid, tax incentives for pension schemes and skills development opportunities were among the benefits that had been achieved by players through the development of their collective voice. No athletes would refuse better terms and conditions of employment. However, in view of the lack of government intervention, athletes had sought to unionize and strengthen their representation, despite this sometimes being discouraged by sports bodies. Even in an organized sport, such as football, the precarious conditions of many players, who were often self-employed, made them vulnerable to organized crime and match fixing. Even though international organizations such as UEFA set a good model through the adoption of minimum standards, they did not take action regarding their imposition at the national level. It was therefore necessary for governments and the social partners to work together to improve the situation.
34. The Worker representative from the International Rugby Players Association described health and safety issues in rugby. It was a sport in which heavy collisions brought a high risk of concussion and players were subject to a heavy workload, to the detriment of their health in the short and long term. At the local level, this was best addressed through effective collaboration and connectivity between stakeholders with a view to improving player welfare. Although attempts were being made to address these issues at the international level, there was often a lack of communication at the national level. In certain countries, the club and national systems were not working together, resulting in an increased incidence of player burn-out. The players were the ones who were best placed to say how much was too much and they should have a place in discussions with stakeholders at all levels, and particularly with tournament organizers.
35. The Employer Vice-Chairperson reaffirmed that the rights set out in Convention No. 98 only applied to workers in an employment relationship, as was clear from Article 4, which indicated that voluntary negotiations between employers or employers' organizations and workers' organizations were undertaken with a view to the regulation of terms and conditions of employment. The application of this right to independent contractors would undermine the spirit of Convention No. 98, and could raise the issue of cartels and price fixing. Although there was no clear definition of social dialogue in the ILO, the explanation on its website indicated that social dialogue included all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. Collective bargaining was one of the many possible forms of social dialogue. The issue of the enforcement of laws and standards was critical, especially for employers. Governments needed to do more to ensure the implementation, enforcement and monitoring of labour laws. Employers were in full support of the recently adopted Convention No. 190 and its accompanying Recommendation No. 206.

## **2. What has worked, what has not worked and what more needs to be done to address decent work challenges and opportunities in the world of sport?**

36. A panel discussion was held on non-discrimination and equality in sport. The panellists were Gabriela Nicole Garton, member of the Global Player Council of FIFPro; Mary Harvey, Centre for Sport and Human Rights; and Henrik Munthe, Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO). The discussion was moderated by Sophy Fisher (ILO).

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- 37.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson pointed to a certain hypocrisy in some statements made by sports bodies and organizers, as well as governments, in relation to action to combat discrimination. It was clear that athletes and sports organizations could play an important role in addressing discrimination, violence and gender discrimination in sport and in society. Yet, in a few days, the IOC would publish guidelines that would make protests by players a violation and a sanctionable offence. Such protests included the “fist salute” and taking the knee. It was not possible to praise athletes as being trail blazers for social change, while at the same time punishing those who engaged in protest. Freedom of speech and expression should prevail over any other considerations.
- 38.** A member of the Workers’ Secretariat from the World Players Association recalled that sport was recognized as an economic sector involving sports workers, who in the present case were professional athletes. In addition to the requirement to protect these workers from discrimination, in accordance with the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), they were entitled to exercise the right to freedom of association, as set out in the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and in Convention No. 98. The question of the exercise of the right to organize by football players had come up in CFA Case No. 2347, brought by the Trade Union of Associated Football Players of Mexico concerning the right of football players to establish a union. The CFA had found that the “criterion for determining the persons covered by that right ... is not based on the existence of an employment relationship, which is often non-existent, for example, in the case of agricultural workers, self-employed workers in general or those who practice liberal professions, who should nevertheless enjoy the right to organize”. Moreover, with reference to the application of Convention No. 98, some of the associations which purported to represent athletes were not, in practice, representative unions. In that regard, in 1994 the International Labour Conference had discussed the General Survey on freedom of association and collective bargaining, in which the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) indicated that solidarist associations, that is those partly financed by employers “although their members include workers as well as senior staff and personnel having the employer’s confidence”, are often set up at the employers’ initiative, which “means that they cannot be independent organizations” and often raises problems regarding the application of Article 2 of Convention No. 98. Accordingly, although athletic commissions were often set up to represent the interests of athletes, it was necessary in all cases for professional athletes to enjoy the fundamental right to freedom of association, and bodies controlled by management could not be considered a substitute for independent trade unions. The essential role of social dialogue in promoting decent work had been re-emphasized by the Conference in 2018 in the conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism and had been recalled in the outcomes of two recent sectoral meetings: the Sectoral Meeting on Promoting Decent Work and Safety and Health in Forestry and the Meeting of Experts to Adopt Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work and Road Safety in the Transport Sector. The same language should be included in the points of consensus of the present Forum. Finally, reference had already been made to the challenges faced by many athletes in relation to the employment relationship. In that regard, the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198), provided important guidance on criteria for establishing the existence of an employment relationship, particularly in cases where there was an attempt to disguise the employment relationship. The existence of collective bargaining in sport represented a “win-win” situation. It protected the labour rights of athletes and ensured the growth and prosperity of the sector.
- 39.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson referred to a range of examples of policies, practices and experiences to address decent work challenges in the sector, all of which had been facilitated by the effective exercise of collective bargaining. At the international level, he welcomed the involvement of UEFA alongside the social partners in the Social Dialogue Committee for Professional Football. UEFA, which was not an employer of professional footballers, had also made a commitment to promote collective bargaining processes and enforce

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agreements among the social partners, including the European Leagues and the European Club Association (ECA). Agreements with FIFA also focused, for example, on the need to negotiate in good faith, especially in relation to health issues affecting athletes. The progress made in various areas showed that cooperation with players' unions could lead to effective results, for example in the development of women's sport, the privacy of medical data in tournaments, concussion, the effects of climate conditions on performance and the protection of athletes in the event of the bankruptcy of clubs or event organizers. However, many challenges persisted and the effective enforcement of agreements at the national level remained a critical issue.

- 40.** Other examples of progress at the national level included provisions on gender equality, maternity benefits and business incentives that had been recently agreed upon by the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) in the United States, which would have the effect of almost doubling the pay of women basketball players and preparing them for life after their sporting careers had ended. New agreements in Australia, in particular for football and cricket players, included provision for the extension of contracts in the event of pregnancy, assistance in preparing athletes for a second career, equal pay for women and men in the national football teams and other paid benefits for women athletes. In general, the most sophisticated programmes to improve player welfare and conditions were the result of collective bargaining. With regard to the effective recognition of human rights in sport, reference should be made to the important amendments introduced by FIFA to Article 2 of its Statutes to recognize humanitarian values. Moreover, the recent Universal Declaration of Player Rights was a comprehensive articulation of athletes' rights intended as a benchmark for international sporting organizations to meet their obligations to protect, respect and guarantee the fundamental human and labour rights of players. Although the adoption of collective bargaining practices in sport were sometimes contentious, it was clear that sports with the most sophisticated systems of labour relations, such as baseball, football, cricket and rugby, were also the most successful, resulting in a win-win situation for the athletes involved and all the other stakeholders. In view of the broad social impact of sport, such progress not only improved the livelihoods of athletes, but had a wider impact in achieving societal goals.
- 41.** A member of the Worker Secretariat from the World Players Association described the experience of the Australian Athletes Alliance (AAA) in engaging in collective bargaining with the respective sports bodies, through which it had been able to further a shared vision with employers of a successful life for athletes in sport and beyond. Strong governance in sport needed to be based on representation. The AAA was dedicated to finding ways of improving the welfare of athletes and developing programmes and projects which maximized their time in sport and prepared them for life afterwards, such as induction and development programmes to prepare athletes as sports professionals, and health-care programmes, including a comprehensive support framework for mental health issues. Experience showed that the transition period between a career in sports and afterwards could last on average 36 months.
- 42.** The Worker representative from EU Athletes described the experience of EU Athletes, which represented a broad range of sports across European countries, including team and individual sports. Athletes in both team and individual sports were confronted with common challenges relating to their rights, welfare and decent work. For instance, most athletes had no other option than to play without a contract, or had to accept self-employment or amateur status. Associations representing athletes had therefore started to come together with a view to improving the situation of athletes and of their sports through collective bargaining and had been successful in many cases in achieving significant progress in improving their conditions and, for example, helping them pursue dual careers. It was necessary to ensure that athletes were able to exercise their right to freedom of association, particularly as they often felt intimidated and faced practical difficulties in establishing representative organizations, and even when such organizations had been established there were still



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challenges in ensuring their recognition as being representative of athletes. While many of the problems relating to collective bargaining and social dialogue occurred at the local level, international social dialogue, such as the present Forum, was essential to ensure that athletes enjoyed rights at work and decent work.

