



Fourth item on the agenda: Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction
(general discussion based on an integrated approach)

Report of the Committee on Rural Employment

1. The Committee on Rural Employment met for its first sitting on 28 May 2008. Initially, it consisted of 156 members (73 Government members, 30 Employer members and 53 Worker members). To achieve equality of voting strength, each Government member was allotted 1,590 votes, each Employer member 3,869 votes and each Worker member 2,190 votes. The composition of the Committee was modified seven times during the session and the number of votes attributed to each member adjusted accordingly.¹

¹ The modifications were as follows:

- (a) 29 May: 185 members (89 Government members entitled to vote with 1,102 votes each, 38 Employer members with 2,581 votes each and 58 Worker members with 1,691 votes each);
- (b) 30 May: 174 members (97 Government members entitled to vote with 1,462 votes each, 34 Employer members with 4,171 votes each and 43 Worker members with 3,298 votes each);
- (c) 5 June a.m.: 148 members (105 Government members entitled to vote with 26 votes each, 13 Employer members with 210 votes each and 30 Worker members with 91 votes each);
- (d) 5 June p.m.: 146 members (105 Government members entitled to vote with 96 votes each, 9 Employer members with 1,120 votes each and 32 Worker members with 315 votes each);
- (e) 6 June a.m.: 146 members (105 Government members entitled to vote with 96 votes each, 9 Employer members with 1,120 votes each and 32 Worker members with 315 votes each);
- (f) 6 June p.m.: 141 members (106 Government members entitled to vote with 117 votes each, 9 Employer members with 1,378 votes each and 26 Worker members with 477 votes each);
- (g) 9 June: 141 members (106 Government members entitled to vote with 117 votes each, 9 Employer members with 1,378 votes each and 26 Worker members with 477 votes each).

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2. The Committee elected its Officers as follows:

Chairperson: Mr Ngosa Chisupa (Government member, Zambia)

Vice-Chairpersons: Mr Philip O'Reilly (Employer member, New Zealand) and Mr James Ritchie (Worker member, New Zealand)

Reporter: Ms Eva Fehringer (Government member, Austria)

3. The Committee had before it Report IV, entitled *Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction*, prepared by the Office under item IV of the agenda of the International Labour Conference: "Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction – General discussion based on an integrated approach".
4. The Committee held 14 sittings.

Introduction

5. The Chairperson thanked the Government member of Kenya for nominating him to the role, the Government member of New Zealand for seconding the nomination, and the Committee for the honour of his appointment. He thanked the secretariat for the report prepared, which provided a useful basis for discussion. He explained that the mandate of the Committee was to exchange views and experiences on the topic of the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction with the aim to reach conclusions and submit them to the Conference for their consideration and adoption.
6. The representative of the Secretary-General (Mr Michael Henriques, Director of the Job Creation and Enterprise Development Department), welcomed all Government, Employer and Worker members and representatives of non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations to this discussion on the promotion of rural employment. The item for discussion had been chosen by the Governing Body in March 2006.
7. Report IV highlighted that some 3.4 billion women and men – slightly less than half of the world's population and three-quarters of the world's poor – live in rural areas. The promotion of decent employment in rural areas was therefore a key prerequisite for advancing the global Decent Work Agenda, and for moving towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including the first Goal: to halve the number of people earning less than US\$1 per day and the number of people who suffer from hunger. The rural and urban spheres were increasingly interconnected, and much of today's urban poverty was simply yesterday's rural poverty displaced. Similarly, national and international dimensions were increasingly interlinked through value chains and other aspects of globalization which had opened up both opportunities and challenges for employment promotion and poverty reduction in rural areas.
8. While the last general discussion on rural employment had taken place 20 years ago, it was useful to recall that previous sessions of the International Labour Conference had discussed related topics: human resources and training development in 2000, social security in 2001, decent work and the informal economy in 2002, migrant workers in 2004, youth employment in 2005, and the promotion of sustainable enterprises in 2007. A number of recent international labour standards had addressed issues directly or indirectly related to rural employment, including the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193), the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195), and the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198). In addition, Report I(A) of the Director-General: *Reducing the decent work deficit – A global challenge* of the International Labour

Conference in 2001, and Report I(A) of the Director-General: *Working out of poverty* of the International Labour Conference in 2003, dealt with issues of great relevance for the rural sector.

9. The challenge before the Committee was to draw up a comprehensive strategy to promote productive employment and decent work for poverty reduction in rural areas around the world and to suggest an integrated plan of action for the ILO to support this strategy. The Governing Body had indicated that the Committee should follow an integrated approach, in which rural employment was approached from a broad perspective comprising all four ILO strategic objectives in recognition of the fact that decent work provides an organizing concept or framework for addressing multiple challenges of pro-poor rural employment. The dramatic increase in food prices in recent months had underscored the need for sustainable agriculture that provided decent livelihoods for workers and their families and sufficient foodstuffs to feed the world. The outcome of the discussion would provide guidance for the Office's work on the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction. The representative of the Secretary-General concluded by recalling the seven proposed points for discussion.
10. The Employer Vice-Chairperson drew attention to a number of current realities such as rising food prices around the world, demographic changes, and climate change. While recognizing these challenges, he also noted a number of positive aspects: unprecedented growth of developing country economies; global economic integration and rapid technological advances that presented even the smallest producers in the poorest countries with increased opportunities to sell their products in the richest markets; the emergence of global production processes that enabled companies to offer new, cheaper, more flexible and higher quality goods and services; and development of labour-intensive high-tech service industries in low-income countries and, as a result, increased high-income services jobs and boosted economic growth.
11. The speaker emphasized that the discussion over the next few days should focus on the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction. Guiding principles in the development of national rural employment strategies included: the need for sound agricultural development policies; a focus on both farm and non-farm employment in rural areas; the importance of the framework for sustainable rural development policies; and the need for further development of trade and competition. Agriculture was an important element of a rural development strategy; a national rural employment strategy should be guided by sound agricultural development policies. Rural employment, both farm and non-farm, was essential for poverty alleviation.
12. The most important element for sustainable rural development policies was to establish an enabling policy framework, which consisted of transparent and corruption-free democracy and governance, transparent and unbureaucratic regulatory frameworks that stimulated innovation and promoted competition, open trade and investment policies, pro-growth macroeconomic policies, productive physical and social infrastructure, investment in education and skills development, inclusive labour market policies, employability and sustainable social protection systems, a culture of entrepreneurship and a climate of dialogue and cooperation. However, poverty and wealth cut across rural and urban areas, and rural areas differed remarkably between regions, countries and localities. While rural producers in some countries received elaborate support from their governments, in others they were heavily taxed. In some countries, developments in technology and infrastructure meant that populations were moving from urban to rural areas, whereas in others, migration was mainly rural to urban. High commodity prices in some developing countries were leading to social crises, whereas in others they were producing a windfall for poor farmers.

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- 13.** Four main principles were needed to guide the work of the ILO in developing a framework for sustainable rural development strategies: first, as the only agency uniquely tasked with a mandate covering the world of work, it must use this comparative advantage in strategy development; second, it should not replicate the work of others; third, it should be focused and realistic about what could be achieved in the confines of its mandate; and finally, it should analyse its value added. In strategy development, consideration should be given to what was currently being done by all actors, and what could be learnt from those experiences, what improvements could be made, where difficult policy challenges had been effected successfully and how, and where policy had been harmful to development.
 - 14.** The speaker concluded by listing several factors to achieve long-term sustainable growth in rural employment. He stressed the need for a commitment to an environment that enables growth which includes: concentration on the rule of law; investment in skills and infrastructure; sound macroeconomic policies; open trade policies; inclusive and appropriate labour market policies; and a culture of entrepreneurship. Sensible and workable agricultural development policies were required to enable more workers to escape poverty, and ongoing commitment to trade and economic openness would help countries seize the opportunities offered by the integrated global economy.
 - 15.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson emphasized that decent rural employment was critical to ensure poverty reduction; at the same time, governments excluded agriculture from labour legislation or had lower standards for agriculture. Agricultural and rural development called for massive investment by both the public and private sectors to achieve decent rural employment and poverty reduction. Rising commodity prices had not automatically benefited small farmers and wage workers. There were significant decent work deficits in rural areas; in particular, governance reforms to ensure freedom of association were essential.
 - 16.** Available statistics confirmed the continued major role of agriculture in providing employment. Agriculture was the main source of employment for women, and gender considerations should be central in the discussions. Employment in agriculture was multidimensional and therefore hard to define; more data on rural labour markets, wages and specific sectors were required to generate much needed and more coherent policies among the UN agencies.
 - 17.** Investment and growth in rural areas were needed but were not enough to ensure more jobs. More emphasis should be given to job creation in agriculture. Major efforts should be made to improve the skills and motivation of the workforce, in order to effectively manage inputs and also to ensure meeting the increasing demand for organic food.
 - 18.** The ILO had a role to play in ensuring that the employment dimension was tackled in the growing debate about carbon emissions, and ensuring food security for local and national residents. Current trade agreements were not delivering for rural workers and the urban poor, and simply focusing on removing trade barriers would be harmful. Dumping policies had had damaging effects: regulation of agricultural markets was needed to protect the working people and their families. The link between trade and employment should be taken into account during the discussions, as well as the need to promote sound labour and social practices in transnational supply chains. The Worker Vice-Chairperson also called for measures to improve social protection, in particular calling attention to the initiatives like the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India.
 - 19.** The decent work deficit in agriculture was enormous. Lack of freedom of association in agriculture had been noted many times in the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and was highlighted again in Report I(A) submitted to the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference. Special

efforts were also needed to promote ratification of the ILO Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), and for the elimination of child labour in agriculture. Collective bargaining also played a critical role in extending good governance in rural areas.

- 20.** In closing, the Worker Vice-Chairperson suggested that the action plan proposed in the report should be more specific, and that the report should reflect such important issues as violence against rural workers and their trade unions, access to land, child labour, as well as social, employment and environment impact of biofuels. He called on the ILO to increase the amount of resources put into work in agriculture, given the sheer size of the rural labour force, and underscored the important role of governments in putting the action plan into practice. Better horizontal linkages were needed within governments when dealing with rural areas, which the ILO should help to establish. He counted on the willingness of all parties to discuss the real challenges of providing decent work in rural areas.
- 21.** The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the European Union (EU),² as well as candidate countries Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia; Iceland, Norway; Republic of Moldova, Ukraine; and Armenia, stressed the importance of the context of sustainable development, as well as the need to address the consequences of climate change. The implementation of labour standards, pro-poor growth and equity were needed. Efforts should be made to formalize economic activities in the informal economy without jeopardizing the means of livelihoods of the poor; improve access to finance and social services; and protect property rights. It was imperative to ensure rights at work for women and to ensure non-discriminatory access to education and training for women and girls. Better social and economic inclusion was essential, through active involvement of social partners and other relevant stakeholders, especially farmers and representatives of workers in agriculture, and the strengthening of workers' and employers' organizations. Rural development should be part of a national development strategy and should be based on improved statistics to monitor progress towards the MDGs. The ILO's efforts to extend social protection and promote a global social floor needed to be supported, especially against the background of the current rise of food prices.
- 22.** The Government member of Canada highlighted the usefulness of the strategic objectives proposed in the report in guiding the ILO and its Members in their search for integrated solutions to decent work deficits in rural areas. Essential elements included investments to facilitate access of vulnerable groups to quality education, vocational training and lifelong learning, along with appropriate investment in the fields of technology and research.
- 23.** The Government member of Mexico emphasized that rural employment was very important in his country due to its relevance for the livelihood of indigenous peoples and migrant workers. Concerning the proposed plan of action for the ILO, he suggested paying close attention to differences between countries and regions. The root causes of poverty in rural areas should be targeted; constituents' needs should be taken into account; and appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be included. To conclude, he suggested taking into account the recent United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2007.

² Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

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24. The Government member of the United States noted that sustainable economic growth, when widely shared, offered the surest way to generate the resources needed to address illiteracy, inadequate skills, poor health, unsafe jobs, and many other ills that were so closely linked to rural poverty. Growth depended on an economic environment that encouraged investment, supported good governance and transparency and minimized work disincentives. He underlined the effectiveness of territorial-based approaches to rural development.
 25. The Government member of Australia considered that a strong rural sector, built on improved agricultural productivity and accompanied by appropriate policies, could boost economic growth and reduce poverty. Economic growth was a precursor to generating more jobs in rural areas, and the principal drivers of sustainable economic growth were capital investment, human resource development and good governance. The Committee discussion should be focused on areas where the ILO had a comparative advantage and experience. Special attention should be given to technological innovation and a fair and balanced workplace relations system.
 26. The Government member of South Africa argued that the emerging challenges, for example rising food prices, were making it more difficult for countries to promote rural employment. He stressed the importance of incorporating social partners' contributions in the strategy and the plan of action to promote employment and decent work in rural areas.
 27. The Government member of New Zealand advocated focusing on the labour-related aspects of rural development such as supporting occupational health and safety standards in agricultural work; creating more effective rural employment policies, such as improving coherence between agricultural policy and workers' skills development through active tripartite involvement; and providing a rural employment lens on existing ILO initiatives, such as the promotion of sustainable enterprises, before creating new work streams. He suggested that links to the ILO work on green jobs should also be considered.
 28. The Government member of China highlighted the importance of exchanging experiences and good practices among countries. He enumerated some strategies used successfully by his country in promoting rural employment, including entrepreneurship development in rural areas, vocational training and education of rural workers, supporting the development of small towns, and extending social protection through medical cooperatives.
 29. The Government member of Turkey advocated strengthening solidarity, cooperation and partnerships through local–regional development strategies and vocational training services, and stressed the importance of entrepreneurship and supporting small enterprises and farmers.
 30. The Government member of Argentina suggested that an appropriate definition of “decent rural work” was needed that could take into account the specificity of this type of employment. He also advocated an increased role for the labour inspection and other enforcement mechanisms in order to address the problem of informality in the sector.
 31. The Government member of Morocco argued that the marginalization of the topic of rural employment for a long time had resulted in deteriorating living standards in rural areas and increased migration. The emerging food crisis was creating a renewed interest in rural employment. He called for urgent action on a number of fronts, including infrastructure development and the promotion of microcredit.
 32. The Government member of Trinidad and Tobago stated that her Government was seeking to implement a multifaceted strategy to reduce poverty, which would include further decentralization of local government, restructuring of the agricultural sector, facilitating

small and micro-enterprise development, and building a knowledge-based economy through skills and productivity improvement. Strategies to promote rural employment for poverty reduction had to be country-specific, sustainable and well targeted to the various dimensions and different types of poverty. Any poverty reduction strategy should create a framework for economic growth and transformation, be based on good governance and social security systems, directly increase the ability of the poor to raise their incomes, and improve the quality of life of the rural poor.

