



SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Purpose, duration and composition of sectoral meetings to be held in 2007

1. The Governing Body decided on the sectors concerned and the topics for meetings to be held in 2006-07 at its 292nd (March 2005)¹ and 293rd (June 2005) Sessions.² At its 294th Session (November 2005), the Committee was provided with information on the title and timing of six sectoral meetings,³ and decided on the length, size, composition, purpose and output of the Meeting of Experts on Safety and Health in Coal Mines, held in May 2006. At its 295th Session (March 2006), the Governing Body decided on the composition, purpose and duration of tripartite sectoral meetings for commerce (18-20 September 2006); road transport (23-26 October 2006); and mechanical and electrical engineering (16-18 April 2007).
2. During 2007, there will be two more tripartite sectoral meetings, for which a decision concerning their dates was taken at the Governing Body's 294th Session (November 2005) – food and drink (24-28 September 2007) and chemical industries (15-19 October 2007). The Committee may at the present session wish to decide on the length, composition, purpose, output and the appointment of a chairperson for these two meetings.

¹ GB.292/PV, para. 213(c).

² GB.293/5, para. 28.

³ GB.294/STM/1, appendix.

Food, drink, tobacco sector

Tripartite Meeting on the Impact of Global Food Chains on Employment, with emphasis on the need to strengthen social dialogue structures in order to achieve better policy coherence

3. As indicated in the proposal to hold this Meeting,⁴ since food chains worldwide function in an increasingly integrated manner, their governance needs to be guided by coherent policies that are preferably influenced by social dialogue. Although each sector merits tripartite scrutiny on its own in terms of decent work deficits, coherent policy decisions require an intersectoral appraisal of current social and labour issues, and as far as possible within the broader parameters of sustainable development objectives.
4. It is proposed to convene a five-day tripartite meeting (24-28 September 2007) to discuss the impact of global food chains on employment, with emphasis on the need to strengthen social dialogue structures in order to achieve better policy coherence, inviting 18 representatives each from the Workers' and Employers' groups of the Governing Body. A Governing Body representative from the Government group will chair this Meeting.
5. The purpose of the Meeting will be to examine current employment trends across the different sectors and their social and labour implications; and propose measures for institutionalized social dialogue and coherent policy formulation.
6. In addition to a background report prepared by the Office, participants will present thematic papers/case studies for discussion. The Meeting will adopt a report on its discussions and conclusions that include proposals for action by governments, by employers' and workers' organizations and by the ILO. The Committee may wish to recommend that the Meeting also adopt resolutions.

Chemical industries sector

Meeting of Experts to Examine Instruments, Knowledge, Advocacy, Technical Cooperation and Industrial Collaboration as Tools with a View to Developing a Policy Framework for Hazardous Substances

7. At the 292nd Session of the Governing Body (March 2005), it was decided that the Office would organize a meeting of experts on the above topic,⁵ while at the 294th Session, it was decided that the Meeting would last five calendar days (15-19 October 2007).⁶ However, owing to practical considerations concerning the dates of the Meeting so as to permit full tripartite participation, the social partners have requested the Committee to consider increasing the number of experts to 12 each, reducing the duration to four days and proposing new dates (namely, 10-13 December 2007). As has been the practice in the

⁴ GB.292/STM/1.

⁵ GB.292/STM/1.

⁶ GB.294/STM/1.

recent past, the Director-General proposes to appoint, after consultation with the groups of the Governing Body, a knowledgeable chairperson from outside the Meeting, thereby enabling all the invited experts to play a full part in the Meeting.

8. The proposed change in the number of experts would have financial implications. The Office budgeted for a meeting of experts based on the current practice of inviting 24 experts for five working days. The additional costs of inviting 12 more experts would, the Office estimates, require an increase of roughly one-third in costs compared to the original estimates, although some savings would be made because of the shorter duration. Adjustments would be required in the programme of sectoral meetings and follow-up activities in order to absorb these additional costs of some US\$27,000.
9. The Committee may wish to recommend that the purpose of the Meeting be to discuss how ILO instruments and other tools concerning occupational safety and health and hazardous substances could be best incorporated into a new policy framework and action plan. The Meeting could also examine best practices and appropriate national legal frameworks to promote safe and healthy working environments; review the roles of governments, and employers' and workers' organizations; and examine ways of establishing tripartite consultation mechanisms on occupational safety and health, and of ensuring that workers and their organizations participate in the consultation mechanisms and thereby build a preventative safety and health culture at work. The Meeting should also consider the impact of new and ongoing initiatives related to hazardous substances, including the UN-wide Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The Meeting could adopt recommendations that would be the basis of subsequent ILO action.
10. The Director-General proposes that the governments of the following 12 countries be invited to nominate experts who would participate in the Meeting in their personal capacity: Australia, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States. Those countries account for more than 60 per cent of employment in chemicals worldwide. It is also proposed that the Meeting be attended by 12 experts nominated after consultations with the Employers' group, and 12 after consultations with the Workers' group of the Governing Body.
11. It is further proposed that, should any of the governments in paragraph 10 decline to nominate an expert, one of the following governments would be invited to do so: Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland or Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
12. *The Committee may wish to make recommendations to the Governing Body in respect of the Meeting on the Impact of Global Food Chains on Employment, and of the Meeting of Experts to Examine Instruments, Knowledge, Advocacy, Technical Cooperation and Industrial Collaboration as Tools with a View to Developing a Policy Framework for Hazardous Substances, concerning the timing and duration of the meetings, their purpose, the appointment of a chairperson for each meeting, the size of the meeting, and (as appropriate) the governments to be invited to nominate an expert and the countries to be included on the reserve list, as proposed in paragraphs 3-6 and 7-11.*

Geneva, 3 October 2006.

Point for decision: Paragraph 12.