- 43.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson reiterated the very clear support of employers for freedom of association. Employers did not challenge the importance of collective bargaining, but recalled that it had to be used in appropriate circumstances. There was also sometimes a certain misunderstanding of the full meaning of social dialogue, which included, but was not limited to, collective bargaining, and also included such other activities as information sharing and consultation. With reference to the CFA case concerning Mexican footballers, he recalled that the CFA was a promotional and conciliation mechanism, and did not set standards. Moreover, the observations and recommendations made by the CEACR, which was not a tripartite body, related to specific national contexts and cases. He recalled the clarifications made during the recent Meeting of Experts to Adopt Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work and Road Safety in the Transport Sector. The Guidelines adopted by the Meeting indicated, in paragraph 130, that social dialogue was “based on respect for freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. These rights covered all workers in all sectors, regardless of their type of employment relationships”. However, a distinction needed to be drawn between the existence of an employment relationship and the status of self-employment. The Guidelines added, in paragraph 131, that while “[a]ll road transport chain parties should be encouraged to participate in social dialogue”, there was “no one-size-fits-all approach to organize and strengthen social dialogue” in that sector. The Guidelines further emphasized, in paragraph 132, that social dialogue “in all its forms contributes to decent work” and occupational safety and health. It was therefore clear that social dialogue should not be interpreted in a narrow manner, and could take several forms, including collective bargaining. With reference to the case referred to previously concerning Mexican footballers, he noted that the union had subsequently been dissolved due to the lack of interest by the players.
- 44.** He recalled the recognition in the preamble to the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work that “social dialogue contributes to the overall cohesion of societies and is crucial for a well-functioning and productive economy”. Social dialogue could take many forms, including collective bargaining, consultation, information sharing and tripartite cooperation, as indicated in the Guidelines adopted by the Road Safety Meeting and the issues paper prepared for the present Forum, which could have included further examples beyond the context of the United States. A balanced outlook was needed when addressing the great diversity found within the world of sport. Although there were many examples of collective agreements in major sports leagues in the United States, in other regions, including Europe, most of the terms of contracts were left to the discretion of the parties and were negotiated freely between athletes and clubs. For example, the Autonomous agreement regarding the minimum requirements for standard player contracts in the professional football sector, adopted by the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Professional Football, composed of UEFA, the European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL), ECA and FIFPro, only covered certain minimum required provisions, with the others being left to be negotiated by the players and their agents, who played a major role in this system. World Rugby recognized the International Rugby Players’ Association (IRPA), which participated in the Rugby Athletes’ Commission to examine issues such as mental health and global calendar planning. There were also examples of democratic player representation in individual sports, such as tennis, where the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) Board of Directors and Player Council both included player representatives, who were consulted on decisions, including issues of player welfare. Other sports bodies that had adopted various measures for the representation of athletes included World Athletics and the International Canoe Federation. It could therefore be concluded that a variety of types of representation

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had been adopted which reflected the diversity of structures of the different sports and the differences in the status of athletes, whether they were employed or self-employed.

- 45.** With reference to policies and practices to prevent child labour, trafficking and forced labour in sport, he noted that many sport bodies and clubs had adopted their own child protection measures, but that such measures were not often required by governments. There was a great need for more action in this respect through the adoption of proactive policies by governments. He called on member States to work with the social partners to improve the implementation and monitoring of laws to prevent child labour, trafficking and forced labour in sports. He noted the measures adopted by FIFA for the protection of minors, particularly in relation to transfers, for which specific documents were now required and reviewed, including proof of residence for both the player and the parents.
- 46.** In relation to policies and practices to promote gender equality in sport, the speaker noted that it was necessary to ensure in all institutions equality of representation of women, as well as appropriate representation of youth. Although gender equality was an issue that needed to be taken very seriously by everyone, the world of sport remained plagued by inequalities in many areas, which reflected those present in society in general, including gender-based violence and gender stereotypes. Because of the lack of media coverage of their sporting achievements, it was still difficult for women to break through traditional gender barriers, the roots of which went back to the origins of modern sport. A related issue was the participation in sport of transgender and intersex athletes, which had raised a number of ethical questions. The case of Caster Semenya showed that strong support by sports companies could be instrumental in achieving attitudinal change in society. Many stakeholders were demonstrating a commitment to taking specific action to promote gender equality in the world of sport, including FIFA and the Women's Tennis Association (WTA). The participation rate of women athletes in the Olympic and Paralympic Games had risen steadily over the past 90 years. However, the gender pay gap was nowhere more apparent than in the world of sport, and the situation had been aggravated in recent decades by the rise in commercial sponsorships, endorsements and prize money. Women used to rank more prominently among the top earning athletes, but the vast amounts spent by media companies on broadcasting live sport had resulted in a large increase in players' salaries in the major men's sports leagues, although certain sports bodies, such as the IOC, were endeavouring to address the issue. A direct consequence of the gender pay gap in sport was that women athletes often needed to find a second job to secure their livelihood, which meant that they had less time to improve their athletic skills, which in turn limited their career opportunities as professional athletes. It was urgent to tackle the systematic barriers faced by women in sport, including sexist behaviour and poor media coverage, through greater media exposure and an increase in the visibility of women athletes. Commercial brands were seizing on the market potential of women's sport, which was in turn contributing to equal pay and equal prize money in an increasing number of sports. Nevertheless, much remained to be done by governments and sports bodies to ensure: the access of women to all sports; the improvement of the portrayal of sportswomen in the media; sufficient funding for women's sport; the access of women to decision-making positions on sports bodies; and better monitoring, accountability and reporting.
- 47.** With regard to policies and practices to eliminate workplace violence in sport, including racial abuse, the Employers' group emphasized the importance of Convention No. 190 and Recommendation No. 206. Although sport played an important role in society by bringing together millions of people, irrespective of their sex, colour, age, nationality or religion, it was increasingly afflicted by the incidence of discrimination on a daily basis. The figures showed a sharp increase in acts of racism and abuse in 2018 compared to previous years. One particular recent example was the Afghan national women's football team, the members of which had been sexually and physically abused by men from the national football federation, including its president. The action taken to deal with such abuse should consist of a smart mix of measures, including regulations, punitive measures, bans, fines,

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disciplinary and educational measures, training, education, guidance, communication and campaigning, in cooperation with all stakeholders, including clubs, media, fans and athletes. The apartheid period in South Africa had shown that discrimination was largely a problem of education, as people feared the unknown. Clubs, athletes and sports bodies should make use of their public profiles and social media power to speak up on discrimination. Action was being taken by certain sports bodies, such as FIFA, which had increased the minimum ban from five to ten games for incidents of discrimination committed by players, and the Eredivisie, the Dutch premiere league, which had initiated the campaign “Racism? Then we won’t play football” in cooperation with clubs and athletes. Another inspirational example relating to disability was the foundation in 1996 of the World Blind Cricket Council to promote blind cricket globally, including through the creation of the first international blind cricket series for women and the first national cricket league for blind women in India. Although many sports bodies and clubs had adopted policies to prevent abuse and were taking a range of measures, more needed to be done to address discrimination and abuse in the world of sport.

