



## EIGHTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Reports of the Programme, Financial and  
Administrative Committee****Second report: Personnel questions***Contents*

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## **I. Statement by the staff representative** (Fifteenth item on the agenda)

1. The statement by the staff representative is reproduced in the appendix to the present report.

## **II. Composition and structure of the staff** (Eighteenth item on the agenda)

2. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>1</sup> on the composition and structure of the staff. The Chairperson informed the Committee that the document had been submitted for information.
3. Mr Blondel, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, welcomed the fact that, for the second time, the information in the document came from the IRIS system. On the issue of the implementation of IRIS in field offices, he hoped that every precaution had been taken with respect to staff training, in particular, and concerning infrastructure. Given that the system still seemed to have a bad press at headquarters, it would be a good idea to ensure that the necessary funds were available for roll-out to the field. To this end, the Workers wished to know the amount budgeted for the operation, as well as the specifications.
4. On the issue of social dialogue, the speaker was surprised to hear the Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee state that IRIS was not yet able to produce information about the movements of headquarters and field staff for use by staff representatives.
5. Progress appeared to have been made in regard to equality between men and women in the Office, as shown by tables II and IV. The speaker was glad to see that the percentage of women in the Professional category had risen from 38.9 to 40.5, even though much remained to be done, particularly with respect to recruitment (charts VI and VII).
6. With respect to table IV(b), the Workers warned the Committee about the possible adverse effects of rebalancing the grade structure of the ILO. The downgrading of certain posts should not entail an increase in the workload of staff at lower grades. To avoid a deterioration in working conditions, rebalancing the grade structure should be carried out in consultation with the Staff Union, on the basis of transparent criteria.
7. As the Staff representative had pointed out, it was important to ensure that participation in the "One United Nations" process did not affect the acquired advantages of staff of the ILO, its competence with respect to tripartism or specific aspects of its training.
8. The Workers disapproved of the low level of representation from Africa among the staff, and once again asked the administration to ensure during the recruitment process that each country was represented by at least one staff member.
9. The youth recruitment policy should be pursued, not necessarily to increase the number of interns, but rather to ensure staff renewal.
10. Concerning contracts, the Workers were conscious that it was not possible to avoid using different types of contract and that, given the different needs and activities, all Office workers could not have a permanent contract. However, they warned against having a

<sup>1</sup> GB.298/PFA/18.

systematic policy, which was being practised in other organizations, of granting so-called “mobility” contracts, which were basically a form of outsourcing. The ILO should set the example, not copy what other organizations did.

11. To conclude, Mr Blondel requested that his group be provided with statistics about the number of workers with disabilities at the ILO, in particular those with mobility impairments.
12. Mr Barde, speaking on behalf of the Employers’ group, declared that the Employers’ main concern about the document was the very small number of people from business recruited in an organization primarily concerned with the world of work. The Employers were not in favour of fixing a minimum quota of persons with disabilities among the staff because they felt that quotas were demeaning to the people who benefited from them.
13. The representative of the Government of South Africa, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, thanked the Office for the document, produced for the second time by IRIS, which had resulted in greater accuracy in the reporting for headquarters-based staff and international professional staff based in the field. He noted that recruitment of men in 2006 exceeded that of women, and that more work was needed to recruit from under- and non-represented countries. He also requested information on the steps taken to recruit persons with disabilities and on the number of vacant positions likely to be filled as a result of retirements up until 2009.
14. The representative of the Government of France thanked the Office for this important document. He would have preferred to see the human resources strategy paper included as part of the programme and budget discussions. He requested more information on the number of vacant positions and asked the Office to consider the impact of some of the information shown, for instance whether the reduction in the number of staff at the end of 2006 was part of a trend, or to explain the future implications of one-quarter of the staff being aged over 55 years. He also considered that the number of external collaborators should be limited. He concluded that the review of the field structure and UN reform would result in uncertainties for all the staff, as well as for the Office. In this regard, he noted that a carefully planned management of jobs and positions would be useful.
15. The representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea thanked the Office for the document, and noted the reduction in staff at the P5 grade and above, as well as a small reduction in the grades below P5. He applauded the efforts of the Office made in this regard. Nevertheless, he noted with concern that 48 per cent of the Professional and higher category staff were P5 or above, and that 68.3 per cent of the staff in this category were over 46 years of age. He urged the Office to continue its work to rebalance the grade structure. He asked for some clarifications regarding the total number of staff and requested the Office to prepare a plan to further improve the geographical distribution of staff.
16. The representative of the Government of Japan thanked the Office for the document, noting that the information provided on regional diversity and on the grade structure were important elements of the human resources strategy. She considered that the reduction in the number of staff at the P5 level demonstrated the Office’s commitment to redressing the grade balance and looked forward to seeing continued improvement at the November 2007 session.
17. Mr Levin, Chief of the Human Resources Operations and Development Branch (HR/OPS), thanked the Committee for the useful ideas and suggestions emerging from the discussion, and expressed satisfaction with the accuracy of human resources reports now being generated by IRIS. He suggested to the Committee that the paper on progress made on the