33. The Government member of Gambia said that, although agriculture was a major source of employment in Gambia, short periods of rainfall, persistent drought, lack of capital, and lack of marketing opportunities had resulted in a year-on-year decline in production, and therefore an increase in poverty and rural–urban migration, and emigration. At the same time, food prices were increasing at an alarming rate. The promotion of agro-based industries for export was high on the agenda of the national economic development plan. Internationally established rules that exacerbated the imbalance between developed and developing countries should be revised in order to promote rural employment for poverty reduction.
34. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) acknowledged with appreciation the ILO’s efforts to closely consult and collaborate with the FAO in the preparation of the report. She advocated giving greater attention to fisheries, forestry and livestock as well as agro-industries. Special increased attention should be given to the growing numbers of ageing and elderly people in rural areas to reduce rural poverty, and explicit policies and recommendations should be considered to address rural employment in emergency, conflict and natural disaster contexts.
35. She strongly supported the plan of action outlined in the report, and called upon the FAO, the ILO and other UN agencies to “deliver as one” on the rural employment agenda. The ILO *Toolkit for mainstreaming employment and decent work* already provided a valuable basis for the FAO to raise awareness within its constituency to better articulate decent work concerns within the organization’s programme of work. The FAO–ILO web site, entitled “Decent work in food and agriculture”, had been launched and should form the basis for future strategic partnerships, improved exchange of information and best practices, and better coordination and synergies in implementing projects and activities in the field.
36. The representative of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) asked the ILO to continue its support to cooperatives. The ICA and the ILO had joined forces to enable poor people to cooperate out of poverty through a global cooperative campaign against poverty. Cooperatives were in themselves major employers but with their collective ownership and equal focus on social and economic aspects they offered a different model of entrepreneurship, which had potential for poverty alleviation, economic growth, provision of public goods and services, stronger democracies and avoidance of conflict, and which would be a natural fit to both green jobs and fair as opposed to free trade. He hoped that the Committee would reiterate in its conclusions the importance of cooperative enterprises in the promotion of rural employment and the consequent alleviation of poverty as reflected in the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).
37. Thanking Committee members for the various interventions, the Worker Vice-Chairperson noted the consensus that decent work was at the heart of poverty reduction. Although no one size could fit all situations, promoting rural employment for poverty reduction required investment in infrastructure and skills, a focus on tripartism and social dialogue, and also moving informal economy workers into formalized and decent jobs. He was heartened by the many references to the need for skills development and the attention that should be

paid not only to employment for young women and men but also to social protection of elderly and retired workers. Rural migration was also an area of key importance.

38. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted agreement on the need for: a renewed policy focus on agriculture; renewed investment in rural areas and essential infrastructure; more data and evidence-based approaches; education and skills development; and a focus on occupational safety and health. There was agreement on the importance of thinking about women in rural job creation and poverty reduction, the need for better policy linkages and integration, the importance of tripartism and social dialogue, as well as the need to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. He endorsed the comment of the Government member of Australia that productivity improvement was key, and supported the position of the Government member of China that townships and village development was important for off-farm employment and growth. He aligned himself with the comment that the representative of the FAO had made concerning the incredible diversity of rural labour markets. In addition, he reiterated the importance of promoting entrepreneurship and an enabling environment for businesses and economic growth.

Point 1. What strategies can be used to promote employment and sustainable economic growth (both farm and non-farm), and to reduce poverty in rural areas?

39. The Worker Vice-Chairperson recalled the ILC conclusions on sustainable enterprises (2007) and noted five key strategies to ensure sustainable enterprises: respect for universal human rights, social dialogue, social justice and inclusion, adequate social protection and good governance, and considered that they would be useful for the Committee. These strategies should be underpinned by certain key concepts: productive employment must be understood to be decent employment; the term economic “development” should be used, rather than economic “growth”; and the term “sustainable” should be set in the context of its social, economic and environmental pillars.
40. He affirmed the importance of training and education, and stressed the need for coherence between the work of the Committee and that of the Committee on Skills for Improved Productivity, Employment Growth and Development, which was meeting at the same time.
41. Specific measures were required at the national level to develop employment in agriculture and other rural development areas, such as those developed in India through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of local food production for local consumption, and innovative measures were required to ensure that all small farmers had access to local markets. Strategies should be developed to ensure access to land and water for the development of food production.
42. Measures should be taken to reduce the over-reliance on export-oriented agriculture at the expense of the availability of food for local markets. In view of the recent debate on food miles and carbon emissions, workers employed in the horticulture sector were particularly vulnerable if a western supermarket chain decided to improve its environmental credentials by switching to local production. Efforts should therefore be made to devise ways to reduce all carbon emissions and make all production more environmentally friendly. Environmentally friendly jobs offered new employment opportunities. The jobs created must be decent, and the transition to sustainable work must include the social protection necessary for an active and healthy labour market. Some so-called “green” jobs such as palm oil production were not “green” at all since they relied on child labour, intensive use of pesticides, heavy dependence on vulnerable migrant workers, and denied trade unions the right to organize and bargain. Governments had a crucial role to play in developing

inclusive policies and laws that brought agriculture and rural areas into the scope of labour legislation and in promoting a framework for rural development, as had been done in Spain in 2007.

43. The Employer Vice-Chairperson identified four levels for employment strategy: international, national, regional and workplace. Concerning the international level, an enabling environment was widely recognized as a prerequisite for economic and social advancement. Trade was vital and open markets offered massive opportunities to poor producers in developing countries. Linking rural producers and businesses to markets was a proven pathway to wealth and employment generation. Accessing supply chains could lead to reduced produce losses, increased sales, reduced transaction costs, and better control of product quality. More effective international transport and new communication technologies were enabling greater participation in global supply chains.
44. At the national level, a key to rural development strategies was non-farm enterprise growth, to diversify out of agriculture and provide greater employment, particularly in countries where landlessness prevailed. A culture of entrepreneurship in rural areas could provide a virtuous circle of innovation, increased use of new technologies, leading to increased productivity, thus expanding market opportunities and, in turn, stimulating further innovation. Entrepreneurial activity provided affordable essential services to rural areas. Another essential component of rural development for agriculture and non-farm activity was access to demand-led financial products, in particular microfinance. Investment in research and development by governments could increase agricultural productivity. Furthermore, innovation along the supply chain could improve productivity, but often required partnerships between the public and private sectors, as well as regional cooperation.
45. At the regional level, governments needed to develop effective rural–urban linkages. The majority of urban dwellers in developing countries lived in medium-sized cities, which played an important role as an intermediary point along the rural–urban continuum, linking and benefiting both rural and urban areas through consumption, production and employment patterns as well as various types of economic and social provisions. Strong rural–urban linkages facilitated the flow of resources to where they had the largest net social and economic benefits. Agricultural growth engendered both backward linkages in the form of increased demand for farm inputs such as fertilizers and farm equipment, etc. and forward linkages, as increased farm households’ income translated into increased demand for consumption goods and services. Policy solutions required investment in local infrastructure and services to provide rural suppliers access to domestic markets. Clustering of rural producers and shared customer access to products and services were also important.
46. Regarding the workplace, larger enterprises could help smaller rural suppliers increase productivity through training and knowledge transfer. Lead firms could play an important role linking up rural communities to often higher value urban, national or international markets. Other key elements included raising productivity, skills strategies that focused on all levels of the workplace and organization, and policies which capitalized on new technologies.
47. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, suggested four measures for rural development: promote incorporation of employment, labour standards enforcement and poverty reduction as part of rural development policies; support public employment generation schemes linked to development priorities of rural areas; support the development of agricultural subsectors and technologies, which should be adapted to the local labour market taking into account underemployment and rural labour shortages; and encourage the inclusion of agriculture-

oriented applications in school curricula in rural areas, and technical vocational education and training.

48. The Government member of Japan stressed the need to take a holistic approach which was based on local needs. In the Japanese approach to rural development, local government, business representatives and other social partners cooperated in formulating and implementing a development plan. Priority was given to employment effects, skills development and business expansion.
49. The Government member of Brazil described her Government's policy of strengthening "family agriculture", including in fisheries and small-scale rural production. These enterprises accounted for 10 per cent of GDP and 70 per cent of national food production. The effects were better technical training, more employment and greater economic security. A special measure consisted in land regulation and distribution in view of improving the conditions for food security. Key elements of this programme included social dialogue and eradication of child and forced labour.
50. The Government member of Burkina Faso stated that development constraints, such as low productivity, were prevalent in his country. Measures must improve productivity and infrastructure, modernize agriculture, facilitate access to new technologies and enhance diversification and intensification of production. He highlighted the importance of income-generating programmes, promotion of microcredit and enterprise development in rural areas, especially for young people, and development of the agro-business industry.
51. The Government member of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted that much rural-urban migration was due to lack of those services in rural areas which were available in the cities. He suggested that services meeting basic needs be extended to rural dwellers and that development plans focus on the complementarities between rural and urban areas in order to achieve the concept of an "agricultural town".
52. The Worker Vice-Chairperson noted that numerous delegates had called for attention to the impact of climate change on employment. The debate about organic agriculture, fair trade and food miles must take into account employment implications, and the ILO should take an active role in these assessments. There could be no sustainable economic development without growth going hand in hand with job creation and the promotion of decent work. Following the ILO Global Employment Agenda (GEA), strategies for employment promotion and poverty reduction should include a macroeconomic framework that was explicitly pro-employment and include adequate investment in health and education.
53. The Employer Vice-Chairperson again underscored the importance of a multifaceted and coherent policy framework. In responding to comments by the Worker Vice-Chairperson, he suggested that the palm oil industry could be viable and could bring benefits to rural communities if managed by a responsible company. Issues had to be addressed on a sector basis, without focusing on specific companies. He agreed with other speakers that policies should foster the formalization process of informal economic activities, and that no blueprints could be derived from existing models in other contexts.

Point 2. What conditions are needed to foster an enabling environment for sustainable rural enterprise development?

54. The Employer Vice-Chairperson stated that an appropriate enabling environment for rural employment was one that engendered economic growth, enterprise development and job

creation and recalled a broad consensus around the policy framework outlined in numerous international declarations and most recently in the conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (ILC, 96th Session, 2007). Elements of this framework included: good and transparent democracy and governance, free of corruption; transparent and unbureaucratic regulatory frameworks to stimulate innovation and promote competition and respect for property rights; open trade and investment policies; pro-growth macroeconomic policies such as low inflation, responsible and efficient government, and sound financial development; productive, physical, and social infrastructure; investment in education and skills development; labour market policies, inclusive and aiming to provide protection to all in the workplace; sustainable social protection systems tailored to increasing employment; culture of entrepreneurship; and a climate of dialogue and cooperation. A good regulatory framework should allow rural enterprises to get access to the information and know-how needed to formalize, ensure that the cost of enforcing a contract was not prohibitive, and make registration of commercial property and starting a business simple and affordable. A good regulatory environment required regulations and laws that had been tested, that were workable, affordable, sustainable and enforceable. A heavily regulated business environment led to corruption.

