



Governing Body

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Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and
the International Labour Conference

WP/GBC

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SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Improving the functioning of the International Labour Conference

Analysis of the 106th Session (2017) of the Conference

1. The two-week format, implemented for the third consecutive year, is generally considered as a major development that has reinforced the credibility and efficiency of the ILO. Many are of the view, however, that the compression of work schedule has reached its limits and that further improvements should be envisaged to alleviate the pressure on constituents and the secretariat.
2. On the basis of the comments and feedback received from the Governing Body at its 330th Session, this document therefore reviews the arrangements implemented at the 106th Session of the Conference and explores further areas where improvements could be considered (Part I). At the request of the Governing Body,¹ this document also reviews the set of amendments to the Standing Orders of the Conference that were trialled at its 106th Session (Part II). Possible areas for additional amendments with a view to simplifying and modernizing the Standing Orders are covered in GB.331/WP/GBC/2/2.

I. Improving current arrangements

Conference preparations and logistics

Preparatory processes

3. Appreciation has been expressed for a number of improvements put in place to facilitate the preparatory processes of the Conference, such as the **briefing sessions** organized for Geneva-based missions and, upon request, for regional groups; and the **early dissemination of information**, in particular the “Advance information” issued in January and the

¹ [GB.329/PV](#), para. 370(b) and [GB.329/INS/18](#).

“Conference Guide”, posted on the Web on the basis of arrangements agreed by the Governing Body at its March session. In this respect, the Office has taken note of the request to reconfigure the “at-a-glance” version of the tentative plan of work of the Conference.

4. The importance of the **consultation process** to prepare the discussions in the technical committees, which often starts more than one year before the discussion, has also been acknowledged. Some are, however, of the view that there is room for improvement in the way the expectations of the three groups are reflected in the reports submitted to the Conference. The format of those consultations, which usually involve the Geneva-based Consultative Group, could be clarified when there is a need to enlarge their composition, as has been the case twice between the first and second discussions of standard-setting items, in 2015 and in 2017. One of the major drawbacks of a shortened duration of the Conference is indeed the very limited time available during the Conference for informal contacts or negotiations.
5. Efforts will be pursued with the regional coordinators and with the secretariats of the Employers’ and Workers’ groups to ensure **early nominations of committees’ officers** so that they can be finalized during the Governing Body spring session. In particular, early identification of chairpersons for the Conference committees is of a crucial importance for the preparatory work carried out in the months preceding the Conference. These nominations should be based on a clear understanding of the profile and skills required.
6. Concerning **group meetings**, two hours of interpretation services (9 a.m. to 11 a.m.) were assigned to each of the official Government regional groups on each day of the Conference, with the exception of the opening day. This was to allow the regional groups, as required, to share the interpretation service time with a subgroup needing that support. This facility has been broadly used by some groups.

New technologies

7. The increasing use of technology has contributed to reducing document production and facilitating faster and more accurate access to information, in particular through the Conference App, more comprehensive websites dedicated to each committee or the screens available in common areas of the Conference premises.
8. A new feature with the App this year was the need for delegates to register, so as to allow a link with the Conference Management System where the group and function of each delegate is recorded according to the credentials received. This facilitated a more targeted use of the App, by language, group or committee. Once most Conference participants are equipped with mobile devices, the App could replace the paper distribution of the *Daily Bulletin* and some other Conference in-session documents.
9. Further enhancements and improvements can be envisaged through other IT tools used at the Conference: entirely electronic submission of credentials of delegations; entirely electronic registration in committees so as to continue improvements with early registration (105 governments, 104 Employers and 58 Workers compared respectively with 97, 102 and 43 in 2016); a possible online system for the submission of amendments while keeping the necessary interaction with the committees’ secretariats before the amendments are registered.

Side events

10. The policy of limiting the number of side events held in parallel to plenary, committee or group meetings, applied since the introduction of the two-week format in 2015, was again

strictly observed in 2017, with only two side events approved: an information session concerning the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, and a ceremony for the World Day against Child Labour, both organized during the lunch breaks of 6 and 12 June, respectively.