implementation of the human resources strategy, which would be submitted to the November 2007 session, would provide an opportunity to present progress made in a number of areas of the strategy.

18. On recruitment issues, Mr Levin informed the Committee that work was continuing to broaden geographic diversity and indicated that the number of unrepresented nationalities had been reduced further to 58. A prospection database, which included ministries of labour, as well as employers' and workers' organizations, was now being used to notify constituents in under-represented countries regularly of vacancies. Concerning the grade structure, he noted that the Office was continuously working towards rebalancing its current grade structure. He explained that this was being done through the appropriate technical classification of vacant positions, which graded each vacant position taking into account the level of responsibilities, difficulty of the job and context of the job. As to the representation of African nationalities among the staff, from the viewpoint of the Office, Africa as a whole was quite adequately represented, the issue being that certain countries in Africa were not represented at all. He confirmed that the Office was continuing its efforts to address this situation. Concerning the rejuvenation of staff, he pointed out that the Office was expecting quite a large number of retirements in the coming years. He indicated that three-quarters of the newly recruited staff were under 45 years of age. Recruiting much younger staff might compromise the requirement that staff who would be called upon to provide advice to constituents at the international level had sufficient experience. He informed the Committee that the Office was making continued efforts to recruit suitably qualified persons with disabilities, as well as providing appropriate accommodation for current staff with disabilities. The Human Resources Development Department (HRD) was working closely with the Medical Service in this respect.

### **III. Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the International Civil Service Commission (Nineteenth item on the agenda)**

19. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>2</sup> on decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the International Civil Service Commission. The Chairperson informed the Committee that the point for decision was contained in paragraph 22.
20. Mr. Barde, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, stated that his group took note of the financial implications of the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly and supported the point for decision.
21. Mr Blondel, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, referred to the reduction of the period of eligibility for the mobility allowance in the ICSC proposals that had been approved by the United Nations General Assembly, and suggested that the Office give some thought to the fact that, given that the purpose of a mobility allowance was to encourage mobility, some way of compensating for the effect of the decision would have to be found through negotiations with the Staff Union.
22. Concerning paragraph 11 of the paper, it was to be hoped that the review of the ILO's contracts policy carried out by the Human Resources Development Department would contribute to the fight against precarious employment, and that the progress made by the Office in abiding by standards in this regard would not be undermined.

<sup>2</sup> GB.298/PFA/19.

23. The Workers were prepared to support the point for decision in paragraph 22.
24. The representative of HRD informed the Committee that a joint working group, made up of representatives of the administration and the Staff Union Committee, under the auspices of the Joint Negotiating Committee, continued to work constructively on contracts policy. He assured the Committee that action had been taken to improve the controls over the use of external collaboration contracts, and HRD had held an information session with managers and Funds Control Officers on this matter. Discussions had taken place with managers to identify alternative contract arrangements for individuals in cases where inappropriate contracts had been issued.
25. With regard to mobility, he acknowledged the fact that a certain number of colleagues had been in their duty stations in the field for longer than what would be considered the appropriate term of duty. Work was continuing to transfer these colleagues either to headquarters or to other field duty stations. He indicated that the introduction of the Resourcing, Assignment and Placement System (RAPS) in 2007 should provide a platform for greater mobility.
26. *The Committee recommended that the Governing Body note the action taken by the Director-General to give effect to the measures adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and in particular endorse the proposals in paragraphs 6 and 9.*