48. Turning to policies and practices to reduce sports-based injuries and health effects, including mental health and drug abuse, it was necessary to acknowledge the severe and long-term effects that sports injuries could have. Measures were increasingly been taken in this respect in a number of sports, including for the management of concussion in rugby and football. The National Football League (NFL) was enforcing rules to eliminate risky behaviour and compiled injury data every season. The NFL worked with the Players Association to improve player protection, including through improvements in safety equipment and rule changes.
49. In relation to policies and practices to foster skills development, dual career paths and post-sport employment for athletes, the Employers’ group constantly emphasized the essential role of skills development in all sectors, as reaffirmed in the ILO Centenary Declaration. Employability and the ability to embrace new skills were major concerns for athletes in the transition from professional sport to other types of employment, regardless of social status, type of sport, sex or experience. Athletes retired at a young age, often as a result of injury, which meant that they still had several decades of professional activity ahead of them. Athletes who acquired academic qualifications were better prepared to deal with the transition from sport to other forms of employment. It was particularly critical to ensure that child athletes continued their education as an essential and integrated part of their development as athletes. Although a dual career could help an athlete with the transition following the end of their athletic career, there were also risks involved, including fatigue, a loss of motivation, reduced opportunities for involvement in other areas of life, stress and a resulting increased risk of injury. One of the main targets of the support provided to players in the area of skills development was to increase their awareness and motivation to learn new skills. Examples of successful measures included the agreement concluded by Ajax Football Club based on cooperation with schools to ensure that all Ajax youth players obtained basic qualifications during their early careers. An initiative by the IOC Athletes’ Commission was designed to support athletes at all stages of their career through the development of life skills and educational qualifications, including entrepreneurship skills to help them start businesses. The Swiss Olympic Association was taking action to make companies aware of the skills that athletes acquired during their sporting careers which could be useful to enterprises.
50. The Government Vice-Chairperson agreed that fundamental principles and rights at work were universally applicable to everyone and in all States, irrespective of their level of economic development. The challenge was to identify the most effective means for their application in the sports sector, taking into account national circumstances. She emphasized the importance for athletes of skills development, dual careers and social protection. The skills developed by athletes should not be exclusively related to their sport. The Dutch Olympic Committee was active in providing training and education to athletes during and after their sporting careers. She cited her own example of a sporting career brought to an end

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at the age of 22 by a severe injury and welcomed the opportunities that she had enjoyed to pursue education, which had been vital in her subsequent career. She also welcomed the initiatives that were being taken at the national and international levels to address the issues of gender equality and discrimination and to prevent child labour and trafficking. The Government of the Netherlands had recently taken measures on equal pay to ensure that there was no discrimination in the pay of professional athletes. There was a great need to share knowledge of best practices in these areas with a view to improving the conditions of athletes.

- 51.** The representative of the Government of Argentina emphasized the importance of non-discrimination and recognized the potential of sport to facilitate inclusion and social, political and economic empowerment, particularly for women and girls. It was necessary to develop policies and action plans for the inclusion of a gender perspective in sport. Cross-cutting measures and initiatives were needed to increase the participation of women in decision-making positions, for example through the establishment of quotas or the requirement of parity, and to improve the sharing of household work, offer better career opportunities for women, ensure the effective enjoyment of sexual and reproductive rights and improve the implementation of legislation on comprehensive sex education. All of these were important in improving the participation of women in sport and their access to sporting careers, which were currently subject to the glass ceiling and substantial wage gaps. Gender equality required guarantees for the rights of women and the development of the same opportunities for men and women in the field of sport. At present, women in sport were confronted by gender stereotypes, but were a source of inspiration as models to be followed. The promotion of equality in sport also involved policies and measures to achieve equality of opportunity in accessing positions of responsibility in clubs, equal remuneration in paid sport and non-discrimination in traditionally male sports, as well as policies to develop tolerance, the professionalization of sport and the promotion of collective bargaining and conciliation.
- 52.** The representative of the Government of Portugal said that in his country, with the exception of professional football players, most athletes were volunteers and amateurs. For example, in volleyball, which was very popular in the country, only 19 of a total of 50,000 registered players had employment contracts. When young men and women entered a sport, their main objective was participation. Only if they were extremely talented would they then envisage becoming professional. It was accordingly necessary to protect athletes even when they were not professional, as they still devoted themselves full-time to the development of their skills. A central concern was therefore the implementation of policies that focused on dual careers and the careers of athletes once they had given up competition. An important aspect of the policies adopted in Portugal was to ensure the flexibility of school education for promising young athletes, so that they could combine studies and training. It was pleasing to note that the academic results of the almost 600 children covered by this scheme were above the national average.
- 53.** The representative of the Government of Canada noted that many professional sports were unionized in her country, particularly those played throughout North America; however amateur sports or athlete groups were not unionized. Very focused action was being taken in Canada to address the issues under discussion, based on a comprehensive long-term strategy and a specific authority, the Gender Equity Secretariat of Sport Canada, with the aim of increasing the participation and representation of women in sport. Emphasis was placed, for example, on increasing the number of women in coaching and as sports officials, the development of mentorship programmes and the requirement of gender parity on decision-making bodies. In relation to participation in the Olympic Games and the Paralympics, the measures covered not only athletes, but also coaching staff. Research and data compilation, including gender equity audits, were being carried out to help sports organizations develop customized gender equity programmes. Direct funding was provided to high-performance athletes, as well as support during pregnancy and for dependent

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children. There was a greater focus on addressing harassment, abuse and discrimination, for example through increased reporting requirements for sports bodies, the provision of a safe space to report incidents and a Canada Sport helpline for victims and witnesses. A universal code of conduct was being developed on harassment and abuse in sport. Support was also provided for career development, mental health problems and the financing of education during and after athletics careers.

- 54.** The representative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasized the importance of increased collaboration between labour and sports bodies to address the issues raised at the Forum. A number of initiatives were being taken in the country to provide funding and support for active and retired athletes, develop sports for women and girls, and for persons with disabilities, and to promote the safety and health of athletes. Research had an important role to play in addressing challenges in the world of sport. The Office should therefore carry out further research and collaborate with other relevant international bodies, for example in the field of data collection and the production of reliable statistics.
- 55.** The representative of the Government of Brazil referred to the good practices adopted in his country for the prevention of child labour in sport. Brazilian law distinguished between participation in sports for recreational and educational purposes, and performance-oriented participation. Various types of institutions were available, including training institutions for children between the ages of 14 and 20 years who aimed to become professional athletes, which were required to provide educational, physical and medical assistance, adequate accommodation and facilities. They were required to provide a good education for trainees free of charge, and young athletes could receive scholarships. Trainee athletes were not attached to the institution and were free to choose their employers following their training. Young athletes were very vulnerable and the system developed in his country took into account the need for adequate protection, for example in relation to their safety and education.
- 56.** The representative of the Government of Ireland emphasized the important role played by governments in safeguarding the integrity of sport at the national and international levels. Poor conditions of employment for athletes created opportunities for corruption and organized crime. Government policy in Ireland focused on inclusiveness, based on the consultation and involvement of athletes and players in decision-making. Through the provision of funding and mentorship programmes, including with former athletes, Sport Ireland was seeking to help athletes improve their performance, develop life skills and manage all aspects of their lives, including in such areas as financial planning, media skills and the use of social media. A life skills team provided support for the career development of athletes, and skills training and short-term employment opportunities through internships were available for elite athletes. Although the life skills programme was very successful, it faced a number of challenges, including the single-minded focus of elite athletes on their sport. Participation in the life skills programme was therefore mandatory for athletes who were receiving financial support from Sport Ireland. Moreover, the programme only had a limited outreach, as it was confined to international athletes at the senior level. Social protection was another important issue and Sport Ireland had recently introduced a maternity scheme offering 12 months of maternity leave in order to facilitate the return of athletes to their sport.
- 57.** An observer representing the IOC, in response to the comments made by the Worker Vice-Chairperson concerning freedom of expression at the Olympic Games, indicated that there was no limitation on the freedom of speech of athletes. The only limitation was on protests on the Olympic field during ceremonies and events, as athletes were free to express their views everywhere else, for example during the press conferences at the international media centre, or to the traditional or digital media. If athletes engaged in protests during ceremonies and events, they would be likely to express very different views on such matters as political, religious or ethnic questions, which could be harmful to the spirit of the Games and meant

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that the organizers would need to determine which protests might be legitimate. It should be recalled that the spirit of the Olympic Games was to bring athletes together in peaceful competition.