11. At the same time, many other events are convened during the Conference by intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations or by groups of member States, as well as, of course, by delegations for their bilateral meetings. Although these are not part of the official programme of work of the Conference, many are announced in the *Daily Bulletin* and the Office provides, to the extent possible, assistance to the organizers, mainly for the allocation of meeting rooms, technical facilities (audio and video equipment) and, as appropriate, interpretation services. Even if some of these services are charged back to the organizer where they entail additional expenditure for the ILO, the increasing volume of requests for assistance is reaching a point where it may compromise the Office's capacity to service the official business of the Conference. Leaving aside bilateral meetings, in 2017, the Office assisted in the organization of some 60 such events. While all these meetings are part of the "forum role" of the Conference, they may distract delegates from their Conference responsibilities. The question thus arises as to whether some criteria should be considered to limit this type of parallel meetings, and in determining where the Office is meant to provide support and to what extent.

Conference attendance and room capacity

12. Concerns have been raised about the limited capacity of certain meeting rooms to accommodate the number of participants interested in the proceedings of the Conference, such as the Assembly Hall during the opening ceremony, the Governing Body room during many sittings of the Committee on the Application of Standards, and some sittings of other technical committees. Concerns have also been voiced with regard to the suitability of the layout of some meeting rooms in the *Palais des Nations* for tripartite discussions, in particular Room XVII after its refurbishment, as the central benches are too small to accommodate the Government group, and there is no clear distinction of the space allocated to each of the three groups.
13. Difficulties with room capacity are partly due to interest in the work of the Conference, but also to the phenomenon pointed out by the Credentials Committee last year, when it made observations with respect to the number of participants in national delegations with no institutional role – i.e. participants other than delegates, substitute delegates, advisers and persons appointed under article 2(3)(i) of the Standing Orders, who appear on the list of delegations as "other persons attending the Conference". There is indeed a clear upward trend from 420 such registered participants with no institutional role in 2007, to 881 in 2017 (or from 555 such accredited participants in 2007, to 1,260 in 2017).
14. To mitigate the situation, in addition to the measures that the Governing Body may consider upon the recommendation of the Credentials Committee,² the Office will continue to broadcast those well-attended sittings in overflow rooms (such as Concordia I for the Assembly Hall, or Room II for the Governing Body Room). It will also attempt to reserve larger and more tripartite prone meeting rooms at the *Palais des Nations*, although this might not be possible in years where the Conference meets in parallel with the Human Rights Council, as was the case in 2017.

² Second report of the Credentials Committee, para. 188; *Provisional Record No. 5C*, ILC, 106th Session, 2017. See also GB.331/WP/GBC/2/2.

15. If deemed necessary, the Office is also prepared to implement, as of the next session of the Conference, a badging system to differentiate participants with and without institutional responsibilities, so that the former be given preferential access and the latter invited to follow the discussions from the overflow rooms, where available.

Logistics

16. There has been general appreciation for the reintroduction of smaller pigeon holes.
17. Efforts will continue to be made to address catering, transport and safety and security concerns with respect to delegates involved in late evening and night meetings.

Conference plenary

Opening day

18. Due to the expected visit of a Head of State, the Conference opening ceremony started at 11 a.m. The regional group meetings were held from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., with a 45-minute meeting of the whole Government group from 10 a.m. to 10.45 a.m. While recognizing that the visit of a dignitary on the opening morning represented a challenge in terms of time management, the sequence of the official opening followed by the special sitting went smoothly, and the plenary was able to adjourn at 1.20 p.m.

Discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General

19. The number of speakers in 2017 (295) was similar to those of the two preceding two-week Conferences: 294 in 2016 and 299 in 2015. In contrast, only nine sittings were required in 2017, compared to 11 in 2016 and 2015. In addition, in 2017 no speeches were interspersed with events or special sittings relating to the World of Work Summit. This reduction in the number of sittings was possible through better time management with respect to the opening time of the sittings, stricter observance of the time limits, and with the slight extension of some sittings (by 15 to 30 minutes).
20. The experience of the past two Conferences has shown that there were more speaking slots available than were needed in the first week. In view of the above, consideration might be given to the possibility of compressing the plenary speaking slots during the first week into a shorter time frame. These are currently spread out over three full days, of which two afternoon sessions proved unnecessary in 2016 and 2017. The discussion could start on the Thursday, instead of the Wednesday of the first week, which would result in four sittings over two full days where needed during the first week, and six during the second week. As was the case this year, the discussion of the reports would close on Wednesday of the second week. Such a scenario would still allow for the same number of speaking slots and represent some savings in the rental cost of the Assembly Hall.

World of Work Summit

21. The World of Work Summit on a better future for women at work was acknowledged as a timely, thought-provoking, and well-moderated panel discussion. The absence of any Government representative among the panellists was however noted. Views were expressed that the Summit could benefit from earlier and better involvement of the tripartite constituents in its preparation, as well as from earlier identification of panellists with relevant

profiles who could foster inspirational interaction, share original ideas, and come up with creative viable solutions.

22. Concerning the format of the World of Work Summit, the general view is that visits of the dignitaries should all be scheduled on that day. The special sitting held in the afternoon with three women Heads of State addressing the plenary at the same sitting was much appreciated.

Votes

23. At its last session, the Conference resorted again to the organization of votes outside the plenary as a time-saving measure in view of the two-week duration. Of the four sets of decisions that the Conference was required to make by a record vote in 2017, three were held outside the Assembly Hall (arrears of Kyrgyzstan, the abrogation or withdrawal of six international labour Conventions and the approval of the Programme and Budget for 2018–19), and only one during the plenary sitting where the report of the standard-setting committee was discussed and adopted (the adoption of the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)).
24. The vote on the arrears of Kyrgyzstan was held on Friday, 9 June with a view to allowing the tripartite delegation of that country to participate in the Governing Body elections scheduled for Monday, 12 June, as well as in all of the subsequent votes of the Conference. Due to the lack of quorum, a second vote had to be taken. The fact that the first vote was called while two of the technical committees were not in session (the general discussion and recurrent discussion committees were both in limited drafting group composition) no doubt contributed to the lack of quorum, but it is not the only factor.
25. It is to be recalled that the vote was announced well in advance in the programme of work of the Conference and in the *Daily Bulletin*, and that the initial time for the vote was extended by the plenary before the lunch break until the end of the day in order to mobilize additional voters. Several announcements were made in committees, through the App, the groups and the regional coordinators, and voting stations were made available in various locations to facilitate the process.
26. At the same time, there is a clear disconnect between the high number of registered participants and the actual number of delegates taking part in votes: whereas the maximum voting strength of the Conference on the date of the first vote on Kyrgyzstan's arrears was 560 (all registered Government, Employers' and Workers' delegates entitled to vote), only 281 delegates took part in the vote. For the second vote, of 600 delegates entitled to vote, only 311 took part in the vote. Similarly, for the adoption of the programme and budget or of the adoption of Recommendation No. 205, of a voting strength of 610, only 362 and 391 delegates, respectively, cast a vote. It should be stressed in this regard that attending the Conference implies for those delegates with voting rights the duty to ensure that those rights are effectively exercised.

Adoption of committee reports in plenary

27. The organization and timing of the adoption of committee reports in plenary on the last day of the Conference was somewhat disturbed by the unexpected number of interventions and their length. Although the Conference managed to finish its business on schedule on Friday afternoon, the adoption of one of the technical committees' reports had to be interrupted for lunch due to delays with the scheduled time for the discussion and adoption of the report of the standard-setting committee.

28. This situation could be tackled by setting a time frame for the introduction of the committee report by its officers, as well as time limits for individual or group interventions. Such time limits could be set according to the number of speakers if a deadline for the registration of speakers is established for each committee report adoption.