#### **IV. Pensions questions**

**(a) Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board**  
(Twentieth item on the agenda)

27. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>3</sup> on decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, which was for information.
28. Mr Blondel, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, welcomed the good news in paragraph 2 concerning the surplus resulting from Fund investment performance, and the possibility of revising benefits that had been affected by the actuarial deficit in the 1980s.
29. Concerning paragraph 4 and the admission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a new member organization of the Fund, the speaker would have liked to have been able to say that the IOM's work was directly inspired by ILO standards protecting migrant workers. But this was not the case, and he deplored the fact that certain organizations that were not part of the UN system and had no intention of placing themselves under its authority nonetheless tried to take advantage of their involvement in the coordination of the system.
30. With regard to paragraph 7, the speaker was concerned to see that the views of the representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the investment experts had prevailed in regard to the Fund's investments. It would be preferable for such decisions to be taken by those who would ultimately have to take political responsibility for them.

<sup>3</sup> GB.298/PFA/20/1.

31. The representative of the Government of Nigeria supported Mr Blondel's comments about the admission of the IOM to the Fund. She cautioned against admitting any type of international or non-governmental organization, as some of these organizations might not conform to ILO or UN system standards and values.
32. The representative of HRD explained that the Fund already had member organizations that did not belong to the UN system. However, all organizations had to adopt the UN salary and pensionable remuneration scales before they could join the Fund.

**(b) Report of the Board of Trustees of the Special Payments Fund**

33. The Committee noted without comment a paper<sup>4</sup> that had been submitted for information.

**V. Matters relating to the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO**  
(Twenty-first item on the agenda)

**(a) Recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE)**

34. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>5</sup> on recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE).
35. The Employers' group was glad to see that new organizations were interested in recognizing the Tribunal's jurisdiction. However, it wondered whether the CDE met all the criteria laid down in the Tribunal's Statute, in particular with regard to the concept of an international organization, given that the Centre was entirely funded by the European Union, and to the permanent nature of its functions, since the Cotonou Agreement had entered into force on 1 April 2003 for a term of 20 years. The Employers' group also wondered what impact recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by other organizations would have on the Tribunal's caseload.
36. The Workers' group pointed out that the Tribunal's caseload was not directly correlated with the number of organizations that recognized its jurisdiction, rather with the way in which each organization managed its staff, including its internal system of dispute resolution. With regard to the Tribunal's jurisdiction, the Workers' group requested information on any progress made concerning the possibility of a staff association bringing a collective action on its own behalf before the Tribunal.
37. The Deputy Legal Adviser explained that the annex to the Tribunal's Statute lay down certain conditions under which an organization that was not clearly intergovernmental in character might aspire to recognizing the Tribunal's jurisdiction. The Office considered that the Centre fulfilled these conditions, and its international character had also been confirmed by the Legal Service of the European Commission. That legal opinion had been included in the file prepared by the Office concerning the CDE's request. Regarding the

<sup>4</sup> GB.298/PFA/20/2.

<sup>5</sup> GB.298/PFA/21/1.

question raised by the Workers' group, he explained that a consensus had not yet been reached with the other organizations that had recognized the Tribunal's jurisdiction.

**38. *In the light of the above, the Committee recommends that the Governing Body approve the recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE), with effect from the date of such approval.***

**(b) Composition of the Tribunal**

**39.** The Committee had before it a paper <sup>6</sup> on the composition of the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO, proposing that the terms of judges Mr Gordillo and Mr Rouiller be renewed and that Mr Patrick Frydman (France) be appointed to replace Mr Michel Gentot, who is leaving the Tribunal, having reached the age limit of 75 years.