- 55.** Institutions which define property rights and ensure their fulfilment must be efficient, impartial and accountable. Property was more than ownership as it enabled trust, credit and access to capital. Macroeconomic policy, infrastructure which acted as a bridge between rural and urban areas, and agriculture and other sectors, and education and skills training were also important for an enabling framework. The Employer Vice-Chairperson concluded by pointing out the importance of formalizing the informal economy to promote economic and social development, protect workers and increase tax revenues, and noted the link between high informality and an inappropriate national legal and institutional framework.
- 56.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson emphasized the need in rural enterprises for social dialogue and good industrial relations; human resources development; productivity, wages and shared benefits; and in particular conditions of work to provide a safe and motivating working environment and mutually beneficial flexible work organization. He reminded the Committee of the conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, in particular paragraph 13(3) concerning the responsible and sustainable enterprise-level practices with regard to conditions of work. In the spirit of these conclusions, sustainable rural enterprises were those which adopted workplace practices free of discrimination, harassment and intimidation, promoted gender equality, equal opportunity and treatment of vulnerable groups, applied workplace practices maintaining a sustainable balance between work, life and family, recognized the role of women in sustainable development, created safe and healthy workplaces, and allowed workers to contribute to changes and improvements. Sustainable enterprises should also respect the minimum age for employment, reject the worst forms of child labour, reject forced labour and, where relevant, address tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS and other chronic and life-threatening diseases. Such practices improved productivity and strengthened the innovativeness and competitiveness of enterprises.
- 57.** The Government member of the United States took the floor, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Turkey, United States) and the Government members of the Committee Member States of the EU. He suggested the relevance of many factors identified in the conclusions of the general discussion on the conditions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (ILC, 96th Session, 2007) for rural settings. The foundation for sustainable enterprises must begin with a sustainable society and must include responsible governance. Societies must provide access to education and training, financial resources and entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as an opportunity to share in the fruits of development. Public

institutions must support social and economic inclusiveness and enforce legal rights and obligations. Territorial approaches provided a sound means to stimulate local networks and expand education and training opportunities, which were critical for rural workers. Governments could promote specific sectors of the rural economy, expand infrastructure, provide appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks, and pursue integrated macroeconomic and fiscal policies. Governments must support the ability of enterprises and workers to adapt to changing market conditions. Inhibiting factors affecting rural enterprises included lack of access to financial resources, lack of clear titles to land, poorly functioning labour markets, and limited labour mobility. He concluded by calling upon governments and international organizations to ensure that labour and economic policies were coordinated in a meaningful way.

- 58.** The Government member of Zimbabwe stated that the strategies appropriate for a particular country varied with the country's history. In Africa, such strategies must take account of the legacy of colonization and the repression of indigenous rights, and must redress those imbalances by ensuring fairer distribution of resources and encouraging skills development.
- 59.** The Government member of India welcomed the report's emphasis on market access. In order to make rural economies more competitive, agricultural and off-farm productivity must be increased, and access to domestic and international markets enhanced. India's experience had shown that employment could be generated through the development of off-farm and non-traditional high-value agriculture, such as horticulture. He suggested establishing an ILO group to consider the effects of market access denial on developing countries. On the question of formalizing large-scale informal sectors, developing countries should be advised of what measures to take.
- 60.** The Government member of Mexico stated that rural sustainable enterprise development required macroeconomic stability, a favourable political environment, technical production and labour assistance, a regulatory framework and an appropriate institutional system to regulate economic actors and markets. A system of training, evaluation, accreditation and certification should be established to ensure that producers were integrated into innovative, productive processes. Those initiatives would place rural enterprises at the price and quality levels required to compete on national and international markets.
- 61.** The Government member of Egypt described the measures her Government had taken to prevent a rural exodus: improving the provision of clean drinking water, investing in agriculture and services in rural areas, improving land use, and increasing access to land for small farmers. The minimum wage had been increased and access to education and social integration had been improved through favourable tax breaks. Legislation regulating seasonal work in rural areas had been introduced and measures had been taken to increase job security. There were many cooperatives in Egypt, for producers and consumers alike, which played a major role in poverty reduction.
- 62.** The Government member of South Africa suggested that guidelines were required to ensure that benefits from rural enterprises did not accrue to enrich individual households or groups of a few owners, since that was not conducive to the sustainability of enterprises. Decisions about investment, location, expenditure and pricing structures should be made for the overall socio-economic benefit of the rural poor. Governments and employers should commit to funding rural enterprises, in order to ensure their financial viability. Furthermore, the social partners should have a clear vision of the kind of enterprises they wanted in rural areas: privately remunerative, State provided and socially profitable, or provided by public-private partnership.

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- 63.** The Government member of China pointed out that the development of enterprises in rural areas must be coordinated with the national economy and with the promotion of other enterprises. Rural enterprises must be closely related to farmers and villages. China's introduction of a system of rural enterprise clusters had resulted in better cooperation between enterprises, increased investment in rural areas and the creation of 20 million jobs for rural workers by 2007. An initiative was currently under way to provide training, a human resources data bank, and a certification system.
 - 64.** The Government member of the Republic of Korea described efforts to foster rural businesses by easing regulations in the agricultural sector and establishing fair competition. Restrictions on the ownership and transaction of marginal farmland had been relaxed, the upper limit on ownership of inherited farmland by non-farmers had been abolished, restrictions on fair competition had been redressed, the maximum limit on farmers' contribution to an agricultural corporation had been eased, and discrimination between private companies and producers' organizations, such as cooperatives and farming associations, had been eliminated.
 - 65.** The Government member of Uruguay subscribed to the centrality of an enabling environment that respected social dialogue, property rights and freedom of association. But other issues were important too, such as sound land policies and measures to slow down rural migration. Land should be distributed in a way that improved efficient usage and did justice to the diversity of the rural economy in terms of economic sectors, farm size and type of enterprise. Land allocation should also be made instrumental to retain labour and should not lead to the concentration of property in a few hands only. Enabling factors at the national and global level, including trade policies, were important to enterprise development and job creation.
 - 66.** The Government member of Argentina argued for a better definition of rural work which took the notion beyond agriculture and recognized the diversity between countries and within rural labour markets. The territorial and social roots of the local economy provided an essential complement to an approach focusing primarily on markets, and had been successfully used in Argentina with the active collaboration of local labour market institutions. Policies should include the strengthening of territorial social capital and the consequent improvement of social cohesion. Local approaches to addressing the informal economy were needed which focused on the costs of labour rather than generalized policies focusing on prices and subsidies. In conclusion, the speaker underscored the key role of social dialogue and tripartism in shaping rural employment policies.
 - 67.** The representative of the FAO described the high costs and long process involved in registering property rights in many parts of the world, and explained the difference between the absence of clear rights and the presence of inconvenient rights where land rights existed but could not be traded. Consequently, land reform did not offer a universal solution to reducing poverty. In some countries successes had been achieved whilst in others land reform had led to damaging effects. Lessons drawn by participants at the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD, Porto Alegre) in 2006 provided useful insights into promoting rural enterprise development and decent rural employment.
 - 68.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson noted that property rights were a shared concern among the many speakers. Concerning property rights, there was a need for clear and predictable rules, however, property rights should support human rights and protect the rights of landless workers, indigenous peoples and women workers and farmers. Acknowledging there was no single solution that fit all situations, the Workers' group called for more attention to property rights. The ILO should seek active collaboration with other UN agencies such as the FAO and engage with the International Land Coalition that brought

together the World Bank, the FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

69. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed satisfaction about the wide call for stronger policy coherence. Referring to the statement of the Government of India, he affirmed the need for practical conclusions and follow-up to be given by the Office, particularly concerning solutions to reducing informality in diverse rural situations. In closing, he recalled that property rights were included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and were a key driver of rural development and employment promotion for poverty reduction.

Point 3. How can rights at work be extended, implemented and enforced in rural areas?

70. The Worker Vice-Chairperson reiterated that questions relating to rights at work, social protection and social dialogue were the crux of rural employment promotion. Since the rural workforce was hard to define due to casual, temporary and seasonal workers moving between informal and formal segments of the rural economy, it was necessary to view and approach work in rural areas in the widest context possible. With regard to the immense decent work deficits faced by rural workers, he agreed with the Government member of India that it was necessary to look at practical solutions – at what could be done, how and by whom. The ratification and application of core ILO Conventions was key, especially with regard to freedom of association and ending violence against trade unionists. Governments had to ensure that application of international labour standards was universal, and employers had to respect the fundamental principles and rights at work.
71. Another means to extend, implement and enforce rights at work in rural areas was to end contract labour and outsourcing, which increasingly left workers exploited and abused by labour-hiring agencies and rogue traders. In the United Kingdom, trade unions had been a driving force behind the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act, 2004, which had provided equal rights to all workers.
72. Special measures should be taken to ensure that rights at work were extended to vulnerable migrant workers in line with the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration. Agriculture was the occupational sector with the highest incidence of fatalities so it was essential to enforce the right to safe work as well. The Workers' group anticipated that Governments and Employers would support the application of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184). Further, the inclusion of agricultural workers in labour legislation and strengthening labour inspection in agriculture was essential to ensure that rights at work were implemented and monitored in rural areas, and trade unions could support labour inspection in that regard. The ILO had much to do in helping with the extension of rights and building effective mechanisms to implement and enforce them, which could be described as providing a global social floor in rural areas. The ILO should provide resources and technical assistance to support effective trade unions, and also employers' associations, in rural areas as a fundamental means of closing the gap for rural workers.
73. The Employer Vice-Chairperson stressed that practicality, good governance, transition to the formal economy, and enterprise development and growth, were four thematic issues of key importance that should be taken into account when discussing how rights at work could be extended, implemented and enforced in rural areas. Rural labour markets were different from urban ones, which explained why laws developed for urban labour markets were not automatically applicable to rural areas. Labour laws were often ineffective in rural areas because of a lack of information, effective public services and basic

infrastructure in remote rural environments, and because compliance with laws that had been drafted with large companies in mind were particularly difficult to implement for small businesses and family-run farms. It was therefore necessary to put in place a package of policies to encourage investment and enterprise and employment creation as a prerequisite for extending rights at work, and to put the right legislation in place that would work for the benefit of all workers. Legislation should be concise, clear and understandable, and due regard should be given to different national situations and sectors; and the likely costs and economic impact should be assessed before legislation was adopted. National administrations should conduct regular examination of enforcement problems.

74. The speaker disagreed with the Worker Vice-Chairperson's views about contract labour and outsourcing. Instead, he supported a suite of contractual arrangements that provided flexibility for enterprises and workers as well as the optimum level of regulation beyond which employment generation was likely to be adversely affected in rural areas.
75. A sound labour administration system in rural communities provided for a stable business climate and encouraged direct investment. Labour inspectors should be properly trained, adequately remunerated and resourced as to be able to fulfil their functions. The creation of a national preventative safety and health culture that included information, consultation and training should be accorded highest priority. He stressed that in many jurisdictions laws or other arrangements were in place, but often not enforced. No international discussion, convention, recommendation or resolution would influence protections when governments were unable or unwilling to apply the law. In conclusion, he highlighted the valuable role that the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), as well as the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998, could play in providing a framework for action.
76. The Government member of New Zealand, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU and the Government members of the Committee Member States of IMEC, supported the application of core labour standards in rural employment, accompanied by other measures to increase both the quantity and quality of employment available to formal and informal economy workers alike. Measures should include providing information, advisory services, conflict resolution mechanisms and strengthening enforcement services in the event of deliberate non-compliance. Review of the implementation of standards should also be encouraged, for example, within countries using tripartite networks and through Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). Social dialogue could serve to highlight labour standards for rural workers, including rural women and youth. Emphasis should be given to policies and initiatives to encourage and support best practices. Over time, emphasis should shift beyond minimum standards and compliance to raising the quality of rural employment more generally. In addition, the Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Government members of the Committee Member States of the EU, underlined the need to encourage and support the worldwide ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions through technical cooperation and strengthening the ILO supervisory mechanism.
77. The Government member of South Africa called on all countries to extend the rights to water, sanitation, health services and basic education to rural populations, and to extend the Decent Work Agenda to rural areas through social dialogue structures, focused education and information. Labour law enforcement systems should start with a process of advocacy and education for both employers and workers in the rural areas, followed by progressive enforcement and imposition of sanctions. Countries should promulgate laws, with which it was easy for small to medium-sized businesses in rural areas to comply.

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- 78.** The Government member of Kenya said that the Employment Act was the principal legislative enactment that specified employment terms and conditions in Kenya. Her Government had amended the labour laws in response to changing economic circumstances. The principal goals and objectives of the labour administration were to promote full employment, stimulate economic growth and development, secure maximum cooperation, promote adequate working conditions and quality of working life, ensure the development of occupational health and safety services and to ensure equal opportunities for all workers, free of all forms of discrimination.
- 79.** The Government member of Zimbabwe urged that safety and health be promoted in rural areas through the dissemination of information in a language that was accessible to rural worker communities. Curricula on occupational safety and health and human rights issues should be developed and taught in primary schools to empower future generations. His Government had developed a national policy on occupational safety and health which extended to rural areas and agricultural employees. Efforts should also be made to extend social protection to rural areas, not only for workers but also for retirees.
- 80.** The Government member of Argentina said that care must be taken to ensure that workers' rights were not reduced or compromised by trends in flexible employment. There should be no difference between rural and urban workers' rights, particularly since seasonality was not limited to rural work but also occurred in respect of certain urban jobs. Ambiguity in employment status should be avoided, since it was merely a means of circumventing labour laws and standards. Labour inspectorates were particularly important for ensuring compliance with labour laws and standards on working conditions, and should actively involve the social partners. Workers' rights should be well publicized and simple rules should be established on registering employers' and workers' organizations. Efforts should be made to strengthen collective bargaining bodies that were adapted to the specific needs of rural work. Particular attention should be paid to the need to eliminate child labour, which was endemic in the rural sector. Decent rural work should be creative, productive and should ensure that workers had sufficient income to meet their needs, since those elements were indicative of the degree of social development in a country.
- 81.** The Government member of Uruguay said that advances in law and practical progress were an ongoing struggle that required action, not only from the Government, but also from the social sector. Although legislation, which educated people and set standards, was essential for progress to be made, collective bargaining at the bipartite and tripartite levels was crucial for the creation and application of standards. International Conventions and recommendations tended to lack provisions specific to rural employment. Efforts should be made to strengthen workers' organizations in rural areas, and to increase training and awareness raising in respect of workers' rights. In Uruguay, labour legislation was still lacking in respect of rural employment. Efforts were being made to promote an inclusive policy for rural work, and tripartite bodies had been established, which were responsible for wage fixing and setting conditions of work. Legal limits on the length of the working day had been set, following a two-year negotiation process.
- 82.** The Government member of Brazil stressed that in order to ensure decent work, better living standards and poverty reduction, country specific policies had to be developed. Brazil had introduced a number of measures that had helped to establish large areas of family farming, grant adequate social protection to small farmers, reduce the number of informal workers, ensure that rural workers enjoyed similar rights to urban workers, combat child labour, improve food security through programmes to combat poverty and hunger, and ensure that poor families received income support to improve their living standards and got access to health care. Food security should be achieved through the removal of protectionist practices, and food aid should be complemented by opening up production markets to rural workers. The poorest countries should be able to increase their

income through production and export. He finally discussed the link between biofuel production and generation of rural income.