Provisional Record

29. Since 2014, *Provisional Records* containing the speeches made during the plenary discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General have been replaced by audio recordings in the original language of the debate, plus the audio recording of their interpretation in English, French and Spanish; where available, the text file of the original speech is also web posted in pdf immediately after delivery. On demand, the Office provides a translation of any speeches delivered in plenary in any of the working languages of the Conference.
30. *Provisional Records* of all other plenary sittings (opening ceremony, special sittings, World of Work Summit, adoption of committee reports, closing ceremony) continue to be produced after the closure of the Conference in its three official languages. These measures have permitted substantial savings of some US\$350,000 per biennium and a significant reduction of paper consumption and the carbon footprint of the Conference.
31. While there has been hardly any request for access to text files since the discontinuation of the *Provisional Record* of the plenary discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General, the Governing Body has not so far formally endorsed the continuation of such practice. At the last meeting of the Working Party, the main reason put forward in support of maintaining the *Provisional Record* was the difficulty with present technology to make global searches on audio recordings. Pending technological progress with search engines for audio files, such concern could be addressed by providing lightly edited, text-searchable transcriptions of the English, French and Spanish audio recording of all speeches in plenary, at a significantly reduced cost compared to the formal production of the *Provisional Record*, namely US\$50,000 per Conference session or US\$100,000 per biennium (i.e. some US\$250,000 difference per biennium). In considering this possibility, the Governing Body may wish to indicate if the Office should commission the trilingual transcription of the speeches of the past four Conferences.
32. In addition, in order to further facilitate the consultation and search of Conference documents, the Office is considering the publication in electronic format of all *Records of Proceedings* pertaining to a session of the Conference in a single file.

Governing Body elections

33. Feedback on the organization of the Governing Body elections has been positive, with about three hours having been necessary to convene the three electoral colleges and conduct various secret ballots in each of them.
34. With respect to the Government electoral college, the point was made in information sessions for regional groups and in the voting demonstration session organized for members of the college, of the need for clearer rules. Areas mentioned for possible regulation include:
- more transparency on the existence and content of regional or subregional agreements or arrangements for the distribution or rotation of regular and deputy seats;
 - the deadlines, procedure and channels for the submission of candidatures to the Office for the preparation of the ballots;

- the possibility of splitting the Government electoral college into four independent regional electoral colleges, as envisaged in the 1986 Instrument of Amendment to the ILO Constitution.

35. If the Governing Body so requests, the Office can prepare proposals in these various respects.

Conference committees

Selection Committee

36. The mandate of the Selection Committee comprises three different types of issues:

- formalities necessary to set the Conference in motion, such as setting the closing date for the registration of speakers in plenary, suggestions to facilitate the work of the Conference and its committees, or invitations to international non-governmental organizations to participate in committees;
- steering functions to arrange the programme of the Conference and fix the time and agenda of plenary sittings and committee meetings;
- to consider any matter which might not warrant the setting up of a separate committee, including the referral of resolutions not related to an agenda item since the discontinuation of the Resolutions Committee, the consideration of proposals for the abrogation or withdrawal of international labour standards, the admission of new Members, etc.

37. As regards the first function of the Selection Committee, most if not all decisions in this regard are identical from one year to the next, based on long standing and uncontroversial practices. If those decisions are integrated into the Standing Orders of the Conference, or if the Conference made them itself at its opening ceremony, there would be no need for the Selection Committee to meet immediately after that ceremony. Similarly, most of the decisions of the Selection Committee under its steering function are of a purely formal nature. After the first and often only meeting of the Selection Committee, this responsibility is delegated to its Officers, who exercise it by consultation via email. This responsibility would seem to be better placed with the Officers of the Conference, who are those in fact most concerned by changes in the programme of work of the Conference, and who meet in person more regularly than the Selection Committee or its Officers. Alternatively, those functions might be exercised through another arrangement placed under the responsibility of the Officers.

38. The Selection Committee would however have a role to play, if and when required, with respect to the third type of issues the Conference may refer to it. It would be convened only in such instances. If the Governing Body so requests, the Office can prepare proposals in this respect.