- 58.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, while thanking the observer representing the IOC for the clarification, considered that the explanation provided was not convincing. The purpose of protest was to raise awareness, not confront others. No institution had any right to disallow protest, as accepted by the CEO of the Commonwealth Games, where protests had been allowed during the competitions, with the explanation that “We are not politicizing the games, we are humanizing them.” While appreciating the reaffirmation by the Government Vice-Chairperson of the application of ILO standards to athletes, what was of concern was the effective dilution of practices of social dialogue and freedom of association, and certain longstanding practices by sports bodies which, in his view, infringed the rights of athletes to organize freely. He also contested the claim made concerning the difference in levels of collective bargaining and agreements within and outside the United States. While it was true that some of the most sophisticated collective bargaining structures in sport were to be found in the United States, collective bargaining was also effective in other regions and countries, including in many of the countries represented at the present Forum. One of the principal reasons for the prevalence and effectiveness of collective bargaining in the United States was the strict application of anti-trust and labour laws, which meant that sports bodies needed to conclude agreements with the players. Governments had an important role to play in holding sports organizations responsible for engaging in collective bargaining in accordance with the relevant laws. He added that, in the case of Mexico, although the footballers’ union had been dissolved, another union had now been established, which was a member of FIFPro.
- 59.** With reference to the comments made by the representative of the Government of Portugal regarding young players, it was important to recognize the difference between purely amateur athletes and those who were on the path to becoming professional. As athletes were starting on the road to professionalism at an ever-younger age, and only a small fraction of them would ever earn their living from sport, there was a great need to take their situation into consideration, and particularly to give greater emphasis to their social, psychological and educational needs. He welcomed the indications provided by the representative of the Government of Canada concerning the protection of groups of athletes, and particularly on the prevention of violence, harassment and discrimination. In the event of such violations, as demonstrated in the high-profile examples of the Afghan women’s football team and women gymnasts in the United States, the remedies available were often quite simply not suitable. In many cases, the victims were required to repeatedly go through the trauma of recounting their experiences, with little likelihood of an appropriate outcome. Governments therefore needed to assist sports bodies to develop appropriate complaint mechanisms and remedies, wherever they were lacking.
- 60.** Finally, turning to broader challenges for the future of work and their effect on athletes, he referred to the ever-growing importance of performance biometrics and medical data on athletes. Technologies were being developed and applied to analyse the movements of athletes which could help to foresee potential injury risks and health issues, which could have a far-reaching impact on the careers of athletes. However, such techniques also raised substantial privacy issues. Many other emerging trends, including the spread of digital platforms, the globalization of markets, increased travel, the need to adapt match times to suit specific time zones and the increasing focus on elite brands, were likely to substantially change conditions of employment and employment opportunities in future, possibly reducing the number of jobs available. These issues required further dialogue and consideration by the ILO.
- 61.** The Worker adviser from Rugby Players Ireland said that many welcome initiatives were being taken in the world of sport, and despite the common denominators in the performance

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arena, the great diversity between sports and regions meant that there was no one-size-fits-all approach. In many ways, athletes could be trailblazers for societal change and it was important for established players' associations to work alongside emerging associations to develop good practices and apply benchmarks. Recent research suggested that there were certain key areas of any robust player development programme, including psychosocial support to help the athletes overcome fears and barriers in their working environment and the conditions that characterized sport, such as selection, deselection and the fear of injury. Athletes and players needed to be educated on such issues as their health and well-being, player development and rights, and the working environment, and such education was particularly effective if it was provided by former players. Players were people first and foremost, and better people made better players and performers.

62. The Worker adviser from the Irish Cricketers' Association (ICA) recounted her role in founding the Association as a means of advocacy for her fellow cricketers. In Ireland, most men cricketers were professional, but not many women cricketers. When working as a full-time lawyer, she had faced enormous difficulties in making herself available to represent her country for over 100 days a year. Following the establishment of the ICA, it had been possible in recent years to improve the conditions of cricketers, for example through compensation for any earnings lost by amateur cricketers when representing their country, the improvement of the contracting process for professional cricketers and the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between cricketers (men and women) and the governing body of the sport. With reference to a case study on the situation in Australia, it was clear that success could not be achieved without investment. A very good example was the Women's Big Bash League in Australia, which was one of the most successful initiatives in women's cricket and had been developed through a collective agreement based on the identification of a gap in the market, and was offering very attractive opportunities and visibility for women cricketers. Governments and the ILO could assist athletes and sport to move forward, for example through the development of codes of practice and the identification of opportunities.
63. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted that all parties were clearly interested in achieving a continuous improvement in the conditions and protection of athletes and in the development of the various sports. The commitment stated by Government representatives was very welcome and all the stakeholders needed to do more to achieve necessary and desirable improvements.

**3. What recommendations would you make for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members (governments, employers' and workers' organizations), and the Office, regarding the promotion of decent work in the world of sport?**

64. A panel discussion was held on occupational safety and health in sport. The panellists were: Morgane Gaultier, Union Cycliste Internationale; Stuart Gilhooly, Professional Footballers' Association of Ireland; Omar Hassanein, International Rugby Players; Paul Mackay, Business New Zealand; and Yvonne Nolan, World Rugby. The discussion was moderated by Sophy Fisher (ILO).
65. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, with reference to social dialogue, reiterated that representative social partners should be included and consulted in dialogue and initiatives in the world of sport. However, the specificity of the various sports and the diversity of structures and employment relationships might pose some challenges to the access of athletes to social dialogue. It was therefore important to develop innovative solutions for

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social dialogue within existing legal frameworks. Despite difficulties of representativity, social dialogue did take place in sport, and efforts should aim to reinforce the capacity of the social partners to ensure their representativity. There was no one-size-fits-all approach to social dialogue in sport, although there were common denominators. It was necessary to respect national legal systems and no precise form of social dialogue should be imposed through the application of a top-down approach. In relation to gender equality, which was a concern for all ILO constituents, a joint political agenda should be established for equality of opportunity in sport, including through the promotion of gender equality in social dialogue, the monitoring of national strategies and actions, the demonstration of the business case for gender equality in sports, the production of guidelines to update national plans and strategies, and the fostering of transnational initiatives to improve national and international action on gender equality. With regard to discrimination, governments should ensure and encourage equal opportunity in access to sport for all and combat all types of discrimination within sport, particularly through educational programmes and the adoption and implementation of anti-discrimination legislation and measures to ensure access to sport for all. Building coalitions against discrimination with the involvement of all stakeholders was important, and there should be a zero-tolerance culture. The police should be trained to identify and deal with racist discrimination in sport, and there should be awareness-raising initiatives. With reference to dual careers, there should be wide stakeholder collaboration with a large number of partners, including educational institutions and sports bodies. The establishment of processes should be facilitated to encourage players to engage in and promote awareness of opportunities. Media campaigns should be undertaken to promote a culture of holistic educational development, and support should be provided to develop the structural, financial and human resource capacity of associations to promote and support player development and dual careers, showcasing innovative educational programmes. The ILO could contribute to all these activities, particularly by identifying future skills needs for athletes, mapping good practices and conducting workshops.

- 66.** He added that the ILO had a role to play in shaping the wider global sports agenda and in ensuring policy coherence, for example through the implementation of the UNESCO Kazan Action Plan, which aimed to align international and national policy in the fields of physical education, physical activity and sport within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and included issues linked to skills, labour rights and gender. The ILO needed to engage in a tripartite manner in its follow-up processes. The ILO should also continue to collect data on employment in sport, produce studies on the working conditions of athletes, reinforce the capacities of workers' and employers' organizations, organize activities during the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, and support capacity building for sports organizations on gender, equal opportunities and dual career promotion, when so requested.
- 67.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson called on governments and the social partners to ensure the implementation and enforcement of national laws and regulations based on ILO standards in respect of athletes. They should engage in collective bargaining at the national, regional and global levels and promote all forms of social dialogue to advance decent work, and ensure the application in sport of the Sporting Chance Principles on Sport and Human Rights and the United Nations *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*. Governments and the social partners should collaborate to ensure safe and healthy workplaces in sport, and support social dialogue, including collective bargaining. They should engage in the review and revision of existing laws and practices to ensure that athletes were covered by national labour legislation and social protection, particularly in relation to workplace injury, maternity protection and minimum wages. The ILO should intensify its engagement with other international organizations involved in the world of sport, including UNESCO for the implementation of the Kazan Action Plan. It should also engage and intensify its collaboration with sports governing bodies and other employers, including league or club associations, with the capacity to ensure the application in sport of fundamental principles and rights at work and to enforce the relevant national legislation. It should convene a



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tripartite meeting to develop a code of practice on the application of fundamental principles and rights at work in sport, and collect and disseminate good practices in such areas as social dialogue, collective bargaining, industrial relations, occupational safety and health, and non-discrimination. It could organize training for the social partners to enhance their capacity to advance decent work in sport within the framework of ILO standards, and organize tripartite regional meetings on decent work in sport. Finally, it should engage in evidence-based research to fill existing knowledge gaps and identify further steps to promote decent work in sport, particularly in vulnerable regions.