**40.** The Workers' group expressed its appreciation for Mr Gentot's competence and independence.

**41. *The Committee, through the draft resolution below:***

**(a) *recommends to the Governing Body and, through it to the Conference, that they convey to Mr Gentot their appreciation for the services he has rendered to the work of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization over the past 15 years as judge, Vice-President and President of the Tribunal;***

**(b) *recommends to the Governing Body that it propose to the 96th Session of the International Labour Conference:***

**(i) *the renewal of the term of office of Mr Gordillo and Mr Rouiller for three years;***

**(ii) *the appointment of Mr Frydman for a term of office of three years.***

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

*Decides*, in accordance with article III of the Statute of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization,

(a) to express to Mr Michel Gentot its appreciation for the services he has rendered to the work of the Administrative Tribunal over the past 15 years as judge, Vice-President and President of the Tribunal;

(b) to renew the appointments of Mr Agustín Gordillo (Argentina) and Mr Claude Rouiller (Switzerland) for a term of three years;

(c) to appoint Mr Patrick Frydman (France) for a term of three years.

Geneva, 22 March 2007.

*Points for decision:* Paragraph 26;  
Paragraph 38;  
Paragraph 41.

<sup>6</sup> GB.298/PFA/21/2.



## Appendix

### **Statement made by the representative of the Staff Union to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee of the ILO (March 2007)**

Director-General, Members of the Governing Body, colleagues, friends,

1. It is with great pleasure that, in my role as an official of this Organization with over 18 years' experience, as a Spaniard and a woman, and now also as Chairperson of the Staff Union, I address you here today.
2. Alongside the technical topics specific to our mandate, you have before you on the agenda of this session issues which are central to the development of the Organization, such as the programme and budget for the next biennium, proposals for work as a specialized agency under the United Nations reform process, and progress reports regarding the new human resources strategies (aimed at adjusting to new management approaches and a more rational use of existing resources). These are all subjects that reflect the ILO's nature as a modern organization within the system, mindful of the needs of today's world. Against this background, the Staff Union Committee considers these proposals to be of great interest and wishes to express its modest opinion from the point of view of those who work, on a daily basis, to fulfil this mandate – the staff of our Organization. Please allow me, therefore, to speak on their behalf.
3. The reform of the United Nations, outlined in the statements made by my predecessors, remains the focus of attention and action by our Director-General, in response to our constituents, who have made it clear in various forums that a change is necessary within the new context of the Organization. However, we know very little about the impact this reform may have on staff (has this even been discussed?). The much publicized concept of "One United Nations" has raised many concerns in the field and in particular among those of our colleagues who are working in the pilot countries. Will we need to amend our Constitution? Must we revise our Staff Regulations and radically amend our rights and duties in order to adapt to the others? Will the reforms affect our regulations, and will they alter our own acquired rights? These are only a few of the unanswered questions surrounding this issue. The Staff Union Committee feels that there is a need to dispel this uncertainty and build the necessary trust for us to move forward without fear and in possession of the facts, and urges management to provide answers. The staff want to know what is going on, and they cannot be kept waiting. This is a matter of priority, in our view.
4. However, there is also some uncertainty with regard to other more obvious issues which are closer at hand and which will be discussed over the coming days. Again, answers have not been forthcoming, and this is indicative of some of the failings regarding the internal implementation of a number of decisions taken centrally within the framework of the United Nations, in particular by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The paper before you, document GB.298/PFA/19, reviews mobility and hardship allowances for our staff, putting into practice the proposals made by the ICSC. The document suggests that this measure is aimed at rationalizing and improving international staff's benefits based on the mobility that is inherent in their status. There will certainly be benefits for our colleagues at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Red Cross, but will this be the case in the ILO?
5. Circular No. 658, Series 6, does lay down specific measures regarding mobility in the ILO, but is it being applied and, if so, then to what extent? In our field offices we now have international staff who have spent over six years at the same duty station, despite repeated requests to be transferred to other offices. Here I should like to remind you that

paragraph 7 of the said circular states that postings in the field will last from three to five years, which is somewhat contradictory in the light of the above. It is these same staff members who are adversely affected by a measure which grants benefits linked to mobility and who suffer obvious losses in salary resulting solely from the failure to implement a rational policy with regard to transfers and the filling of posts. Another recurring problem in the field, as a consequence of the common provisions, arises from the methodology used in calculating the salaries of local staff, and the possible economic consequences of its application. The Director-General expressed his interest when addressing the trade unions of the Americas, and we are now awaiting follow-up.