Finance Committee

39. In 2017, the Finance Committee followed, for the first time, the same procedure for the adoption of its report as all three technical committees without any major difficulty. It is therefore proposed to formalize the principle whereby committee reports (other than that of the Committee on the Application of Standards and the Credentials Committee) can be submitted after their approval by the officers of the committee directly to the plenary for

adoption, subject to any corrections made to it by committee members within the deadline of one week after the closure of the Conference.

40. Another aspect of the functioning of the Finance Committee (and of the Selection Committee too) that deserves consideration is the restricted distribution of its working documents, so far by email, through the regional coordinators and the groups' secretariats, with a few copies being made available in the meeting room at the time the Committee meets. This process creates difficulties for the members of those two Committees, as very often they only become aware of the documents on which they are required to make decisions a few hours before the Committee meeting, or at the time they enter the Committee room where the documents are available. In addition, since the documents are not considered public, they are not accessible on the Web, even after the documents have been considered and decisions made by the Committees. Unless there is any reason warranting a limited distribution of such working documents, they could be posted on the Committee website, as is the case with the working documents of any other committee. To the extent that current practice has no formal basis in the Standing Orders, it could easily be changed as of the next session of the Conference if the Governing Body deems it appropriate.

Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)

41. The three groups agreed that the effective implementation of the informal tripartite consultations on the working methods of the CAS had produced excellent results, in particular as regards time management and the consolidation of previously introduced tools: more dynamic use of the web page of the Committee, a programme displaying the list of speakers on screens, time limits for the different categories of interventions, the electronic submissions of corrections to the minutes, tools to facilitate the communication between the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons and the production of the minutes and reports in a "patchwork" trilingual format. Specific mention has also been made of the sense of commitment and responsibility that prevailed during the discussion that led to a timely agreement on the list of cases and in the preparation of the conclusions.

Standard-setting committee

42. The Committee on the revision of Recommendation No.71 held its second discussion and managed to complete the examination of the new Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation in time. The Committee held 19 sittings spread over nine days. On five of those days, the Committee held evening/night sittings. Several observations may be of relevance for similar future exercises.
43. First, the number of evening and night sittings has a direct impact on the work of the drafting committee as the drafting committee meets principally at night, immediately after the end of the Committee's work, which implies for the members of the drafting committee very long working days and difficult conditions in terms of catering, transportation, etc. As a result, delegates with the appropriate linguistic skills are increasingly reluctant to take part in the drafting committee and accordingly the secretariat experienced particular difficulty in prompting nominations from the three groups and setting up the drafting committee in a timely manner. As regards the working methods of the drafting committee, the presence of Spanish-speaking delegates and members of the secretariat to follow the review of the text in the two authentic versions is generally seen as a positive and helpful arrangement.
44. Secondly, strict time management and skilful chairmanship prove to be critical for the smooth functioning of the Committee. The discussions also highlighted the importance of extensive informal consultations in preparation of the Conference discussion.

45. Thirdly, the discussion of amendments has become over the years fully dependent on the sub-amendment management module (SAMM). The difficulty of SAMM to handle large portions of text has given rise to challenges and has at times delayed the Committee discussions. In addition, the need for the SAMM operators to instantly translate subamendments in the three official languages represents at times some risk from a quality point of view and often also complicates the work of the drafting committee.
46. Lastly, on the basis of the experience of the three standard-setting discussions held within a two-week Conference format, serious consideration should be given to any additional substantive improvements in the working methods with a view to ensuring that a standard-setting committee can effectively handle the examination of two instruments, i.e. one draft Convention and one draft Recommendation, at the same session.

Non-standard-setting committees

47. The results of both the recurrent discussion and the general discussion were unanimously praised.³ However, some felt that there was room for improvement in the working methods of the drafting groups. The Office could explore ways to facilitate the work of the members of the drafting groups, and thus prevent night sessions, if necessary by providing adequate training. The request for focused, concise and action-oriented outcomes was also reiterated.
48. It was recalled that in the context of a two-week Conference, the enforcement of a strict discipline in time management is crucial. Starting times need to be rigorously observed. A better discipline should also be implemented in the conduct of the general discussions, in particular for the opening statements, if needed through the introduction of differentiated time limits for the different categories of interventions and through the use of the type of tools introduced in the CAS.