83. The Government member of Colombia stressed that it was important to call for protection of all workers, irrespective of whether or not they belonged to a union.
84. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed a preference for the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), in comparison with the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), as it was more instrumental in promoting a culture of prevention. He also concurred with several Government members on the need to address labour market rigidities. And he noted the need for good policies to encourage investment and enterprise growth, and for improved labour laws that corresponded to the realities of rural communities.
85. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the broad recognition for the global right to a safe and healthy workplace and emphasized the importance of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), as well as the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129). Legal frameworks and labour inspection were essential for helping rural workers out of poverty; however, in rural areas these were virtually absent and rural workers were often denied such rights as freedom of association and equal pay.

Point 4. How can social protection and social inclusion be extended and improved in rural areas?

86. The Employer Vice-Chairperson stressed the importance of social protection for sustainable and equitable economic growth, as well as poverty reduction. Since agriculture was more susceptible to climate and natural disaster than any other industry, social protection was particularly important. Fiscal responsibility was essential for ensuring the sustainability of responses and creating jobs, and social security policies should be planned in accordance with demographic trends.
87. In order to reduce vulnerability, social security must be in line with the economic and social realities in a given country, and must constitute a shared responsibility in order to avoid employers being forced to provide the majority of financing. Developing countries were often unable to provide adequate social protection, and further efforts were therefore required to reduce the economic vulnerability of households with appropriate instruments. Steps needed to be taken to understand the causes of vulnerability, counteract those with strategies for managing social risks, and identify policy gaps. Efforts were required to reduce the risk and mitigate the effects of natural, financial and health-related disasters.
88. Agricultural producers were particularly vulnerable since they lacked access to insurance and credit markets, access to which could mitigate some risks, such as price volatility or illness. Regardless of which social risk management arrangement was adopted, sound administrative and financial management were fundamental. Capacity-building measures were required to enable low-income countries to design and implement effective social protection programmes. In some countries, cash transfers were provided for parents on the condition that their children received regular schooling. Such schemes reduced immediate poverty and empowered future generations through education.
89. In terms of social inclusion, the speaker noted two main types of migration: rural–urban migration and seasonal or contractual migration. While the exodus of rural youth to manufacturing and services in urban centres had increased the demand for migrant workers in rural areas, those migrant workers in rural areas could be susceptible to abuse.

Employers had a vital interest in a level playing field for the recruitment of seasonal migrant workers. Migrants should be educated about their rights. The example from the horticulture and wine-producing sector in New Zealand could be instrumental in that regard. Remittances deserved special attention due to their increasing role in the global economy. The Employer Vice-Chairperson concluded by calling attention to tackling HIV/AIDS and stressed that efforts, including those by the ILO and its constituents, must continue to be targeted at countries and regions with the most potential impact, and must adequately address the important gender dimension, especially among young people. The *ILO Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work* was a comprehensive means for creating workplace partnerships and for taking action outside the workplace in both rural and urban areas.

- 90.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson reiterated that social protection and social inclusion went hand in hand with rights at work. Workers needed to have tools to ensure their own social protection through trade union organization and collective bargaining. Raising wages, still shockingly low in rural areas, was vital to social inclusion. Systematic inclusion of agricultural and rural workers in state social protection schemes was essential. Education was crucial to ensuring that rural workers, including illiterate ones, could benefit from information and improved social protection. Special measures had to be taken to ensure that the needs of women were reflected in collective bargaining agreements and that women, usually primary caregivers, were given access to regular employment, maternity protection and childcare. Social protection had to be extended to migrant workers in line with the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration. Safe workplaces, as well as workers' empowerment to enforce safe working conditions, were crucial to social protection. Trade unions had played a vital role in the design and adoption of the National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers (RENATRE) in Argentina and the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India; and the Workers' group supported the international partnership for cooperation on child labour in agriculture.
- 91.** The Government member of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, candidate countries The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, and Norway, and the IMEC countries, observed that social protection assisted people in rural areas by reducing vulnerability to sudden changes at national and international levels. Governments had a vital role to play in providing and coordinating social protection in rural areas, and should ensure coordination between local, regional and central levels. Social protection should be based on sound and stable macroeconomic policies comprising health care, occupational health regulations, insurance or other income-support arrangements, employment programmes, pension schemes and cash transfers. It was essential that measures taken to extend social protection were conducted in parallel with efforts to boost employment by promoting job-rich growth, education and vocational training, providing information about the availability of work, and combining insurance with access to credit. Social protection mechanisms should be targeted to assist disadvantaged groups, and ILO efforts to promote and extend basic social protection to all should be supported.
- 92.** The Government member of Kenya regarded the maintenance of comprehensive social security programmes as a requirement for improved productivity and competitiveness. Kenya operated a number of social protection schemes, yet faced the challenge of upgrading their coverage and constantly adapting these schemes to the socio-economic circumstances of society. The starting point would be to develop and implement a national social protection policy with a view to putting in place universal social protection for all citizens.
- 93.** The Government member of Côte d'Ivoire considered that social protection schemes comprised access to health care, basic education, coverage against risk and care in old age,

yet these systems had to be adapted to specific rural settings. In Côte d'Ivoire, producers' cooperatives had set up trusts to help members access health care and education for their children.

94. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the comments from Governments, in particular the examples given of measures taken to extend social inclusion and protection in rural areas; but recalled the comments in the report highlighting the special difficulties in extending social protection to workers in rural areas. Public services, especially health, social security, and education had to be provided; private service provision excluded those unable to pay.
95. The Worker Vice-Chairperson noted agreement with the Employers' group concerning the New Zealand initiative on migrant labour and the problems of contracting destroying decent work. Lastly, he welcomed the Employers' group's comments on the measures which needed to be taken in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
96. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted the consensus among Governments on the need for social inclusion and social protection to be extended on a realistic and practical basis. Extending social inclusion and social protection also required sound macroeconomic policies, policies to move workers from informal to formal work, and adequate rural infrastructure. The public sector had a key role to play; however, a mix was needed which included public-private partnership and private services.

Point 5. How can better governance and social dialogue be promoted in rural areas?

97. The Worker Vice-Chairperson stressed that governance and social dialogue were important for poverty reduction in rural areas. Social dialogue, which included by definition workers' and employers' organizations, could be an effective means to incorporate decent work in poverty reduction strategies and to bolster the fight for the elimination of child labour, including through the creation of targeted alliances with other organizations. Despite the good examples cited in the report, there were many cases where rural workers were not included in social dialogue.
98. Collective bargaining played a key role in social dialogue, and should be extended to include rural areas and workers in the informal economy. This would help small farmers and other self-employed workers to strengthen their position in relation to local authorities. The ILO should ensure that the DWCPs were implemented in rural areas and included efforts to strengthen social dialogue and good governance. Company-based framework agreements were a useful instrument stipulating ways to ensure and monitor the application of labour standards, and should be used as a complement to national negotiations.
99. The Worker Vice-Chairperson concurred with the report's description of what constituted good governance, in particular the extension of labour laws to rural workers. However, there was not sufficient guidance provided on governance in relation to multinational companies, which were increasingly influential in the food sector. Corporate social responsibility and voluntary codes of conduct could not replace social dialogue. Good governance also should include effective community participation.
100. The Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141), duly recognized the complexity of the rural workforce and rightly pointed to the mechanisms for ensuring that all workers – including self-employed, tenants and small owner-occupiers – were

protected. This Convention should be more fully implemented to ensure that all rural workers benefited equally from effective representation.

- 101.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson stated that economic freedom provided the environment that enabled individuals in society to make their own choices. Economic freedom was strongly related to good economic performance and lower rates of unemployment and inflation. Effective public policy and sound institutions were also essential for successful rural development. Governance and policy in rural communities must be open, transparent, and free from corruption and excessive bureaucracy. Corruption hindered the development of fair market structures and distorted competition, thereby deterring investment, undermining trust in the political system and public institutions, and retarding rural economic and social development.
- 102.** Rural areas often lacked services available in cities. Decentralized and transparent public spending, and public-private partnership provided a way of addressing inadequacy of infrastructure and public services in rural areas. Inadequate access to such services as education, health, banking and credit facilities, electricity, water and transport infrastructure represent a serious impediment to agriculture and rural development. Territorial approaches had significant potential to improve the coherence and effectiveness of public expenditure in rural areas. Decentralized government could help improve governance as it brought government closer to the people and made policies more responsive to local needs.
- 103.** Full and genuine social dialogue should be based on cooperation and involve collaboration of governments, employers and workers to generate wealth and employment. A partnership approach between employers and workers could create a shared vision. However, social dialogue in itself was not a panacea; it had to contribute to attracting investment, improving productivity and fostering sustained economic growth.
- 104.** The Government member of Indonesia informed the Committee that employment creation in rural areas had become a key policy focus of his Government. This focus translated into a strategy that placed a strong emphasis on decentralization with financial resources and decision-making authority being gradually shifted to the district and provincial levels. This helped to create a more flexible and efficient rural employment programme. An example of the new policy trend was the “National Program for People’s Empowerment”, aimed at achieving the MDGs, currently involving about 3,000 sub-districts with the potential of expanding to 5,200 sub-districts in 2009. He concluded by calling upon the ILO to give special attention to capacity building for local governments and social partners in local economic development.
- 105.** The Government member of Canada, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, and the Government members of the Committee Member States of IMEC, stated that better governance and social dialogue in rural areas were to be based on common values, including democratic principles, human rights, and ILO fundamental principles and rights at work. The territorial approach could help stimulate sustainable growth and development. Decentralization was a means to improve local governance, particularly when accompanied by increased capacity of local governments, and a partnership approach. Special attention should be given to the needs of vulnerable groups and improving their representation at local, regional and national levels.
- 106.** The Government member of South Africa stated that governance in rural areas must be participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, capable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and should follow impartial enforcement of the rule of law. Good governance was responsive to the present and future needs of society,

minimized corruption and took into account the views of minorities, the most vulnerable members of society, and these characteristics were interdependent.

107. The Government member of Benin noted that good governance structures were often lacking in rural areas. Benin was using a dynamic public–private partnership approach, based on social dialogue in partnership with local authorities and the State, to develop community health services, roads and schools, and to build local agro-processing plants.
108. The Government member of Mozambique stated that her Government had allocated funds to generate jobs and improve income and wages in rural districts. These investments involved social dialogue and engagement of workers, employers and community organizations in monitoring the use of funds.
109. The Government member of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela pointed out the need for social dialogue to address poverty reduction and respect for the right to housing and education, to promote social justice and ensure a fair and harmonious society, and to improve income and wealth, especially for citizens who live in what are referred to as rural areas.
110. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted that the Government interventions on better governance and social dialogue helped illuminate the concept of local government involvement, regionality, and involving local players in promoting public policy and sound institutions for rural development. They also demonstrated the link between local government initiatives and national initiatives, the role of public–private collaboration and the importance of involving a wide range of stakeholders such as community and religious leaders, small farmers’ organizations and cooperatives in territorial approaches to rural development. He agreed that corporate social responsibility was not an alternative to sound regulation, but it could benefit society and business. He reaffirmed the Employers’ rejection of violence in rural areas and their support for firm government action to protect human health and safety and create a climate for business growth. Concerning agro-business and transnational corporations, he cautioned against creating disincentives for them to enter rural markets; the issue was how to get SMEs to engage in markets themselves.
111. The Worker Vice-Chairperson was encouraged to see so many Governments addressing the issue of strengthening good governance and social dialogue and expressing their support for tripartite approaches. He particularly welcomed the comments on the importance of fundamental education, good housing, accessible and good health care, as well as effective local government. He welcomed the Employers’ emphasis on trust and partnership but cautioned that trust could only come with respect for workers’ rights and recognition of the role of trade unions, which was not necessarily the case for many transnational companies relying on subcontracting and outsourcing which often acted against the promotion of decent work.

Point 6. How can national and local governments, and employers’ and workers’ organizations best contribute to decent rural employment and poverty reduction?

112. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted that employers’ organizations could contribute to decent rural employment and poverty reduction by: advocating for effective rural economic and social development policies; helping members in terms of representation; and providing direct services and information, such as interpret legislation, give market information and provide knowledge on market and regulatory requirements, to help

enterprises develop. Employers' organizations from different countries could work together to help build capacity.