- 68.** The Worker representative from SYNAFOC recalled that in Africa decent work was often little more than an illusion, with the late payment of wages and the lack of written contracts resulting in athletes being desperate and vulnerable to exploitation. The remedies that existed were not effective and collective bargaining was non-existent in such situations, which was leading to the exodus of African athletes to Europe in search of better salaries and working conditions. The stress levels of athletes led to mental health issues and the transition from sport to other employment was challenging, particularly as athletes were not given any support in that respect. ILO standards and the rights set out in the 1998 Declaration should be applicable throughout the world, and it was therefore to be hoped that governments and the social partners would engage in action to achieve a significant improvement in the situation in the world of sport. Action was required to improve the implementation of these rights in all areas of the world where they were violated, and particularly in Africa where basic rules were not followed and national regulations were often not applicable to sport. There was a need for more follow up at national and regional levels to promote decent work in sport.
- 69.** The Worker representative from the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations said that in cricket players continued to face significant opposition and active barriers to forming or joining representative player associations. Common forms of intimidation included threats to careers, coercion to sign contracts and bullying, as well as the imposition of the structures and governance of their representative bodies. These problems, which were particularly prevalent in the Asian subregion, were in conflict with fundamental principles and rights at work, including freedom of association. The ILO should play a coordinating role in addressing these issues at the national and regional levels and should provide guidance and support for the application of fundamental principles and rights at work in professional sport.
- 70.** The Government Vice-Chairperson reaffirmed the importance of the continuous promotion and protection of fundamental principles and rights at work, in which a key element was effective social dialogue in its various forms, including collective bargaining, with all the relevant stakeholders. Social dialogue which promoted consensus building and democratic involvement was both a means to achieve economic progress and an objective in itself, as it gave people a voice in the governance of their societies and workplaces. Effective dialogue on a variety of issues was essential for the sustainable development of the sport sector. The ILO could contribute by providing technical support and assistance in such areas as the development of legal frameworks, institutions, machinery and processes for social dialogue. The ILO should also collect data and good practices and disseminate research findings, and should continue its engagement with organizations and institutions at the different levels with a view to enhanced policy coherence, including with the Centre for Sport and Human Rights, UNESCO and sports governing bodies. At the national level, collaboration between the various ministries, such as those responsible for labour and sport, should be enhanced as a basis for developing a strong partnership for future action.
- 71.** The representative of the Government of the United States expressed support for the ILO's work on decent work in sport, and commended the ILO's leadership in this area in relation to mega sporting events, such as the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. There were opportunities for future ILO action in this area. The improvement of data and research would

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be important in gaining a better understanding of the conditions of athletes and in filling knowledge gaps. Strategic partnerships and collaboration with a variety of stakeholders would be key to promoting skills development and lifelong learning for athletes, as well as fundamental principles and rights at work. Collaboration should be strengthened with relevant international agencies and bodies, including the Centre for Sport and Human Rights. The recommendations of the Forum should be clear and concise and within the ILO's mandate and programme and budget.

#### **IV. Consideration of the draft points of consensus**

72. At its previous sitting, the Forum considered document GDFWS/2020/5, containing the proposed points of consensus drafted by the Office on the basis of the deliberations in plenary, and discussed them point by point.

##### ***Preamble***

73. The Government Vice-Chairperson raised the question of whether it might be helpful to include an explanation in the preamble to the draft points of consensus concerning the meaning attributed to the term “athlete” for the purposes of the present Forum, along the lines of the text in paragraph 2 of the issues paper.

74. The Employer Vice-Chairperson recalled that there had been no discussion during the Forum of the definition of athletes. It would therefore be difficult to discuss and develop such a definition now. The issues paper had been prepared as a basis for an initial discussion of the conditions of work in sport.

75. The Worker Vice-Chairperson said that the key concern was to differentiate between the millions of amateurs who practiced sport worldwide for leisure and professional working athletes. If no definition or explanation were included at the beginning of the draft points of consensus, it would be necessary to specify elsewhere that the focus was on working athletes.

76. The Government Vice-Chairperson observed that everything agreed during the Forum did not concern the millions of amateur athletes engaged in sport throughout the world. It was to be understood that the points of consensus referred to working athletes.

#### **Opportunities for and challenges to decent work in the world of sport**

##### ***Proposed paragraph 1***

77. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “practiced by millions of athletes worldwide” in the first sentence by the words “a pursuit enjoyed worldwide”. In the second sentence, he proposed to replace the words “to lift people out of poverty, through” by the words “to promote”. He also proposed to add the following final sentence: “There are, however, widespread obstacles to the achievement of decent work for worker athletes.”

78. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed a preference for the original wording of the paragraph. However, in the spirit of compromise, the proposed changes could be acceptable if the words “by athletes” were included after the words “pursuit enjoyed” in the first sentence, and the words “full and productive” were included before the word “employment”

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in the second sentence. The text of the proposed final sentence was liable to create confusion and should not be accepted.

79. The Worker Vice-Chairperson could accept the addition of the words “by athletes” in the first sentence, but proposed that the suggested addition of the words “full and productive” should be changed to “full, productive and freely chosen”. He wished to retain the proposal to add the final sentence.
80. The Employer Vice-Chairperson suggested that the term “worker athletes” could be changed to “employed athletes” in the proposed final sentence.
81. Following further discussion, after agreement had been reached on most of the other proposed points of consensus, the Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed to the proposal by the Employer Vice-Chairperson to replace the words “worker athletes” in the proposed final sentence by the words “athletes in some areas”.
82. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 2***

83. The paragraph was adopted without amendment.

### ***Proposed paragraph 3***

84. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed the deletion: in the first sentence, of the words “of athletes that compete at an amateur, semi-professional or fully professional level”; in the second sentence, of the words “and autonomy”; and of the final sentence “There is no one-size-fits-all approach”.
85. The Employer Vice-Chairperson could agree to the proposed deletions in the first two sentences, but wished to retain the last sentence.
86. The Government Vice-Chairperson also agreed to the proposed deletions in the first two sentences, but preferred to retain the last sentence.
87. The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed to keep the last sentence.
88. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 4***

89. The Employer Vice-Chairperson said that proposed paragraph 4 covered very important issues and recalled that social dialogue could take a diversity of forms. He proposed the addition, in the first sentence, of the words “athletes, including”, after the word “All”, and the addition of the words “, regardless of the type of employment relationship,” after the word “athletes”. He proposed the deletion of the words “is key to the promotion of decent work in sport” in the second sentence and of the words “, with collective bargaining at its heart” in the second sentence, and the addition in the final sentence of the words “, such as community and sports bodies,” after the words “other stakeholders”.
90. The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed that the paragraph covered critical issues. However, the proposed amendments tended to mix up many forms of dialogue, when it was necessary to distinguish between social dialogue and other forms of exchange. He therefore wished to

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retain the words “, with collective bargaining at its heart” and to delete, in the final sentence, the words “and other stakeholders, such as community and sports bodies.”

91. The Government Vice-Chairperson recalled that much of the wording of the proposed paragraph, including the words “, with collective bargaining at its heart”, had been agreed in the 2018 Conference conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism. She added that the words “and other stakeholders” clearly reflected the discussions in the Forum, during which it had been recognized that there were many actors and stakeholders in the world of sport which needed to be involved in addressing the issues raised.
92. The Worker Vice-Chairperson indicated that if the words “, with collective bargaining at its heart”, were retained, he would be able to accept the last sentence, on condition that the word “dialogue” was replaced by the term “cooperation”.
93. The Employer Vice-Chairperson objected that cooperation was very different from dialogue. However, in a spirit of compromise, he could accept “other forms of dialogue and cooperation”.
94. Following further discussion, after agreement had been reached on most of the other proposed points for consensus, the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the third sentence, to delete the words “, with collective bargaining at its heart”, and to replace them by the words “, including collective bargaining”, following the words “Social dialogue” at the beginning of the sentence.
95. The Worker Vice-Chairperson could agree to that proposal on condition that the words “, such as community and sports bodies,” were deleted from the last sentence.
96. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 5***

97. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to delete the word “Free” at the beginning of the sentence and to add the words “that are free from interference from each other and third parties” after the word “organizations”. He noted that the proposed additional wording came from Convention No. 98, although the term “third parties” was being proposed as more appropriate to the situation in the world of sport.
98. The Secretary-General indicated that, when preparing the draft points of consensus, care had been taken wherever possible, in relation to the issues of social dialogue, freedom of association and collective bargaining, to stay as close as possible to the language agreed to in the 2018 Conference conclusions.
99. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed a preference for the original wording.
100. The Government Vice-Chairperson also preferred the original wording. Although the amendments proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson did not give rise to objections, it was not clear that they added any further value.
101. The Worker Vice-Chairperson indicated that if consistency was shown throughout the consideration of the draft points for consensus in staying close to the language of the 2018 conclusions, for example in relation to collective bargaining being at the heart of social dialogue, he could withdraw his proposed amendments to the paragraph.
102. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted without amendment.