Credentials Committee

49. The Credentials Committee's secretariat, which oversees the accreditation and registration of participants to the Conference in addition to providing support to the members of the Credentials Committee which is tasked with examining cases of monitoring, objections and complaints, has sought to promote and reinforce the technological enhancements and improvements used at the Conference. For the June 2017 Conference, there was a 97 per cent rate of electronic submission of credentials, versus 28 per cent for the June 2013 Conference. This represents a 70 per cent increase in a five-year period. Taken together with the increased number of governments meeting the three-week deadline for the deposit of credentials before the opening of the Conference (67 per cent for 2017), bottlenecks in respect to the processing of accreditation by the Office and of visas by the host State have been greatly reduced. The informal feedback from governments regarding the online accreditation system, which was updated for the 2017 Conference, has been that its user-friendliness has been enhanced and that the ability to view accreditation and registration in real time (<http://www.ilo.org/Delegates/Credentialslive.aspx>) is greatly appreciated. From the perspective of the social partners, this real-time information enhances their ability to consider earlier whether an objection needs to be filed, and is a substantial advancement over the *static lists* that have been traditionally published. Consideration could be given to extending the online accreditation system to representatives of the United Nations, specialized agencies, intergovernmental, regional and international non-governmental organizations that have been duly invited. Additional technological advances trialled by the

³ See GB.331/INS/3 proposing a revised framework for the preparation and organization of recurrent discussions.

Committee include sharing case files with Committee members and the secretariat electronically, so as to permit them to work remotely and significantly reduce paper consumption.

50. Taken together with other actions, the secretariat continues to seek ways to reinforce the Committee's ability to respond to the high volume of participants and cases that are lodged with it every year (on average 23 monitoring cases, objections and complaints per year). While this has been sufficient to date, this may no longer be the case if the Committee's members work in more than one language and there is another unprecedented number of cases lodged with the Committee (40 cases in 2017). As the number of cases lodged with the Committee is unknown until the deadline for deposit expires (i.e. 10 a.m. on the first Wednesday of the Conference/48 hours following the Conference's opening), the Office will have to continue to be able to respond flexibly in the event that the demand is greater than the resources provided. This is compounded where an objection or complaint is received in a language other than English, French or Spanish, as well as when the persons to be nominated as Committee members are not known well in advance of the Conference. Indeed, this particularly impacted the 2017 Conference Credentials Committee as one member was not nominated until the eve of the Conference. This impeded the ability of the Committee's members to be briefed as early as possible by the secretariat or undertake preparatory work beforehand. Moreover, as the Credentials Committee lends itself to a certain continuity as its decisions are based on its extensive jurisprudence, consideration could perhaps be given to excluding it from the annual rotation system currently in place for Committee Government members.

II. Review of amendments trialled at the 106th Session of the Conference

51. At its 329th Session (March 2017), the Governing Body asked that proposed amendments to the Standing Orders of the Conference, which are required to implement the two-week format of the Conference, be trialled at the 106th Session of the Conference through the suspension of relevant provisions of the Standing Orders. It may be concluded that the trial was successful as all the suspensions (and in some cases replacing provisions) have fulfilled their purpose by permitting changes that have proved valuable. The following aspects merit highlighting.