- 113.** Governments had the obligation to ensure that rural and agricultural development were an integral part of national and international development policies, and to create an enabling environment for growth and job creation. Governments should provide incentives which support private enterprises in rural areas and avoid activities which displace the activities of the private sector. The Employer Vice-Chairperson concluded by reaffirming the willingness of the employers' organizations to work with other social parties to promote decent rural employment and to reduce poverty.
- 114.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson listed numerous areas where governments could best contribute to decent rural employment and poverty reduction: ensure the application of the law and the inclusion of agricultural workers in the scope of legislative protections; ensure effective rural labour inspection; adopt an integrated approach to rural areas, by bringing together all the relevant ministries; and develop gender-sensitive rural employment creation plans. Governments should work in consultation with employers' organizations and trade unions to establish rural development plans. Governments had a responsibility to increase public expenditure in rural areas and ensure the provision of basic social services, including health care, housing and free education. While there were many active rural trade unions protecting rural workers, extending effective trade union organization in rural areas remained a challenge. Efforts were needed to organize the informal economy. Many trade unions were acting to assist migrant workers with information, services and education, but much remained to be done. Further efforts should be made to strengthen rural women workers' participation in trade union activities. Lastly, the speaker noted the differing views on whether biofuels could contribute to decent rural employment and poverty reduction, and called on the ILO, governments, trade unions and employers' organizations to work together to answer that question.
- 115.** The Government member of Turkey emphasized that the challenges that were currently affecting developing countries were not the same as those that had once affected developed nations. Developing countries, being in direct competition with developed countries, were unable to control industrialization processes and ensure growth of agricultural productivity or markets. The problems caused by rural poverty had inevitable consequences for global society, and solutions should therefore be found at the global level. As well as considering the role that should be played by governments, trade unions and employers' organizations, careful consideration should be given to the role of the international community, since a sustainable solution to rural poverty could not be found without global efforts.
- 116.** The Government member of the United States, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU and the Government members of the Committee Member States of IMEC, concurred that rural poverty constituted a problem not only for developing countries but also for the global community, and therefore required global attention. Cooperation between governments, workers and employers was vital to create good jobs, fair pay and conditions that were conducive to entrepreneurial success. A key role of governments was to create partnerships, ensure inclusiveness and create practical, goal-oriented, financially sound programmes. Governments were also in a unique position to link education and training with workforce development efforts to establish needs-driven entrepreneurial opportunities. Governments should ensure protection of property rights, facilitate research and development, be transparent and accountable, and make informed policy decisions based on reliable data. All parties should develop integrated, coherent and mutually supportive plans that would achieve widespread success, and should pay particular attention to the most vulnerable members of society, including the working poor.

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- 117.** The Government member of Morocco stated that his country had undertaken a detailed diagnosis of the economic situation in the country which had taken account of all actors. Based on the result of the initial diagnosis, a poverty map had been drawn up which showed the geographic distribution of poverty and unemployment, which served as the basis to develop specific plans and projects to mobilize those populations, and bring all actors together to ensure better governance and rationalized spending. So far, positive results had been widely noted.
- 118.** The Government member of South Africa informed that his Government had developed in a coordinated manner decentralized sustainable rural development programmes and urban renewal programmes to contribute to decent work and poverty reduction. The starting point for these programmes was to identify rural and urban areas where poverty was most endemic. Governments should introduce integrated rural development programmes involving various government departments and other stakeholders, engage local governments and municipalities and allocate a budget to sustain integrated rural development. The ILO could assist countries with integrated development planning.
- 119.** The Government member of China remarked that governments had to play many roles to promote employment and reduce rural poverty, and thus long-term vision was needed. China had developed a comprehensive approach towards rural area-based development focused on the promotion of highly efficient and highly productive agricultural sectors while addressing social issues such as health care, minimum wages and free access to education. The Government promoted democratic and transparent village management based on respect for rights.
- 120.** The Government member of Trinidad and Tobago argued that rural employment and poverty reduction was the responsibility of all partners and had to be undertaken within a clear and agreed framework, with a significant role for national government in countries with centralized public management. To ensure the effective promotion of rural employment by local governments and employers' and workers' organizations, the national government should put in place an appropriate legislative and regulatory framework which included human resources development. Workers' organizations should expand their work in rural areas focusing on educating workers on their rights and responsibilities.
- 121.** The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of the Government members of the Committee Member States of GRULAC (Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), stressed the importance of promoting decent work and encouraging compliance with labour legislation in the rural areas, particularly concerning micro and family enterprises. Social dialogue and tripartism, as the key components of any policy for poverty reduction, should include representatives of micro and small enterprises and indigenous peoples.
- 122.** The Government member of Argentina, speaking in an individual capacity, also stressed that active participation of the central Government was required to create and strengthen institutions of collective bargaining and social dialogue in rural areas. Employers' and workers' organizations should be promoted in rural areas; ways should be sought to incorporate new technologies with due consideration for their impact on the labour market; and labour administration and labour inspection should be strengthened in rural areas.
- 123.** The Government member of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the Committee that in his country in order to ensure food security through sustainable agriculture, large farms had been scaled down and idle land had been allocated to inhabitants in rural areas. Other initiatives included: providing financial support to small

producers in agriculture, fisheries and forestry; increasing productivity through training of workers and support to infrastructure; and increasing the minimum wage, and bringing rural salaries into line with urban salaries.

124. The Government member of Côte d'Ivoire underlined that employers' and workers' organizations could aid national and local governments in their efforts to promote decent work and reduce poverty; nonetheless, in Africa, several obstacles limited their participation. In most African countries there was no dedicated forum for social dialogue to promote employment. Secondly, the leading companies in many African countries were multinational enterprises in which decision-making processes took place abroad. These problems posed strong obstacles for the formulation of adequate employment policies and should be overcome for a fruitful collaboration between employers, workers and governments.
125. The Worker Vice-Chairperson described trade union initiatives such as: the RENATRE registration of rural workers in Argentina; joint worker–manager training programmes; and training on integrated pest management techniques, which had demonstrated the relevance of health and safety training for building strong social dialogue in the workplace. He noted that the discussion on Point 6 had focused on the role of governments in poverty reduction with little mention of measures that had been taken to create jobs.
126. The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed with the comments made about the need to improve coordination between various governmental institutions, the importance of public–private partnerships, the need to ensure property rights; and with the call for governments to make microfinance facilities available. He concurred with the need to base policy decisions on reliable data; as well as the need for sound research and development and sharing of information. He concluded by pointing out the importance of the ILO engaging with other institutions.

Point 7. Building on the ILO's comparative advantage: What should be the key components of a plan of action for the Office, including in terms of promoting policy coordination and coherence?

127. The Worker Vice-Chairperson urged all member States to adopt a national employment policy on rural employment through negotiations on a tripartite basis. The ILO must commit to a rural focus on DWCPs through cooperation with representative unions, employers and governments. And it must develop a strategy on rural development and rural employment; review limitations of existing data-collection tools to analyse rural labour employment conditions and practices; and provide additional resources and staff under the leadership of a dedicated unit, otherwise he was concerned the Committee's conclusions would not lead to action.
128. In relation to employment, the ILO must:
- (a) Provide technical assistance to its constituents on the linkages between economic growth, decent employment creation and poverty reduction.
 - (b) Support, through technical advice and the implementation of a programme, public employment guarantees targeting rural workers for the purpose of delivering living wages, stimulating demand and developing infrastructure.

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- (c) Promote public and private investment in agriculture which generates freely chosen and productive decent employment.
 - (d) Promote the use of labour-intensive environmentally safe technologies.
 - (e) Promote the diversification of rural economies.
 - (f) Promote free, universal quality education, skills training in a system of lifelong learning in accordance to the needs of the rural economy.
 - (g) Promote decent attractive jobs that will motivate youth to stay and return to rural areas.
 - (h) Based on the 2007 conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises, the ILO should support the promotion of a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises, including cooperatives, in rural areas.

129. In relation to social protection the ILO should actively initiate programmes to ensure:

- (a) The introduction of universal social security benefits, including but not limited to, child benefits, health services, financial relief, pensions for the old, the disabled, and families who lose an adult who contributes to the income of the family.
- (b) Access to potable water as a universal right.
- (c) Maternity protection and parental leave.
- (d) Adequately trained and well-remunerated labour inspectors.
- (e) The right to health and safety in rural communities and the involvement of workers in health and safety inspection.
- (f) United action among the key actors on HIV/AIDS.
- (g) Methodologies to adopt alternatives to hazardous and unsafe technologies in rural workplaces.
- (h) The provision of public childcare facilities.
- (i) The use of labour inspectors.
- (j) A living wage, negotiated on a tripartite basis, that will lift people out of poverty.
- (k) Protection against sexual harassment.

130. Regarding labour rights for rural workers, the ILO should:

- (a) Ensure that all relevant international labour standards, fundamental principles and rights at work of rural workers are respected and promoted.
- (b) Promote ratification and effective implementation of the fundamental Conventions as well as the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110), the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156).

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- (c) Promote the extension of labour laws to all rural workers, in particular agricultural workers, and ensure effective implementation through a programme of advocacy, capacity building and technical assistance.
 - (d) Promote equal treatment and equal pay for migrants workers.
 - (e) Promote the elimination of rural child labour.
- 131.** The ILO should support the growth and development of rural employers' and workers' organizations, particularly in the agricultural sector, and encourage linkages with national and international employers' and workers' associations. In addition, the ILO should work with others agencies on the issue of access to land and on labour and employment aspects of trade, with particular reference to rural employment for poverty reduction. The ILO must engage with the international financial institutions and other relevant UN agencies on food security, environmental sustainability and related issues. The ILO should work on policies and programmes to guarantee protection of small family agriculture as a means to ensure food security and poverty reduction. Finally, ILO technical cooperation programmes must focus on the development of rural decent employment for poverty reduction.
- 132.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson stressed the need for a focused approach based on practical interventions that could garner the widespread support of all its constituents and external partners. Given its limited capacity and funding, the ILO should focus on its core strengths and how to deliver in those areas.
- 133.** Concerning standards, the ILO should assist governments to strengthen rural labour market institutions, to construct economically appropriate labour legislation and to reform existing regulations to promote labour market flexibility; and help them to modernize their labour administration to better respond to the needs of the rural economy. It also should address the issue of informality in rural communities. The formalization of the informal economy should be a major goal. The ILO should establish, through consensus, a modern and high-impact labour standards policy to produce widely ratifiable and implementable standards addressed to the goal of improved economic and social development. In light of egregious abuses of workers' rights in rural areas, the ILO should vigorously promote the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
- 134.** In the area of employment, the ILO should promote policies conducive to the creation of sustainable rural development strategies in the following areas: reorient programmes and policies towards "employment security" for rural workers as opposed to "job security"; help rural enterprises to become more effective and workers more employable and productive through education, skills development, training and retraining programmes; develop entrepreneurship programmes particularly targeting young people and women in rural communities; and work with partners and constituents in delivering microcredit/finance/insurance outcomes.
- 135.** The ILO should promote sustainable social policies and social security systems that recognize the economic and social diversity in their development and implementation, bearing in mind that costs were often the responsibility of society as a whole. It should also: tackle discrimination in rural workplaces, so as to ensure maximum labour market participation; work with the social partners to combat HIV/AIDS; and promote the creation of safe workplaces on and off the farm through promulgating occupational safety and health best practices that foster a culture of prevention.
- 136.** Concerning social dialogue, the ILO should: help to strengthen tripartite mechanisms and better utilize and respect the contribution of employers; ensure equality in distribution of

resources, both human and financial, technical cooperation and employment opportunities across the Office; fully involve employers in the development of ILO policies and products, ensuring that employer priorities, objectives and resources are treated on an equal basis with those of the workers; and strengthen the Bureau for Employers' Activities in Geneva, Turin, and the field.

- 137.** Transparency and accountability must be ensured in all activities and decision-making. The ILO should ensure that the Office acts promptly and meaningfully on the decisions of the Governing Body and the Conference; ensure a fact-based approach to rural development strategies; and impose financial management principles to have real impact within budget constraints.
- 138.** Within the ongoing process of UN reform, the ILO should aim for clearer and more coherent UN activity at the national level with an overall goal of eliminating unnecessary duplication and competition. Each institution had a particular mandate and a particular set of competencies and expertise. The ILO needed to focus uniquely on the policies impacting on labour markets and the workplace.
- 139.** Lastly, all constituents must be satisfactorily engaged in and committed to the DWCPs in their countries. This required clear notification to all constituents well in advance of the development of the national DWCP; and the national priorities identified in the final DWCP agreement should have the clear and unequivocal support of all constituents. The DWCP should help build the capacity of constituents and they should be engaged in its implementation. The DWCP should be adaptable to changing needs and an independent impact analysis should measure outcomes and guide future direction.
- 140.** The Government member of India considered that an important role of the ILO was to support the countries in establishing appropriate diagnosis and in formulating related prescriptions. The ILO also should support governments with advice during the implementation. The ILO could analyse the causes of informalization and provide some useful prescriptions to overcome this big and very complex problem.
- 141.** The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU and the Government members of the Committee Member States of IMEC, requested special attention to youth and women, and to the rights of workers, jobseekers and the unemployed. The ILO should cooperate with relevant international institutions, especially the FAO and the IFAD. Investment in training and lifelong learning, financial services such as microcredit, and infrastructure, including labour-based approaches, were crucial. Entrepreneurship programmes for youth and women in rural areas should also be promoted. Cooperatives were an important means for decent work and deserved support. In the realm of social protection, the ILO should focus on reaching out to the poor and vulnerable in marginal rural areas and to develop methodologies for addressing the occupational safety and health hazards they faced. The ILO action plan also should include a research component on rural employment for poverty reduction. The extension and effective enforcement of national labour laws and fundamental principles and rights of rural workers was important, as was gradually formalizing economic activities without taking away the means of livelihood for millions of people. The ILO must also support the development of effective workers' and employers' organizations in rural areas and promote inclusive social dialogue where relevant stakeholders and informal economy workers and employers had a voice.
- 142.** The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, said that the ILO should develop a framework convention compiling all existing Conventions related to rural employment, implement technical assistance programmes for poverty reduction, and adopt mechanisms for coordination and cooperation with other agencies.

