



Governing Body

332nd Session, Geneva, 8–22 March 2018

GB.332/WP/GBC/3

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

WP/GBC

Date: 8 February 2018

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THIRD ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Comprehensive review of the Standing Orders of the Conference

Progress report of the intersessional consultations

1. At its 331st Session (October–November 2017), the Governing Body took the following decision concerning the comprehensive review of the Standing Orders of the Conference:

The Governing Body:

- (a) took note of the additional proposed amendments for the simplification and modernization of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference;
 - (b) requested the Director-General to undertake intersessional email and Geneva-based consultations with the three groups for the purposes of an in-depth review of the proposed amendments and drafting of any additional amendments, as may be necessary; and
 - (c) decided that the progress of such consultations be reported to the Working Party at the 332nd (March 2018), 334th (November 2018) and 335th (March 2019) Sessions of the Governing Body with a view to finalizing a comprehensive package of amendments to the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference for validation by the Working Party and possible approval by the Governing Body in March 2019 as part of the Governance Initiative.¹
2. The intersessional consultation process requested by the Governing Body aims at soliciting the views of the tripartite constituents on the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders of the Conference in an open, transparent, informed and effective manner, in order to facilitate the decision-making process in the Governing Body. No amendment will be decided until such time as the Governing Body takes a decision on the comprehensive set of amendments on the basis of the recommendation of the Working Party, in principle at the 335th Session (March 2019).
 3. It may be recalled that, in November 2017, the three groups endorsed a four-strand approach: deletion of obsolete provisions; codification of current practices; simplification of processes;

¹ GB. 331/PV/Draft, para. 480.

and rationalization of the overall structure of the Standing Orders.² In this context, and given the scope and timeframe of the comprehensive review fixed by the Governing Body, the Office took the view that the review could follow a staged approach, combining the consultations through electronic means and meetings. To facilitate the consultations through electronic correspondence, the Office would prepare consultations forms, inviting comments from constituents on a set of proposed amendments and including an Office explanatory note under each proposed amendment. Based on the feedback received, the Office would prepare a synthesis progress report presenting the results of each round of consultations and/or any revised proposals.

4. In this framework, on 12 December 2017, the Office initiated the intersessional consultation process by seeking the constituents' views on a first set of proposed amendments set forth in a consultation form aiming mainly at deleting specific obsolete provisions (or revising them so that they reflect current practices) identified in documents submitted previously to the Governing Body.³ At the time of the writing of this report, 11 replies had been received.⁴ The respondents were favourable to most of the proposed amendments with some observing that the format of the Standing Orders should be such as to enable constituents to find the information easily. Questions were raised only as regards articles 23(4) (Verbatim reports), 24 (Languages), 72 (Official meetings) and 74 (Non-official meetings).
5. A second set of proposed amendments is being processed for circulation by the beginning of March 2018. This set concerns the codification/modernization of current practices.⁵ The proposed amendments would relate mainly to the provisions in Part I (General standing orders) and Part II, sections A (Order of business at the opening of each session) and I (Conference groups).
6. The Office intends to communicate a third set of proposed amendments which could include the codification/modernization of current practices in relation to the provisions set forth in Part II, sections B to H, before June 2018. Tripartite consultations could be held either in September or October 2018. These consultations could discuss the proposed amendments circulated so far and prepare the second progress report to the Governing Body at its 334th Session (October–November 2018). Based on the views expressed by the Governing Body, a further set of proposed amendments could be communicated by the end of 2018, and a second round of tripartite consultations could be held in January–February 2019 leading up to the examination and possible decision on a comprehensive set of proposed amendments by the Governing Body at its 335th Session (March 2019).

Draft decision

7. ***The Working Party recommends that the Governing Body take note of the progress report on the intersessional consultations concerning the comprehensive review of the Standing Orders and provide guidance on the next stages.***

² [GB.331/INS/17](#), para. 24.

³ [GB.331/WP/GBC/2/2](#), paras 9–19 or [GB.320/LILS/1](#), appendix.

⁴ Replies were received from: the Employers' group, the Workers' group, the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC) and the Governments of: Algeria, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Namibia, Paraguay, Poland, Sweden and Zimbabwe.

⁵ See for example, [GB.331/WP/GBC/2/2](#), paras 20–27; [GB.329/INS/18](#), Appendix II; [GB.320/LILS/1](#), appendix.