Time limits for filing objections with the Credentials Committee

52. The bringing forward of the time limit for the deposit of credentials with the Office from two to three weeks before the start of the Conference has helped to reduce bottlenecks in the processing of credentials. Together with the requirement that governments transmit credentials through the online accreditation system, this has permitted the earlier inclusion of credentials information in the Conference Management System that has in turn facilitated the timely processing of visa applications by the host State and earlier confirmation of registration in committees and of speaking times in the plenary.
53. The reduction of the time limit for the filing of objections with the Credentials Committee has proved indispensable for the Credentials Committee to commence its work early enough so as to permit it to complete the examination of all objections in time for the publication of its report, particularly in view of this year's unusually high number of cases. The effect of the reduction of the time limit for the submission of complaints is less clear. On the one

hand, as has been previously highlighted,⁴ in the current Conference format the shortened deadline expires on a Saturday when many government offices are closed, so that replies from governments are not necessarily received earlier than Tuesday of the second week. Thus, the examination of such cases cannot begin before Wednesday when the Committee's report is close to finalization. On the other hand, it appears that in most cases the complaints have actually been submitted well before the reduced deadline so that they could be forwarded to the governments for comments before the weekend.

Single drafting committee

54. Experience at this session of the Conference has confirmed that a single drafting committee is able to fully discharge the responsibilities that under the current Standing Orders are shared between a committee drafting committee and the Conference Drafting Committee. As there has been no Convention on the agenda of the Conference at the last three sessions of the Conference, the only aspect of a single drafting committee's work that could not be trialled is the inclusion of the standard final provisions into the text of a proposed Convention.⁵ However, based on past Conference Drafting Committee experience, this task is not expected to raise any particular difficulty for a single drafting committee as the final provisions are included in their standard wording, except in the very rare cases in which the technical committee gives differing specific instructions.
55. As a consequence of the reduced duration of the Conference the single drafting committee starts its work as early as possible once the technical committee has adopted a first set of provisions and proceeds with the examination of the text as it is adopted by the committee.
56. In view of the recent practice of the technical committees to delegate the adoption of their reports, including any draft instrument, to their Officers, it is essential that the drafting committee works transparently and in coordination, through its members, with the groups of the committee, to ensure that the text of the instrument will not raise unforeseen objections when it is sent to the plenary for adoption. To facilitate this, it could be envisaged to regularly post the parts of the instrument already reviewed by the drafting committee on the web page of the technical committee, with the clear reservation, however, that the drafting committee remains free to modify text it has already reviewed if this appears necessary at a later stage, in particular for reasons of overall consistency of the text.

Adoption of committee reports

57. Since 2014, technical committees have delegated to their officers the authority to approve their reports to avoid the holding of an additional committee sitting to adopt the reports before their submission to the plenary. This measure, which in case of reports of standard-setting committees containing a proposed instrument, requires the suspension of article 67 of the Standing Orders, has remained essential for the implementation of the two-week format of the Conference as it obviates the need to hold an additional committee sitting for the report adoption.

⁴ See also [GB.328/WP/GBC/1/2](#), appendix, p. 15 (commentary on art. 26ter).

⁵ For details on standard final provisions, see [GB.286/LILS/1/2](#).

Abolition of the Resolutions Committee

58. The question of the abolition of the Resolutions Committee was not relevant for this session of the Conference as resolutions relating to matters not included in the agenda were not receivable at this session in accordance with article 17(1) of the Conference Standing Orders. It is recalled, however, that the abolition of the Resolutions Committee has already been successfully trialled over the last ten years since it has been suspended, as no resolutions were submitted during that period that could have justified setting up a dedicated committee.

Facilitation of interactive debates and panel discussions

59. The suspension of several provisions of articles 12, 14 and 16 of the Standing Orders has permitted the conduct of the World of Work Summit as planned.

Records of the Conference

60. The suspension of several provisions of article 23 of the Standing Orders has fulfilled its purpose. Further proposals regarding the *Provisional Records* of the Conference are discussed above (paragraphs 29–32).

Draft decision

61. *Following the discussion and lessons learned from the 106th Session of the Conference (June 2017), the Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference recommends that the Governing Body:*
- (a) take note of the successful trialling of the first set of amendments to the Standing Orders of the Conference set out in Appendix II of document GB.329/INS/18;*
 - (b) continue to explore further improvements taking into account the discussion in the Working Party;*
 - (c) request the Director-General to prepare for its consideration at the 332nd Session (March 2018) a detailed plan of work for the 107th Session of the Conference (May–June 2018) based on a two-week format.*