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- 143.** The Government member of Mexico supported the comments made by the GRULAC group, in particular the call for a convention consolidating all existing standards concerning rural employment and updating them in light of new developments at the international level. The ILO should provide technical assistance, focusing on indigenous peoples, women, children and the elderly; and coordination and cooperation with other multilateral agencies. Cross-cutting themes in ILO's work could include: access to health, paying attention to cultural particularities; access to quality and inter-cultural education systems and the diffusion of knowledge, including local/traditional forms; coherent environmental policies at local and global levels to face the challenge of climate change; and strengthening democracy, respect for human rights and social dialogue mechanisms at all levels.
 - 144.** The Government member of Brazil suggested a strategy based on two pillars: improve working conditions of waged workers through social dialogue and the effective application of labour standards; and recognize the potential of small rural producers as agents of decent work creation, economic growth and poverty alleviation. Public policies were needed on land access, social protection, and appropriate credit and insurance schemes.
 - 145.** The Government member of Uruguay endorsed the idea of compiling and updating the existing instruments, and advocated the creation of new international regulations which would also include issues such as hours of work and weekly rest in agricultural activities.
 - 146.** The Government member of Côte d'Ivoire endorsed the idea to concentrate efforts in a few areas, and suggested two: setting up multi-sectoral bodies for the promotion of rural employment, and expanding labour legislation in rural areas. The ILO also should help workers to organize in rural areas and support targeted employment programmes for youth and women.
 - 147.** The Government member of Argentina also endorsed the comments by the GRULAC group, in particular a consolidated convention which could also address existing gaps in areas such as hours of work in agricultural sectors. The ILO should: strengthen its role in promoting the fundamental rights of workers, in particular freedom of association and collective bargaining; support local institutions in charge of combating forced labour, child labour and discrimination in agricultural sectors; and promote the diffusion of fundamental rights. The ILO also should monitor the impact of trade policies on rural employment and support the development of labour policies aimed at addressing the challenges of free trade agreements, in particular agricultural subsidies. Vocational training and targeted employment programmes for youth and women in rural areas also should be priorities. To conclude, he requested the ILO to strengthen collective bargaining institutions, labour inspection, and trade union action in rural areas.
 - 148.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, paraphrasing the Government member of India, summarized his intervention in one phrase: make it happen. The ILO should do few things well. There was no need for more laws and regulations; better focus and practical outcomes were the key.
 - 149.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the Employers' group's remarks concerning the importance of full participation of all constituents in developing and implementing DWCPs. He welcomed the interest of the GRULAC governments in standards for rural workers, but considered that all the existing instruments were up to date. The ILO should focus instead on encouraging governments to ratify them and adopt appropriate national legislation.
 - 150.** The representative of the International Young Christian Workers requested the ILO to continue to promote policy frameworks and technical cooperation to ensure job security,

social protection, income security and the right to organized and collective bargaining to the workers in rural areas. Further action was needed by the ILO to ensure countries comply with the core labour standards. Finally he encouraged trade unions to continue to recruit and educate rural workers on their rights.

- 151.** The representative of Social Alert International and the World Movement of Christian Workers argued that agriculture is most often not a source of decent work, due to unequal distribution of land, precarious working conditions on plantations, violence against workers' movements and lack of consultation with indigenous communities. The ILO plan of action should focus on extending labour legislation to agricultural workers, enforcing compliance and strengthening representation of rural workers. In the area of social protection, he advocated a more active role for ILO through its STEP programme.
- 152.** The representative of the Trade Unions International of Workers in Agriculture, Food, Commerce, Textile and Allied Industries advocated expanding access of rural producers to water and land, called for regulating the global agricultural markets in order to ensure food security, and urged placing greater priority on protecting agriculture workers' rights, including freedom of association and social protection.
- 153.** In his closing remarks, the Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed appreciation for the positive and constructive debate, and noted numerous areas of emerging consensus. These included the need for good data for evidence-based policy-making, the importance of non-farm activity, the need for investment in infrastructure, the importance of protecting property rights, the need for policy coherence, the value of area-based policies, and the importance of sustainable and affordable social protection for rural communities. Furthermore, there was agreement that governments must not compete with private sector players; exclusively legal approaches were not effective and practical activities were required, particularly to draw the informal economy into the formal economy over time, through building on workers' livelihoods; proper occupational health and safety and rural labour inspectorates were essential; and an enabling environment should be established to promote rural employment effectively. The ILO should focus on providing practical solutions within its unique sphere of competencies.
- 154.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson thanked the Committee members for the interesting and constructive debate. He stressed that the ILO had a duty to work with governments to encourage the ratification of Conventions and their incorporation into domestic legislation, in particular the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), which guaranteed agricultural workers the same rights as other categories of workers. The ILO must allocate resources to projects relating to work in agriculture, particularly since the agriculture sector had the highest number of child labourers. Insufficient ILO staff resources were dedicated to the agricultural sector; a cross-cutting unit devoted to labour in the agriculture sector, with similar functions to that of the gender unit should be considered to bring agriculture and rural development to the forefront of ILO's agenda. The ILO should also consider how to bring together the relevant international agencies to collaborate on agricultural issues, particularly in light of the UN reform process that was currently under way. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring DWCPs took account of rural areas. Lastly, the speaker called on the Committee to adopt a resolution on the food crisis and support establishing an ongoing project.
- 155.** The Chairperson thanked the Committee members for a fruitful and constructive dialogue.

Draft conclusions

156. The Chairperson introduced the document which contained the draft conclusions prepared by the Drafting Group. He thanked the members of the Drafting Group, which included the Vice-Chairpersons, the Government members and the Employer' and Workers' groups, for their hard work in arriving at the draft, and also thanked the Office for its technical and administrative support.

Paragraph 1

157. Paragraph 1 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 2

158. Paragraph 2 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 3

159. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, submitted an amendment to the first line, to replace the word "sector" with the word "economy", as this better reflected the entire context of rural employment. The amendment was opposed by the Worker Vice-Chairperson, the Government member of Chad, and the Employer Vice-Chairperson.

160. The amendment was withdrawn.

161. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, introduced an amendment to replace the words "rapidly rising food prices" by the words "the food crisis, food shortages and rapidly increasing prices". The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed that this was a more comprehensive way of explaining the context. The Government member of the United Kingdom opposed the amendment, saying that the Committee should focus on structural problems and not be diverted by short-term issues. The Government member of Lebanon insisted that food prices were expected to continue to rise over a longer time and that the rural sector had to be protected against this. The Government member of New Zealand proposed a subamendment replacing the words "rapidly increasing prices" with the words "rapidly increasing food prices".

162. The amendment, as subamended, was adopted.

163. Paragraph 3, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 4

164. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to delete paragraph 4 which read:

Globalization has had a far-reaching impact on the world economy, creating uneven patterns of growth in a rapidly changing economic landscape. For example, global supply chains in the food sector offer opportunities for producers to sell their products internationally, whereas barriers to trade continue to limit market access for a wide variety of agricultural products. One of the major challenges for public policy is to create conditions that will enable the poor, both in urban and rural areas, to benefit from globalization.

The Employer Vice-Chairperson suggested that references elsewhere in the text better covered the issues raised in the paragraph. The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed.

165. The amendment was adopted.

166. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to insert the following paragraph taken from paragraphs 9 and 10 of Report IV:

Historically, agriculture has been an engine of economic development, providing the food, feed, fibre and fuel with which to create more diversified products and services in other sectors. In many countries, agriculture continues to be the mainstay of rural livelihoods, a major contributor to GDP and an important source of export earnings. Agriculture cannot play this dynamic, wealth-creating role without an enabling policy environment, adequate institutions, and sufficient, well-targeted public and private investment.

The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the first two sentences but could support the last sentence only if the words “decent work” were added. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed to subamend the last sentence to read: “Agriculture cannot play this dynamic, wealth-creating role without an enabling policy environment which ensures adequate institutions, decent work, and sufficient, well-targeted public and private investment”.

167. The new paragraph, as subamended, was adopted.

Paragraph 5

168. The Government member of New Zealand introduced an amendment to the fourth line to insert the word “often” after the words “incomes are” to reflect the diverse nature of rural situations in different countries. The amendment received support from the Government members of the EU, South Africa and the Employers’ group. The Workers’ group opposed the change on the grounds that paragraph 5 started with the statement that three-quarters of the world’s poor live in rural areas and suggested replacing the word “incomes” with the word “wages”. A subamendment by the Government member of Côte d’Ivoire to insert “generally” instead of “often” received wide support. On this basis the amendment was adopted.

169. Paragraph 5 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 6

170. Paragraph 6 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 7

171. The Government member of South Africa, speaking also on behalf of the Government members of Kenya and Morocco, suggested the amendment to replace “world of work” by “work markets”, and to replace the word “importance” by the word “impact”. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons opposed the amendment on the principle that, unless there was a pressing need to change the text proposed by the Drafting Group, the Committee should retain the original wording. The Government member of South Africa withdrew the amendments.

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- 172.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to the second bullet of paragraph 7 to replace “the disparity of treatment of rural women” with “inequality of treatment of women in rural areas”. He further referred to an amendment proposed by GRULAC concerning the same bullet, which would insert the words “youth and indigenous peoples” after the word “women”, and he suggested that the two amendments be combined into a new second bullet of paragraph 7 that would read: “inequality of treatment of women, youth and indigenous peoples in rural areas”. The Government member of Argentina agreed on behalf of GRULAC.
- 173.** The Government member of the United States proposed that the amendment be qualified by adding a specific reference to developing countries. The Worker Vice-Chairperson opposed this qualification on the grounds that women, youth and indigenous peoples were also suffering from unequal treatment in developed countries, as did the Government member of Lebanon. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted that paragraph 2 of the conclusions already provided for a particular focus on developing countries. The Government member of Austria emphasized that women should not be categorized with other vulnerable groups since women made up over half of the world’s population and proposed the subamendment to split the bullet point in question into two bullet points as follows: “unequal treatment of women in rural areas” and “unequal treatment of youth and indigenous peoples in rural areas”.
- 174.** The subamendment was adopted.
- 175.** The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, introduced an amendment to the third bullet to insert the words “and poor working conditions” after “poor occupational health and safety”. The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons supported this amendment, and suggested that the word “poor” be used only once in the sentence so that the bullet point would read: “poor occupational health and safety and working conditions”.
- 176.** The amendment was adopted as subamended.
- 177.** The Government member of South Africa, speaking also on behalf of the Government members of Kenya and Morocco, introduced an amendment to add a new bullet “lack of training and low competency levels”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the introduction of the words “lack of training”, but could not support the reference to low competency levels as it implied that there were low competency levels everywhere and that was not the case as there were many highly skilled agricultural workers. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the introduction of the words “lack of training” as a new bullet. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed a subamendment to replace “low competency levels” by “lack of skills”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson and Worker Vice-Chairperson opposed this subamendment. The Government members of Kenya, Morocco and South Africa agreed to limit the wording to “lack of training”.
- 178.** The amendment was adopted as subamended.
- 179.** Paragraph 7 was adopted as amended.
- Paragraph 8**
- 180.** Paragraph 8 was adopted without amendment

Paragraph 9

- 181.** The Government member of Morocco, speaking also on behalf of Kenya and South Africa, submitted an amendment to replace the word “subnational” with the word “local” on the grounds that it was a more universally applied, less technical term. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons agreed.
- 182.** The amendment was adopted.
- 183.** Paragraph 9 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 10

- 184.** The Government member of Turkey introduced an amendment, seconded by the Government member of Yemen, to insert the following new paragraph to be inserted before paragraph 10:

In developing countries, which suffer greatly from lack of resources and means, poverty reduction through job creation in rural areas cannot be achieved at the national level alone. The challenge posed by poverty in least developed countries represents a much more general challenge that must be addressed at the global level, in a context that is characterized by relationships of unequal economic and political strength between rich and poor countries.

He argued that the proposed paragraph responded to the fight against poverty in rural areas and to the principles of the ILO. The Employer Vice-Chairperson considered this a significant change to the text and that the issues being raised were sufficiently covered elsewhere. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the amendment while suggesting, however, to remove the words “at the national level alone”, as it could lead to governments abdicating their responsibilities. The Government member for Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, and the Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, suggested removing the words “and political strength between rich and poor countries”. The Government member of New Zealand suggested removing the words “in a context that is characterized by relationships of unequal economic and political strength between rich and poor countries” and the Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the New Zealand proposal with a further subamendment to add the word “also” after the word “must” in the fourth line.

- 185.** The amendment was adopted as subamended.
- 186.** The new paragraph was adopted as subamended.
- 187.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed adding at the end of paragraph 10 the words “The Global Employment Agenda and the resolution on the promotion of sustainable enterprises additionally provide useful frameworks”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment and it was adopted.
- 188.** Paragraph 10 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 11

- 189.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to replace the words “that enable” with the words “and an enabling environment that promotes” to make the language consistent with the rest of the text. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, supported by the Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member

States of the EU, opposed the amendment on the grounds that it substantially changed the intent of the paragraph.