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### ***Proposed paragraph 6***

103. The Worker Vice-Chairperson made the general comment that women and persons with disabilities should not be collated in the text. It would be better to separate consideration of persons with disabilities through an amendment to proposed paragraph 17. He therefore proposed the deletion, in the first sentence, of the words “, and for other groups such as persons with disabilities”.
104. The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed with that approach. He proposed to replace the word “important” in the second sentence by the word “significant”.
105. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 7***

106. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the first sentence, to replace the words “may be” by the word “are” and to delete the words “including spectators”, and, in the second sentence, to add the words “and other stakeholders” after the words “social partners”.
107. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the second sentence, to include the words “Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), and the” before the words “Violence and Harassment Convention”, and to include the words “discrimination and” after the word “addressing”.
108. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 8***

109. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to add the following final sentence: “The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), is particularly relevant in this regard.”
110. The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed.
111. The Government Vice-Chairperson also agreed. She proposed to restructure part of the paragraph by deleting the second sentence “Highly competitive sport can interfere with education.”, and to replace it with the following new final sentence: “In some cases, access to education can be a challenge, however there are examples of good practices in several countries.”
112. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 9***

113. The Employer Vice-Chairperson indicated that the original wording of the paragraph might give the impression that transfers were responsible for forced labour. He therefore proposed to replace the paragraph with the following text: “Forced labour remains a serious concern in the contemporary world of work. Relevant stakeholders should work on preventing any practice that may result in forced labour. Transfer systems should take this into account, while promoting the legitimate objective of integrity in sport and stability of championships, and the rights of individual athletes.”
114. The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed that the paragraph raised issues that were extremely sensitive in the world of sport. He considered that the language should be as simple as

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possible, and therefore proposed the replacement of the paragraph by the following text: “Athletes may be bound to provisions preventing them from moving or competing. This has raised issues of forced labour.”

- 115.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson emphasized that it was necessary to remove any linkage between transfers and forced labour. The first sentence proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson would be acceptable, if the second sentence were replaced by the following: “Relevant stakeholders should work on preventing any practice that may result in forced labour.”
- 116.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson said that the proposed second sentence would be acceptable if the words “Relevant stakeholders should work” were replaced by the words “Governments, social partners and relevant stakeholders should work together”.
- 117.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 10***

- 118.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the first sentence, to replace the words “numerous technical and soft” by the words “personal, professional and social” and to replace the words “transferrable in the labour market” by the words “essential to maximize their athletic career and thereby support transitioning into the labour market post career”. In the second sentence, he proposed to delete the word “further” and to replace the words “for post sport careers” by the words “that support their preparation for the transition through and out of their athletic career and into the labour market”.
- 119.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson considered that the proposed amendments made the text somewhat repetitive and unclear. The focus should be on maximizing the opportunities available to athletes both during and after their athletic career. Although the original text was acceptable, the proposal by the Worker Vice-Chairperson could also be accepted if: in the first sentence, the words “and thereby support transitioning into the labour market post career” were replaced by “the opportunities afforded by their athletic career”; and, in the second sentence, the words “and realizing” were added after the word “accessing”, and the phrase after the words “that support their” were replaced by the words “ability to move from their sports career to a post sports career”.
- 120.** The Government Vice-Chairperson expressed a preference for the original wording. The versions proposed by the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons failed to take into account dual careers.
- 121.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson indicated that the text, as proposed by the Employer Vice-Chairperson, would be acceptable if, in the second sentence, the words “ability to move from their sports career to a post sports career” were replaced by the words “ability to transition into and from their sport career”.
- 122.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson feared that the first sentence had lost its meaning. He therefore proposed to replace the words “essential to maximize their athletic career and thereby support transitioning into the labour market post career” by the words “essential in any career”.
- 123.** Following a discussion of the meaning of the phrase “ability to transition into and from their sport career”, in which it was indicated that the focus should be on transitioning throughout the various stages of their working life, the Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed the inclusion of the word “through” so that the phrase would read: “ability to transition into, through and from their sport career”.

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124. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 11***

125. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to delete the last sentence and replace it by the addition of the following words to the end of the second sentence: “, particularly in relation to concussion and physical and mental fatigue”.

126. The Employer Vice-Chairperson preferred to delete the last sentence, without any replacement text.

127. The Government Vice-Chairperson agreed that the last sentence should be deleted. She proposed the addition, in the second sentence, of the words “, such as doping-related issues,” after the words “other factors”, and the addition of the words “, as well as stress,” after the word “sickness”.

128. During a brief discussion, it was noted that if one example was added, such as stress, others might also be needed. It was therefore agreed to move the reference to “doping-related issues” forward to come after the words “increasing competition periods” and to delete the words “as well as stress,”.

129. The paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 12***

130. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, noted that emphasis should not be placed on the causality between diversity and the lack of remedies. He therefore proposed in the first sentence to replace the words “The diversity of the number of stakeholders in the world of sport makes it difficult” by the words “Although there have been some encouraging developments, it remains challenging”. He also proposed the addition, after the first sentence, of the following sentence: “Athletes commonly experience late payment of wages and unwritten or unenforceable contracts.” He proposed, in the second sentence, to replace the words “, they do not always constitute an effective space for” by the words “are effective in”, and, at the end of the sentence, to replace the words “because of the uncertainty about their mandate and lack of independence” by the words “others are not”. Finally, at the end of the paragraph, he proposed to add the following new sentence: “Effective grievance mechanisms should be created.” He emphasized that access to remedy was a fundamental right. Moreover, the data showed that the late payment of wages was very prevalent in many sports and the failure to pay wages was a fundamental concern.

131. The Employer Vice-Chairperson indicated that the world bodies responsible for football and rugby would not be happy with the new sentence proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson on the late payment of wages. That sentence was not therefore acceptable. In certain cases, effective grievance mechanisms already existed. He therefore suggested the replacement of the final sentence proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson by the following: “These should be promoted, enhanced and further developed, where appropriate.”

132. The Government Vice-Chairperson emphasized the importance of remedies being available for grievances of all kinds and proposed the addition, at the end of the first sentence, of the words “to address grievances of all kinds”. She considered that the second sentence proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson could be dropped and that the words “where appropriate” in the final sentence proposed by the Employer Vice-Chairperson did not add much.

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133. Following a brief discussion on the structure of the paragraph, it was agreed, at the suggestion of the Chairperson, that the final sentence should read: “In these cases, effective grievance mechanisms should be created, enhanced and further developed.”

134. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 13***

135. The paragraph was adopted without amendment.

## **Current practices in advancing decent work in the world of sport**

### ***Proposed paragraph 14***

136. The Government Vice-Chairperson proposed to add the words “and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate” after the words “workers’ organizations” to reflect the reality that the implementation of policies and practices often involved stakeholders other than the social partners.

137. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to restructure the whole section, with paragraph 14 as an introductory paragraph to a list of elements that would follow in subparagraphs. He also proposed to add the words “Through social dialogue, including collective bargaining,” at the beginning of the sentence and to delete the words “, including through social dialogue” at the end.

138. The Employer Vice-Chairperson preferred the original text without the reference to collective bargaining.

139. The Worker Vice-Chairperson withdrew the proposed amendments.

140. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 15***

141. The Worker Vice-Chairperson considered that, while the paragraph highlighted an example of social dialogue, it was too narrow and should not be confined to a single region. He therefore proposed, at the beginning of the paragraph, to add the following sentence: “Collective bargaining is widespread throughout the world of sport, including at the international, regional and national levels.” The final sentence would then be deleted.

142. The Employer Vice-Chairperson disagreed with the proposed new sentence, as collective bargaining was only present in a relatively small number of sports, and particularly in organized team sport. He agreed with the deletion of the final sentence.

143. The Government Vice-Chairperson considered it strange to refer exclusively to examples of social dialogue in Europe. The last sentence could be removed.