6. The same document refers to the new contractual arrangements, again decided on by the ICSC in the name of so-called “rationalization” of the system. On the basis of dialogue, in which we firmly believe, a staff–management working group has been trying for several months, within the framework of the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), to find solutions and achieve results with the aim of implementing the general measures without affecting the staff. So far, these efforts have met with little success. Nevertheless, it is difficult to take action when there are no clear data (apparently that eternal culprit, IRIS, is to blame), controls are inadequate and there is precarious employment in terms of a marked tendency in certain sectors to use inappropriate contracts that fail to respect the nature of the underlying employment relationship and that deny the persons concerned the social benefits to which they should be entitled.
7. For the administration, precarious employment means ensuring that short-term contracts do not exceed 364 days (commendable in terms of following the rules, but it is not enough). In the view of the Committee, based on the traditional approach of labour law, precarious employment means the existence of a permanent number of external collaboration contracts that are not subject to control by the Human Resources Development Department (HRD), and are used without any regard for regulations, without effective supervision and clearly as a way of avoiding fixed-term contracts which, while more costly, grant the benefits to which all staff members are entitled. It also includes service contracts in the field, which are similar to external collaboration contracts in that they allow the recruitment of cheap, unprotected labour within the framework of technical cooperation. The figures are unclear, but the signs are no less alarming for all that: according to our information there are some 400 service contracts in the field and an average of three to five dubious external collaboration contracts per unit at headquarters. We are currently negotiating and will continue to do so, but some real control is required.
8. The future for staff members beyond retirement is also uncertain. Document GB.298/PFA/20/1 refers to the investments of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. However, we feel that paragraph 7 of the document contains certain inaccuracies: the staff representatives did not oppose the passive management of the North American portfolio, rather they preferred that the choice be made in light of the results of the asset-liability management study and a clear forecast setting out the possible advantages and disadvantages of this management mode. However, this was not done, and the General Assembly decided merely to take note of the change without intervening, contrary to the advice given by the United Nations Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).
9. As you can see, the situation is uncertain, but the Staff Union Committee remains willing and open to dialogue. Joint working groups are making efforts to move forward on the revision of the two collective agreements in force, one on recruitment and selection and the other on training and personal development, while other such groups, in addition to the one already mentioned on contract policy, are trying to make progress on a policy for work–life balance and on a review of the grading system, which is the source of 40 per cent of cases under the formal dispute resolution system.
10. We are pleased with these developments, and with some of the progress made: a breastfeeding room to make things easier for our colleagues who are working mothers;

recognition of the benefit entitlements of same-sex couples (although we believe that more progress is needed towards acknowledging the rights of legally recognized couples, irrespective of their sexual orientation, in order to avoid discrimination), along with an initial framework agreement to review the recruitment and selection process, based on the collective agreement. In this regard, it should be recalled that the Staff Union would like to see the principles of transparency and equity respected throughout the process and selection to be made on the basis of considerations of technical ability and excellence at all levels, and that it considers that competition offers the best way of achieving this.