190. Paragraph 11 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 12

191. Paragraph 12 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 13

192. Paragraph 14 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 14

193. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed after the first sentence to add the following sentence: “Modern commercial farming is often associated with the concentration of commodity markets and the economic power of a limited number of multinational agribusinesses in the industrial food chain.” The wording came from the Committee’s report (paragraph 31, box 2.3). The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed.

194. The amendment was adopted.

195. Paragraph 14 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 15

196. Paragraph 15 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 16

197. Paragraph 16 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 17

198. The Government member of the United Kingdom, speaking also for the Government member of Austria, introduced an amendment to replace paragraph 17 by the following:

“Trade and investment policy. The varying development levels of countries must be taken into account in lifting barriers to domestic and foreign markets. Efficiency gains caused by trade integration can lead to positive employment effects either in terms of quantity or quality of jobs or a combination of both. However, as trade integration can also lead to job dislocation, increased informality and growing income inequality, measures must be taken by governments in consultation with the social partners, to better assess and address the employment and decent work impact of trade policies. Actions are also needed at regional and multilateral levels to remove trade distortions and to assist developing countries in building their capacity to export value-added products, manage change and develop a competitive industrial base.

The amendment was intended to enhance the continuity and improve the coherence with the conclusions of the discussion on the promotion of sustainable enterprises at the International Labour Conference 2007. The Vice-Chairperson of the Workers' group agreed with the text and proposed a subamendment to replace "industrial" base with the words "rural and agricultural" base, to better reflect the current discussion.

199. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

200. Paragraph 17 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 18

201. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to delete the sentence "Public-private partnerships can extend the reach of resources" as it was primarily the government's role to ensure adequate infrastructure in rural areas. The Employer Vice-Chairperson stated that the original text was not meant to replace but instead complemented the role of governments. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, supported the original text. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment in which the original text was maintained but complemented with "but do not replace the primary role of government investment". The Government member of Côte d'Ivoire opposed the subamendment. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, supported the subamendment. The Worker Vice-Chairperson withdrew the amendment.

202. Paragraph 18 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 19

203. Paragraph 19 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 20

204. The Government member of New Zealand, speaking also on behalf of the Government members of Canada and the United States, introduced an amendment to replace the words "relies on" by the words "can be aided by". The Employers' group agreed, noting that technical progress was not solely dependent on the role of tripartite partners. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to change "can be" to "is".

205. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

206. The Government member of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, introduced an amendment to the last sentence: after the word "considered", add the words "and strategies developed to manage these effects, including economic diversification in rural areas".

207. The amendment was adopted.

208. Paragraph 20 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 21

209. Paragraph 21 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 22

210. The following paragraph drafted by the Office was unanimously adopted: “In developing policies for extending the availability and improving the quality of skills development provision in rural areas, it is important to take account of the strategic orientations of the conclusions to the general discussion on skills for improved productivity growth and development (ILC, 2008).”

Paragraph 23

211. The Worker members proposed to insert after the word “find” the words “and maintain” to include the need to protect against precarious jobs and improve employment security of workers. The Employer Vice-Chairperson concurred with the underlying idea and proposed a subamendment: “... productive jobs, improving their employment security”. The representatives of several Governments agreed with a more explicit concern for policies addressing employability and employment security, but they also felt that this was influenced by many other factors than just training and lifelong learning. The Government member of the United Kingdom proposed a compromise sub-subamendment to “find and sustain decent and productive jobs” instead of “find and maintain decent and productive jobs”.

212. This compromise proposal was adopted.

Paragraph 24

213. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “without denying access due to inability to pay” by the words “available free to all, in line with Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.” The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, supported the Workers’ amendment. The Government members of New Zealand, South Africa and the United States opposed the amendment. The Government members of Argentina, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the GRULAC group supported the amendment. The Worker Vice-Chairperson stated he was puzzled by the contradictions in the views expressed by governments as the majority had ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Government member of the United Kingdom suggested as compromise text: “Public policy should provide compulsory quality basic education accessible to all regardless of their ability to pay”, but this proposal was rejected by the Worker Vice-Chairperson on the grounds that it did not resolve the issue around free education. The Government member of Lebanon suggested distinguishing between public and private sector education, adding that public education should be free. The Employer Vice-Chairperson pointed out that the GEA contained language on free education. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed this suggestion. The Government member of the United Kingdom proposed a subamendment: “Public policy should provide compulsory quality basic education accessible to all regardless of ability to pay.” The Workers’ group rejected this subamendment. Citing the GEA, the Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed as a subamendment “quality, compulsory and free basic public education”. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, supported the subamendment. The Government member of the United States proposed a further subamendment to reinsert

“access” and delete “free” because the reasons for not attending school go beyond ability to pay. The Government member of South Africa supported this further subamendment. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, supported the Workers’ group subamendment. The Government member New Zealand suggested a compromise, adding to the end of the Workers’ subamendment “and no child should be denied access because of inability to pay” which was accepted.

214. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, presented the following amendment: to replace “and reduce illiteracy and innumeracy” by “reduce illiteracy and strengthen numeracy skills”. The amendment was supported by the Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons.

215. The amendment was adopted.

216. Paragraph 24 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 25

217. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, presented an amendment to insert the word “intercultural” between the words “community-based” and “training” in an attempt to better reflect the realities of multi-ethnic communities. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons supported the amendment.

218. The amendment was adopted.

219. Paragraph 25 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 26

220. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to insert the word “fish” after the word “poultry” to include an important sector of the rural economy. The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed to the amendment.

221. The amendment was adopted.

222. The Worker Vice-Chairperson submitted an amendment to insert after the word “techniques.”, the words: “Workers should be consulted prior to the introduction of new technologies and work processes”. He stressed that these words reflected the established principles of social dialogue and that consultations underpinned decent work. The Employer Vice-Chairperson stated he had serious difficulties with the proposed statement. It would pose a problem for businesses if workers should be consulted on all and relatively minor day-to-day technologies or work processes, and he noted that not all national laws provided such rights to workers. He proposed to subamend the new sentence as follows: “It is good practice to engage workers in the introduction of new technologies and work processes, where this is appropriate”. The Government member of South Africa supported the original amendment. The Government member of Austria, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, supported the Employer subamendment, as did the Government members of Lebanon and New Zealand. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, noted that the amendment proposed by the Workers’ group contained the word “should” rather than “must” and therefore supported the original Worker amendment. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed a new subamendment: “It is good practice to consult affected workers prior to the introduction of new technologies and work processes”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson defended the

wording of the original amendment and referred to Article 8 of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), which states: “workers in agriculture shall have the right to be informed and consulted on safety and health matters including risks from new technologies”, and which established that consultation was more of a right than a good practice. The Government member of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stressed the rights of workers to consultation and social dialogue, particularly when it came to the introduction of technologies that could have a direct impact on workers and their lives. The Employer Vice-Chairperson in turn proposed an alternative subamendment: “Affected workers should be consulted prior to the introduction of new technologies and work processes according to national practice”, which stressed the diversity of national laws and practices that guided consultations with workers. The Worker Vice-Chairperson said he could accept introducing the word “affected”, but not the reference to “according to national practice”, since the Workers’ group took a global position on what good social dialogue was. The Government member of Austria asked the Employer Vice-Chairperson to reconsider the introduction of the word “affected” at the beginning of the sentence, since the term “affected workers” was not a standard ILO reference to workers. The Government member of Australia proposed a new subamendment: “Workers should be consulted prior to the introduction of significant new technologies and work processes” in acknowledgement of the practical point that the Employers’ group had made. The Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed. Noting that the right to consultation referred to by the Workers’ group was related to an occupational safety and health Convention, and not to the introduction to new technologies or work processes, the Employer Vice-Chairperson reluctantly accepted the point. The amendment was adopted as subamended by the Government member of Australia.

223. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to insert the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: “In order to upgrade their skills, workers should have paid time-off for training”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson suggested that paid time-off was the only way for the government to promote training and skills upgrading, and therefore rejected the proposed amendment. The Government member of Mali noted that training and skills upgrading were a good thing, but felt that paid time-off would be an obstacle that would actually limit opportunities for workers to access such training. The Government member of Thailand supported the amendment. The Government member of New Zealand proposed a subamendment: “In order to upgrade their skills, workers should have access to and opportunities for training”. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons, as well as the Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, agreed.

224. Paragraph 26, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 27

225. The Employer Vice-Chairperson submitted an amendment to insert after the word “conclusions”, the words “in their entirety”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment and suggested another amendment to add, at the end of the second sentence, the words “and are included in Appendix 1”, with such appendix referring to point 11 of the ILO conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, 2007 (96th Session of the ILC).

226. The amendments were adopted.

227. Paragraph 27, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 28

228. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, introduced an amendment to insert, after the word “cooperatives”, the words “or other community-based organizations”, and, on the grounds that non-farm activities were always critical, and not just in this case, to delete “where landlessness prevails” after the word “critical”. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons agreed.

229. Paragraph 28, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 29

230. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to replace the paragraph by the following: “Cooperatives are a major source of employment in rural areas. Cooperatives can be an important element of local economic development. It is important to ensure an appropriate legal framework in line with the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).” The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, introduced a subamendment to insert the word “often” after the words “cooperatives are” in the first sentence. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the subamendment.

231. Paragraph 29, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 30

232. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, suggested to insert the words “and sectors” after the word “groups”, and to replace the words “and youth” by the words “youth, indigenous peoples and smallholders” at the end of the paragraph. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment for the last sentence to read: “Awareness raising of the benefits of enterprise and training in basic management skills can encourage the creation of enterprises and be targeted at women and specific groups and sectors, such as youth, indigenous people and smallholders”.

233. The subamendment was adopted.

234. Paragraph 30 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 31

235. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to replace the paragraph with a new paragraph, based on the ILO conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (96th Session of the ILC). The eight points listed were particularly important for promoting sustainable enterprises in rural employment, but they were not the only concerns, so other items would be included in Annex I. He proposed a subamendment to remove the following text from the proposed amendment:

The basic conditions for an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises are developed in the conclusions of the 2007 discussion on the promotion of sustainable enterprises, paragraph 11 of these conclusions is contained in Annex I. In the context of sustainable rural enterprises the following features outlined in Annex I are also important: In the context of sustainable rural enterprises the following features outlined in Annex I are also important.

236. He proposed that the remaining eight paragraphs be numbered (i) to (viii), and that paragraph would read:

Within a rural context, the following elements are particularly important to facilitate the creation and development of sustainable enterprises:

- (i) *Access to financial services.* A well-functioning financial system provides the lubricant for a growing and dynamic private sector. Making it easier for SMEs, including cooperatives and start-ups, to access financing, for example, credit, leasing, venture capital funds or similar or new types of instruments, creates appropriate conditions for a more inclusive process of enterprise development. Financial institutions, particularly multilateral and international ones, should be encouraged to include decent work in their lending practices.
- (ii) *Enabling legal and regulatory environment.* Poorly designed regulations and unnecessary bureaucratic burdens on businesses limit enterprise start-ups and the ongoing operations of existing companies, and lead to informality, corruption and efficiency costs. Well-designed transparent, accountable and well-communicated regulations, including those that uphold labour and environmental standards, are good for markets and society. They facilitate formalization and boost systemic competitiveness. Regulatory reform and the removal of business constraints should not undermine such standards.
- (iii) *Rule of law and secure property rights.* A formal and effective legal system which guarantees all citizens and enterprises that contracts are honoured and upheld, the rule of law is respected and property rights are secure, is a key condition not only for attracting investment, but also for generating certainty, and nurturing trust and fairness in society. Property is more than simply ownership. Extending property rights can be a tool for empowerment and can facilitate access to credit and capital. They also entail the obligation to comply with the rules and regulations established by society.
- (iv) *Access to transparent and competitive markets, services and inputs,* including through clusters and value chains. This includes local infrastructure, efficient customs systems, predictable legal systems and effective public services.
- (v) *Social dialogue.* Social dialogue based on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, including through institutional and regulatory frameworks, is essential for achieving effective, equitable and mutually beneficial outcomes for governments, employers, workers and wider society.
- (vi) *Respect for universal human rights and international labour standards.* Competitiveness should be built on values. Respect for human rights and international labour standards, especially freedom of association and collective bargaining, the abolition of child labour, forced labour and all forms of discrimination, is a distinctive feature of societies that have successfully integrated sustainability and decent work.
- (vii) *Social justice and social inclusion.* Inequality and discrimination are incompatible with sustainable enterprise development. Explicit policies for social justice, social inclusion and equality of opportunities for employment are needed. Effective exercise of the right to organize and bargain collectively is also an effective means to ensure fair distribution of productivity gains and adequate remuneration of workers.
- (viii) *Adequate social protection.* Sustainable tax-based or other national models of universal social security that provide citizens with access to key services such as quality health care, unemployment benefits, maternity protection and a basic pension, are key to improving productivity and fostering transitions to the formal economy. Protecting workers' health and safety at the workplace is also vital for sustainable enterprise development.

237. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment as subamended. The Government member of Argentina suggested that the proposed amendments under the current paragraph should have been dealt with individually. The Government members of Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela felt that the amendment favoured employers and multinationals. The Government member of the United Kingdom supported the

amendment but proposed that the word “bureaucratic” in point (ii) be replaced with the word “administrative”. The Government member of Morocco suggested to add after clause (iv) the following new clause “Access to social dialogue structures”.