144. The Worker Vice-Chairperson regretted the systemic approach adopted by the Employer representatives of rejecting any meaningful statement on collective bargaining. Many collective bargaining agreements had been concluded in sport in many regions, and it would not be correct for the text to suggest that they only existed in highly organized team sports in Europe. If the proposed additional sentence was not accepted, the message would be sent



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out that the ILO was not taking collective bargaining in sport seriously, despite the essential ILO principle that collective bargaining was at the heart of social dialogue. Collective agreements in sport were among the best examples of win-win outcomes of collective bargaining in any industry. The proposed additional sentence could be modified to read as follows: “Collective bargaining exists in a variety of sports and throughout the world of sport and has greatly contributed to advancing the rights and well-being of worker athletes and the industries in which they are employed and engaged.”

**145.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, in response, proposed that the sentence to be added at the beginning of the paragraph should read as follows: “Collective bargaining exists in a variety of sports and has been beneficial in advancing the rights and well-being of worker athletes and the sports in which they work.”

**146.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 16***

**147.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson emphasized the important role that workers’ organizations were playing in promoting sport for women, which should be reflected in the points of consensus. It was also necessary to ensure the consistency of the terminology used throughout the points of consensus. Terms such as “professional sports”, “sports organizations” and “professional sports organizations” were not aligned with the terminology commonly used in the ILO.

**148.** The Government Vice-Chairperson proposed to use the same wording that had been agreed in proposed paragraph 14 and to replace the words “Many countries and sport organizations” with the words “Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate”.

**149.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 17***

**150.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, in line with the wording agreed for proposed paragraphs 14 and 16, proposed to replace the initial wording in the paragraph with the words “Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate”. As already indicated in relation to proposed paragraph 6, he further proposed to separate into a new paragraph the last second sentence referring to persons with disabilities and to add, at the end of the sentence, the following words: “, including with the support of governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders”.

**151.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 18***

**152.** The Government Vice-Chairperson, with a view to covering the issue in more general terms, proposed to replace the words “racism, homophobia and misogyny, such as” with the words “gender-based violence and racism and all other forms of discrimination”.

**153.** The Chairperson, for grammatical reasons, proposed to split the paragraph into two sentences and to replace the words “such as” with the words “. These measures include”.

**154.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

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### ***Proposed paragraph 19***

**155.** The Government Vice-Chairperson noted that the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) already included sport among its occupations and therefore proposed to replace the word “inclusion” with the words “further development”.

**156.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 20***

**157.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed, in both the first and third sentences, to replace the words “skills development” with the words “personal development”. In the first sentence, he proposed to replace the words “post-sport careers, ensure their livelihoods and enhance their entrepreneurship skills” with the words “a strong personal identity, achieve a life–sport balance, skills to effectively manage the high performance environment and ultimately prepare for life after sport”. Finally, in the last sentence, in line with the language adopted elsewhere, he proposed to replace the words “often in partnership with companies and clubs” with the words “employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders”. The proposed changes represented language used in the sector that was consistent with best practice. The reference to workers’ organizations was crucial because of the central role that they played in the implementation of programmes based on a unique relationship of trust between athletes and other stakeholders in sport.

**158.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 21***

**159.** The paragraph was adopted without amendment.

### ***Proposed paragraph 22***

**160.** The Government Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the first sentence, to replace the words “Sport enterprises, clubs and associations” with the words “Sport bodies and sport enterprises”; and, in the second sentence, to insert the words “for example” before the word “concussion”.

**161.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the first sentence, instead of the amendment proposed by the Government Vice-Chairperson, to use the wording agreed in previous paragraphs: “Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders”.

**162.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 23***

**163.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, in line with the language adopted for previous paragraphs, proposed to replace the words “Some governments, sports’ association, and clubs” with the words “Some governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders”.

**164.** It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

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### ***New paragraph to follow proposed paragraph 23***

- 165.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, with a view to highlighting the importance of social protection, which was not considered elsewhere in the proposed points of consensus, suggested the addition of the following new paragraph: “Some countries have developed social protection systems that support athletes after injuries. New Zealand’s No Fault Accident Compensation Scheme is an example.”
- 166.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed that it was necessary to include a paragraph on social protection. It was particularly important to draw attention to the fact that the legislation in certain countries, such as Australia, excluded athletes from access to social protection. He therefore proposed the addition in the new paragraph of the following sentence: “Governments, workers’ organizations and employers’ organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, should ensure that social protection covers all worker athletes, particularly in relation to workplace injury benefits.”
- 167.** The Government Vice-Chairperson considered that the sentence proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson would be better suited as a recommendation. While accepting the first sentence proposed by the Employer Vice-Chairperson, she was not comfortable referring to the specific example of New Zealand.
- 168.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed that the sentence proposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson would be more appropriate in the recommendations and accepted that the specific example of New Zealand could be dropped. He briefly described the no-fault accident compensation scheme in that country, which provided universal and inclusive coverage for everyone under the public health system and covered injuries sustained during sporting activities, whether or not they were professional. The system also included wage protection of up to 80 per cent of original wages in the event of absence from work due to injury. It was a no-liability, no-fault system which protected people from legal action if a player was injured.
- 169.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, in light of the views expressed, proposed to replace the suggested additional sentence with the following words: “However, other countries, expressly exclude athletes from social protection”.
- 170.** Following a brief discussion, in which the Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed understanding and agreement with the intention to draw a distinction between the lack of legislation on social protection and the exclusion of athletes from existing legislation, and the Government Vice-Chairperson called for more precise wording, it was proposed that the new paragraph should read as follows: “Some countries have developed social protection systems that support athletes after injury, whereas in other countries access to social protection for athletes is limited or does not exist.”
- 171.** It was so agreed.

### **Recommendations for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members**

#### ***Proposed paragraph 24***

- 172.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed, in the first sentence, to replace the words “engage in” with the word “promote” and to replace the words “at national, regional and global levels, as appropriate” with the words “at the appropriate level”.

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173. The Worker Vice-Chairperson could accept the word “promote”, but preferred the original wording concerning the level of collective bargaining which, in the case of football, was covered by a global framework agreement between FIFA and FIFPro.
174. The Government Vice-Chairperson could also accept the word “promote”, but proposed that the first sentence should begin with the wording agreed for previous paragraphs: “Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and other relevant stakeholders”.
175. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 25***

176. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed the addition of the words “employers and” before the word “workers” and the addition, at the end of the sentence, of the words “under the conditions set in each Convention”. He explained that, in light of the work of the ILO Standards Review Mechanism (SRM), in which certain discussions had focused on the effect of obsolete Conventions that had been ratified by the countries concerned, the wording was intended as a safeguard to clarify the situation.
177. The Government Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “have the duty” with the words “should make efforts”.
178. The Secretary-General, in relation to the amendment proposed by the Government Vice-Chairperson, wished to draw attention to the risk created by the proposed wording of lowering established standards. The words “have a duty” had been accepted by the constituents in existing ILO language.
179. The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed with the comments made by the Secretary-General. The inclusion of the words “employers and” was not acceptable, as it did not reflect anything covered by the discussions in the Forum and raised new issues concerning the protection of employers by Conventions. Moreover, the amendment proposed by the Employer Vice-Chairperson at the end of the sentence was unnecessary and created doubt concerning the application of ratified Conventions. The participants at the present Forum did not have a mandate to change language accepted by the tripartite constituents in other bodies. The proposed wording could have unintended consequences that were not acceptable to trade unions.
180. The Government Vice-Chairperson withdrew the proposed amendment of the words “have a duty”. She considered that the paragraph was aimed at athletes and that the words “employers and workers including” should not be included.
181. During a brief discussion, the Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed that the sentence should end after the word “all”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson would be prepared to accept the proposal if the words “in accordance with these Conventions” were added at the end of the sentence.
182. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 26***

183. The Government Vice-Chairperson, in line with the language agreed to in previous paragraphs, proposed to replace the words “Governments, social partners and other sport stakeholders” with the words “Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and other relevant stakeholders”. She also proposed the addition at the end of the sentence of the

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following; “, and engage collectively through relevant stakeholders, such as the Centre for Sport and Human Rights”.

184. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 27***

185. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the word “enhance” by the word “promote”, and to replace the words “ministries responsible for labour, social welfare, youth, culture and sport” by the words “relevant ministries”.

186. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to add the words “employers’ and workers’ organizations and” before the words “relevant stakeholders”.

187. The Government Vice-Chairperson proposed to add the word “policy” before the word “coherence”, and to add the words “and government administrative bodies” after the word “ministries”. However, she feared that the text was becoming unclear with all of the amendments.