11. In addition to this progress, we recognize the improvements made to the functioning of the system for resolving disputes, in particular the Office of the Mediator and the Appeals Board, which, as a result of the groundwork laid by both sides and the considerable efforts of the people currently in charge, are bearing well deserved fruit, with a visible impact on staff and the development of labour relations. The Staff Union is pleased to have participated, together with the administration, in consolidating this process.
12. Achievements, progress – yes, but not enough, especially considering the enormous amount of confusion that exists across the board between the rights to information, consultation and negotiation with staff. Take the example of the Personal Development Plan – remember that? Once a collective agreement on training and development plans had been concluded and the first pilot stages of implementation had begun, the agreement was set aside (like our international standards) and replaced by measures dictated by the administration, after only consultations (not bargaining by staff), despite the fact that an agreement was still in force, although it was not being applied. However effective or otherwise it may be, the situation is still confused so far as the interpretation of collective rights is concerned. Recent agreements reached through the Joint Negotiating Committee appear to be aimed at clarifying the situation, and a new revised agreement is envisaged as a logical solution, but the underlying situation is still confusing, at least from the staff's point of view.
13. Work, as you can see, is proceeding slowly, since decision-making sometimes takes an excessively long time. Furthermore, even once an agreement has been concluded, actual implementation takes an eternity and is often bureaucratically impossible. Let me give you some examples. In 2005, some 1,000 retirees requested the administration to issue a document certifying that their salaries had been taxed at source, so as to avoid double taxation on their pensions. Since then, after more than two years have elapsed, and despite recognition of the need to respond to a reasonable request, this matter has been passed from one unit to another without any reply being received. What happened to mobility and how it relates to career development? Both issues have been mentioned before, but obviously they are further examples of sluggish decision-making.
14. The programme and budget presented for your consideration, in the chapter on governance, support and management, contains proposals for improving human resources in an effective and efficient manner. Nothing could be more important to us and we agree entirely that it should be done, but paragraph 324 proposes the logical use of IRIS in the field to integrate appropriate functionalities, based on its alleged benefits in terms of saving time and resources. Allow me to remind you of the human cost when IRIS was introduced at headquarters. Have appropriate measures been planned to avoid repercussions and guarantee a smooth transition? Has an effective cost-benefit analysis for its application been carried out? We need to consider, in this regard, document GB.298/PFA/ITCS/2, which, in paragraph 29, establishes a task team to extend IRIS to external offices, although unfortunately, and in spite of the user experience it could bring, the Staff Union has not been included in the team's deliberations. We are concerned about stress and working conditions, in all areas, and about safety and health (for example, document GB.298/PFA/BS/2 gives us renewed cause for concern about the presence of asbestos; we hope that the proposed measures will be effective), and we would like to see a coherent policy which addresses prevention applied to these issues.

15. We are pleased to see that the proposed programme and budget contains proposals to reduce the time spent on the recruitment process (between the date a vacancy is announced and a recruitment recommendation being made) to 90 days. We hope that in March 2008 we will be able to congratulate the Human Resources Development Department on achieving this, which would be so beneficial to everyone, although our experience in such matters makes us somewhat sceptical in this regard. Moreover, the document makes no mention of the period preceding the vacancy announcement, forgetting that it is frequently more drawn out than the selection process itself. Is this really an improvement?
16. The situation, as you can see, is clearly nebulous. On the one hand, progress in dialogue, direct contact, periodic meetings, cordial relations, which I would describe as constructive; on the other, an element of discretion being applied to certain decisions (the famous exceptions to the rules), and often a clear failure to verify the application of those rules, which lead to an increase in the number of personal cases, stressful situations, including collective situations, and the general uncertainty already mentioned. A new concept – manager accountability (included as outcome 2.1 in the programme and budget under governance, under which managers are subject to review using a system which we do not as yet know about) – has been introduced, which no one has defined specifically and which is a cause for concern, since, given that managers were already avoiding taking decisions before so as not to have to deal with problems, if they are now to be judged against a new standard, we fear the cure might be worse than the disease. As a union, we agree with effective administration and we support the Human Resources Development Department in exercising effective management and real control, but something has “come loose” in the process and is stopping it from being truly effective. Allow me to point out that efficiency should perhaps include supporting our colleagues’ work with staff and resources. We are convinced that, without the necessary means, the ends, however modest, cannot be achieved.
17. Last, but no less important, let me draw your attention again to the recurrent questions raised in recent years which have still not been answered. Will it be possible one day for the Staff Union to take collective legal action as provided for in its collective agreements (and which is part of any labour relations system) and for it to give its legal adviser the proper status, with the support of the Office? This is not a new issue, but it has still not been resolved – another example of sluggish decision-making.
18. Allow me to conclude by assuring you of our availability, openness and constructive working spirit. We want to further the cause of progress, convinced as we are of the ILO’s aims, but we need guarantees of full respect for the rights of our colleagues. Thank you for your patience and attention.