188. During a brief discussion, it was proposed that all the words following “policy coherence” should be replaced by the words “with and between all relevant stakeholders”.

189. It was so agreed and the paragraph was adopted, as amended.

### ***Proposed paragraph 28***

190. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed the addition, at the end of the introductory phrase, of the following words: “promote decent work for worker athletes, including by”. The amendment would necessitate a grammatical change to the gerund in the subparagraphs.

191. The Government Vice-Chairperson proposed, in line with previous paragraphs, the replacement of the words “Governments, in consultation with social partners and other relevant stakeholders” with the words “Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and other relevant stakeholders”. In response to comments that certain of the subjects covered by the subparagraphs, such as the enforcement of the law, were primarily the duty of governments rather than the social partners, she noted that in certain areas, such as occupational safety and health, there was joint responsibility with the social partners, and thus proposed the addition, after the word “stakeholders”, the words “, each within their own responsibilities,”.

192. It was so agreed and the introductory phrase was adopted, as amended.

193. In relation to subparagraph (a), the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed the replacement of the words “women and men” by the word “all”.

194. The Worker Vice-Chairperson said that the business case for gender equality in sport was already widely demonstrated and therefore proposed the addition of the words “further enhancing” before the words “business case”.

195. It was so agreed and subparagraph (a) was adopted, as amended.

196. In relation to subparagraph (b), the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed the replacement of the words “on and off the competition field” by the words “at all times”.

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- 197.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (b) was adopted, as amended.
- 198.** With regard to subparagraph (c), the Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed the replacement, in the first sentence, of the word “skills” by the word “personal” and the addition at the end of the first sentence of the words “to protect and advance the physical and mental health and social well-being of worker athletes”.
- 199.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed to subamend the proposed additional words to read as follows: “to protect and advance their physical and mental health and social well-being”.
- 200.** The Chairperson proposed, in the first sentence, the deletion of the words “and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders”, which were already covered in the introductory paragraph.
- 201.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (c) was adopted, as amended.
- 202.** With regard to subparagraph (d), the Government Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health” with the words “all physical and mental health”.
- 203.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (d) was adopted, as amended.
- 204.** With reference to subparagraph (e), the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the word “review” with the word “enforce” and to delete the word “all”.
- 205.** The Government Vice-Chairperson indicated a preference for the term “review”. She proposed to replace the words “the extension of” by the words “access to”.
- 206.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson said that a review of existing law and practice could be healthy, especially in the case of exclusions from social protection coverage. He proposed the addition of the words “comprehensive and sustainable” before the words “social protection coverage”, in line with the language used in the Centenary Declaration.
- 207.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, in light of the comments made, proposed to add after the word “enforce”, the words “, and where necessary review,”.
- 208.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (e) was adopted, as amended.
- 209.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed after subparagraph (f) the addition of a new subparagraph on the rights of child athletes, which would read as follows: “safeguarding the rights of children and young people to participate in sports in conditions of freedom, dignity and safety, including through the integration of dedicated policies, programmes and training in keeping with the best interests of the child and internationally recognized standards.” He explained that the language was taken from the 2017 World Players Association Declaration on Safeguarding the Rights of Child Athletes.
- 210.** It was so agreed and the new subparagraph was adopted.

### ***Proposed paragraph 29***

- 211.** In subparagraph (a), the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed the addition of the words “up-to-date” before the words “international labour standards” and the addition, after the words “sport sector”, of the following words: “, taking into account the changing patterns of the world of work, the needs of workers and sustainable enterprises”. The proposed addition of

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the words “up-to-date” was intended to take into account the work of the SRM and was in line with the language adopted in the Centenary Declaration.

- 212.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson objected to the inclusion of the words “up-to-date”, and expressed doubts about the reference to “sustainable” enterprises. Following further discussion, after agreement had been reached on most of the other proposed points for consensus, he proposed that the reference to “sustainable enterprises” could be retained if the proposal to add the words “up-to-date” was dropped.
- 213.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (a) was adopted, as amended.
- 214.** In subparagraph (b), the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed to delete the words “and other stakeholders, including through regional meetings”. He explained that ILO Regional Meetings had a specific function which was not adapted to the present context.
- 215.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson expressed a strong commitment to regional meetings, as the issues in the world of sport differed at the regional level.
- 216.** The Government Vice-Chairperson agreed on the importance of retaining the reference to regional meetings and proposed to add the words “and technical assistance, when requested” after the words “regional meetings”.
- 217.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “including through regional meetings and technical assistance, when requested” by the words “through appropriate means”.
- 218.** The Government Vice-Chairperson considered that the use of the words “through appropriate means” constituted a blank cheque and preferred the wording “including through regional meetings and technical assistance, when requested”. The words “and with other stakeholders” could be deleted.
- 219.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (b) was adopted, as amended.
- 220.** Subparagraphs (c) and (d) were adopted without amendment.
- 221.** In subparagraph (e), the Government Vice-Chairperson proposed the addition, at the end of the subparagraph, of the words “with respect to decent work”.
- 222.** It was so agreed and subparagraph (e) was adopted, as amended.
- 223.** Subparagraphs (f) and (g) were adopted without amendment.
- 224.** In subparagraph (h), the Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed the deletion of the words “, with a view to a possible future meeting of experts to develop guidelines in this area”.
- 225.** The Secretary-General recalled that decent work in the world of sport was still on the list of possible future Conference agenda items. Even if the present Forum referred to the possibility of holding a meeting of experts on sport, the decision would still remain the competence of the sectoral advisory bodies and the Governing Body for the biennium 2022–23 or later.
- 226.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson felt strongly that this part of the sentence should be retained. If reference was not made to a possible future meeting of experts, concerning which the decision rested with other bodies, the future work of the ILO in this area could be severely limited. There needed to be a commitment to a future meeting, as the research undertaken

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needed to lead somewhere. The concern of the Workers was that the process that had been started should not end with the present Forum.

- 227.** The Government Vice-Chairperson, noting that any decision on a possible future meeting would be taken by other bodies, preferred to retain the original wording. She considered that the world of sport needed more tripartite attention.
- 228.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, in light of the comments made, proposed to replace the words “, with a view to a possible future meeting of experts to develop guidelines in this area” with the words “with a view to informing decisions on possible future action”.
- 229.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson indicated that the amendment could be acceptable if the words “, which could include a tripartite meeting” were added.
- 230.** Following further discussion, after agreement had been reached on most of the other proposed points for consensus, and after considering various variations to the wording, it was agreed that the words “, with a view to a possible future meeting of experts to develop guidelines in this area” would be replaced by the words “, with a view to informing decisions by the ILO Governing Body on the acknowledged need for future action and dialogue on this issue”.
- 231.** Subparagraph (h) was adopted, as amended.
- 232.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, in view of the late hour and the departure of Mr Mdwaba before the end of the meeting, asked whether it would be possible to submit the draft points of consensus for a final review by the participants.
- 233.** The Government Vice-Chairperson considered that the points of consensus, as amended, should be adopted by the Forum before its closure.
- 234.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed with the Government Vice-Chairperson. The amendments had been approved on screen and the Workers’ group trusted the secretariat to make any necessary linguistic adjustments.
- 235.** The Secretary-General agreed that, in line with normal practice, the secretariat would make any necessary editorial or linguistic modifications in line with the decisions taken by the Forum.
- 236.** It was so agreed and the points of consensus were adopted, as amended.

## **V. Closure of the meeting**

- 237.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed an extremely constructive and interesting meeting in which everyone had learned a lot. There was a need for all those involved in the world of sport to be more inclusive and to work in the context of labour standards. Professional athletes were workers and deserved the appropriate protection and access to decent work.
- 238.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed with the comments made by the Employer Vice-Chairperson. The world of sport could have a far-reaching effect on society in general and work in the sector needed to be based on the concept of decent work and human rights. Sport was now a huge industry and the involvement of governments, other stakeholders and international sports bodies was needed to ensure that the conditions of athletes were improved.



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- 239.** The Government Vice-Chairperson welcomed the spirit in which all the representatives had worked in the Forum to agree on important points of consensus.
- 240.** The Secretary-General thanked all those who had participated in an extremely productive and positive meeting covering a new subject for ILO meetings. All the participants had shown deep knowledge and experience in dealing positively with difficult challenges.
- 241.** The Chairperson said that it had been a real pleasure to chair such a positive and interesting meeting which had agreed on clear points of consensus that pointed towards the way forward. He thanked all those involved and declared the Forum closed.