238. The amendment, as subamended by the Worker Vice-Chairperson, was adopted.

239. Paragraph 31 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 32

240. Paragraph 32 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 33

241. Paragraph 33 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 34

242. Paragraph 34 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 35

243. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, proposed to add the word “specific” after the word “requires”.

244. The amendment was adopted.

245. The paragraph was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 36

246. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to add the word “decent” after the word “creating”.

247. The amendment was adopted.

248. The paragraph was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 37

249. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to replace the words “due to the nature of their employment” by the word “, such” since labour legislation can not extend simultaneously to self-employed farmers and employed workers. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment for the full sentence to read: “Many are excluded from the scope of legislation such as casual or seasonal workers, due to the nature of their employment”. The Government member of Austria, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, supported this subamendment.

250. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

251. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to insert after “indigenous peoples.” the sentence: “Members should ensure that international labour standards are applicable to all forms of contractual arrangements, including those involving multiple parties, so that workers have the protection they are due.” He argued that precariousness of employment was particularly rife in rural areas, often aggravated by subcontracting arrangements through employment agencies. The Employer Vice-Chairperson disagreed and proposed a subamendment as follows: “All those in the labour market should receive the protection they are due.” The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, suggested a subamendment in line with the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198),³ to read: “Members should ensure national labour standards are applied to all employed workers.” The Government member of Kenya supported this proposal, as did the Employers’ group. The Worker Vice-Chairperson suggested a further subamendment to replace “Members” with “Governments”.

252. The amendment was accepted as subamended.

253. The Employer members submitted an amendment to delete the words “In the absence of efficient labour inspection,” since lack of protection was much more. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, insisted that lack of labour inspection was an important cause and proposed an alternative. The Government member of New Zealand supported the Employer amendment, as did the EU and the Workers’ group.

254. The amendment was adopted.

255. Paragraph 37 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 38

256. Paragraph 38 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 39

257. Paragraph 39 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 40

258. The Government member of New Zealand, on behalf of the IMEC group, introduced an amendment to stop the first sentence after “promoted” and add a new sentence to read: “In addition, other instruments relevant to rural employment promotion for poverty reduction should be promoted (see annex).” All the Conventions in paragraph 42, except the ILO core Conventions, would then be listed in an annex at the end of the final conclusions. The Worker Vice-Chairperson opposed the amendment. The EU supported the amendment. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment.

³ Article 4 of the Recommendation states: “National policy should at least include measures to: (c) ensure standards applicable to all forms of contractual arrangements, including those involving multiple parties, so that employed workers have the protection they are due.”

259. The amendment was adopted.

260. The Government members of GRULAC proposed to add the Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99), to the new annex to the conclusions. The Employer Vice-Chairperson understood that the Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99), was placed on a list of ILO Conventions that were not up to date, and hence it was not subject to promotion by the ILO. A representative of the Office informed the Committee that the ILO Convention in question was placed on an interim list of ILO Conventions that were not up to date, and thus neither to be promoted nor revised. The Convention had been ratified by 50 countries that were still bound by it. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a new heading be added to the new annex: “In addition, other instruments relating to rural employment promotion for poverty reduction should be noted” where the Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99), would be placed under this separate heading. This compromise was accepted.

261. GRULAC also proposed to add the following words at the end of the paragraph: “This should not compromise the consideration of other relevant international instruments”. This proposal was accepted.

262. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment that would add the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), to the new annex. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment. The Government members of the EU proposed a subamendment to add the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), to the new annex, and the Government members of GRULAC also proposed to add the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), to the annex. Both the Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons supported this amendment as subamended.

263. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to add the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), to the new annex, which was accepted.

264. Paragraph 40 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 41

265. Paragraph 41 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 42

266. Paragraph 42 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 43

267. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment that would add the words “the effective recognition of the right to” after the opening words “Freedom of association and” and before the words “collective bargaining are enabling rights” in the first line of paragraph 43. He explained that this was how these key concepts were referred to in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights and Work and its Follow-up, 1998. The Worker Vice-Chairperson strongly opposed, the Government members of the EU and

GRULAC supported the original text, and the Employer Vice-Chairperson withdrew the amendment.

268. Paragraph 43 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 44

269. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed replacing the words “addresses such discrimination” with the words “remove all forms of discrimination” in order to give the paragraph greater clarity. The Employer Vice-Chairperson argued that leaving the original version made clear that the discrimination referred to the particulars of the paragraph and therefore opposed the amendment. He also pointed out that there were positive forms of discrimination such as affirmative action measures that should not be removed. The Government members of Austria and South Africa opposed the amendment. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, proposed a subamendment, namely to introduce the word “negative” before the word “discrimination” in the amendment. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, argued in favour of retaining the original and opposed the amendment. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a new subamendment to now read “to remove all forms of discrimination, which have the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation”. This was accepted.

270. Paragraph 44 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 45

271. Paragraph 45 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 46

272. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed that the words “Governments must ensure that the provisions of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), are applied to agriculture” be inserted after the first sentence. The Employer Vice-Chairperson argued that, while many governments had adopted the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), not all of them had, and any reference must be carefully worded. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, and Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, supported the amendment. The Government member of the United States suggested instead to reference the fundamental principles and rights, which are derived from Convention No. 138. The Employer Vice-Chairperson suggested to replace the original amendment with the words “governments should take guidance from the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).” The Government member of the United States supported the Employers’ subamendment. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed instead the words “governments should take into account the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)”.

273. The Worker Vice-Chairperson argued that 150 countries had ratified this Convention and that it must be stated strongly and unambiguously that it applies to rural workers. The Employer Vice-Chairperson argued that it must be stated in a way that brought everyone on board. He proposed that the amendment be stated as “governments must carefully and fully take guidance from the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).” The

Chairperson reminded delegates that paragraph 2 had made clear that the paper was referring primarily to developing countries. The Government member of New Zealand suggested that the word “must” in the second of the Employer Vice-Chairperson’s subamendments be replaced by the word “should”. The Government member of the United States argued that, if the paragraph were left as it then was being proposed, that countries who had not ratified the Convention and who took the responsibilities of ratification seriously would find themselves being held accountable for Conventions they had not ratified. The Government member of Austria proposed a new subamendment with the words “governments should ensure that the fundamental principles derived from the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), are applied to agriculture”.

274. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

275. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed to add after the words “in agriculture.” a new sentence: “Child labour exploitation should be seen not only as a breach of labour law, but equally as a violation of children’s rights.” The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to delete the word “exploitation”.

276. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

277. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed to replace “It perpetuates a cycle whereby the household income of adults is insufficient to meet the economic needs of their families” with “It exacerbates existing insufficient household income and deepens poverty.”, and replace the sentence “Child labour undermines decent work and employment for adults and the effective functioning of rural labour markets is undermined by the presence of child labour.” by “Child labour undermines decent work and the effective functioning of rural labour markets.”

278. The amendment was adopted.

279. Paragraph 46 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 47

280. Paragraph 47 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 48

281. Paragraph 48 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 49

282. The Government member of Turkey introduced an amendment to insert after the word “skills”, the words “, and poverty and social exclusion”. The amendment was seconded by the Government member of New Zealand and adopted.

283. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to insert at the end of the paragraph the words “Geographical isolation, lack of health services and poverty also reduce access of rural workers to treatment and antiretrovirals.”

284. The amendment was adopted.

285. Paragraph 49 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 50

286. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to delete the words “in rural areas” on the grounds that social security coverage was low in many sectors in developing countries, not just in rural zones. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, as well as the Government member of the United States, opposed the amendment by insisting that the report should stick to rural areas. The Employer Vice-Chairperson withdrew the amendment.

287. Paragraph 50 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 51

288. The Government member of Turkey proposed an amendment, seconded by the Government members of Austria and the United Kingdom, to insert the word “women” after the words “the disabled” in order to underline the importance of strengthening social protection for women. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment. The Worker Vice-Chairperson opposed the amendment on the grounds that it sent out the wrong signal about the status of women and that it was undermining the case for the equal employment status of women. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, the Government member of Morocco and the Government member of Lebanon opposed the amendment. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced a subamendment for the sentence in question to read “Social protection is indispensable to social inclusion to assist women and disadvantaged groups in rural areas, notably children, the elderly, the disabled, and the large number of unemployed and underemployed rural people”.

289. The subamendment was adopted.

290. Paragraph 51 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 52

291. The Government member of New Zealand, speaking also on behalf of Canada and the United States, introduced an amendment to insert the words “and tailored to a country’s stage of development” after the word “policies”. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons opposed the amendment.

292. The amendment was withdrawn.

293. Paragraph 52 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 53

294. Paragraph 53 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 54

295. Paragraph 54 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 55

296. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment that would delete the first four sentences, since the issue of remittances was not directly related to the work of the Committee. The Employer Vice-Chairperson urged drawing the attention of governments to the fact that the right mix of policies could ensure better use and more positive contribution of remittances, and noted that the original paragraph not only highlighted the positive aspects of remittances, but also referred to the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to retain the text of the original paragraph but move the two sentences starting with the words “One of the main outcomes of migration ...” and ending with the words “... enhancing their development impact” to the end of the paragraph.

297. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

298. The Government member of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed to delete “and facilitate access for migrant workers to decent work” since the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration provided non-binding guidance concerning a number of areas related to migration and not just the specific issue of access to decent work. The Worker Vice-Chairperson opposed the amendment because the deletion of the words “and facilitate access for migrant workers to decent work” could signal that migrant workers did not have a right to decent work. The Government member of New Zealand proposed a subamendment that would end the sentence in question after the words “... to address such situations” but add the following new sentence: “Access should be facilitated for migrant workers to decent work”. The Government members of GRULAC opposed any change to the original text on the grounds that all workers, including migrant workers, had a right to decent work. The Government member of the United Kingdom proposed instead to add the following words to the end of the original sentence: “..., according to national laws” because government could not guarantee access to decent work for illegal migrant workers. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed to insert the words “can help” between the words “... address such situation and ...” and the words “... facilitate access for migrant workers to decent work”. The Government member of the United Kingdom agreed with the approach but proposed a new subamendment that would insert the words “can indicate how best to” after the words “... address such situation and.”

299. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

300. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, proposed to introduce the words “and full respect for their human rights”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson accepted the amendment on the proviso that it be accompanied by a subamendment to introduce the words “governments and” prior to the words “the social partners”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment and subamendment.

301. Paragraph 55 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 56

302. The Government member of the United States, speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, proposed replacing the last sentence with the words “It forms a sound basis for a response involving solidarity, care and support with respect to rural and urban workplaces”. He argued that they were not in favour of the phrase containing the words “beyond the workplace”. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons opposed and the amendment was withdrawn.

303. Paragraph 56 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 57

304. Paragraph 57 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 58

305. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed introducing “Good governance covers tripartism, employment policy and labour inspection.” at the beginning of the paragraph.

306. The amendment was adopted.

307. The Government member of New Zealand, speaking on behalf of Canada and the United States, proposed replacing the words “excessive bureaucracy” with the words “inefficient administrations” in the second sentence of the paragraph, to make it less pejorative.

308. The amendment was adopted.

309. Paragraph 58 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 59

310. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed replacing the words “enterprise or sectoral level” with the words “enterprise, sectoral or national level” in the second sentence on the basis that collective agreements can also be national in scope. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced two subamendments, namely, that the word “workplace” be inserted prior to the word “governance”, and the words “as appropriate” be placed after “national level”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson withdrew the amendment.

311. Paragraph 59 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 60

312. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed putting the word “bargaining” before the word “mechanisms”.

313. The amendment was adopted.

314. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed putting the words “In part due to poor infrastructure, low productivity and poor access to markets” at the beginning of the second sentence in order to provide some of the reasons why wages in rural areas of developing

countries are low. The Worker Vice-Chairperson opposed the amendment on the grounds that, if reasons for this were to be offered, then all the reasons should be, including massive disparities in wealth. The Employer Vice-Chairperson withdrew the amendment.

315. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to remove references to several international labour standards from the main text of the report and list them in a single annex. The proposal was supported by the Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Governments.

316. Paragraph 60 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 61

317. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “including ... employment” by the words “where access to land has provided a sustainable livelihood and stimulated rural employment”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to add “distribution of and” after the word “where”.

318. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

319. Paragraph 61 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 62

320. The Employer Vice-Chairperson submitted an amendment to replace the word “essential” by the words “an important means”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced a subamendment to replace “essential” by “... is one of the essential means”, which was supported by the Employer Vice-Chairperson.

321. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

322. Paragraph 62 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 63

323. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to replace the words “world of work. Good governance requires” by the words “world of work which is facilitated by”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson suggested a subamendment to keep the wording “in the world of work” and to add, before the words “Good governance”, the words “In this context, ...”. The subamendment was supported by the Employer Vice-Chairperson.

324. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

325. Paragraph 63 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 64

326. Paragraph 64 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 65

327. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to replace the words “Organizations of” by the words “Employers’ and workers’ organizations should seek to include” and delete the words “should participate fully”. He explained that this amendment was intended to ensure that the social partners were the main participants in the formulation of DWCPs. After several attempts to formulate an appropriate subamendment to reflect both the lead role of the social partners and the need to include other actors in rural areas, the Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to introduce the following text: “Employers’ and workers’ organizations should fully participate in the formulation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and should seek to include rural employers and rural workers to encourage the inclusion of rural issues in DWCPs.”

328. The subamendment was adopted.

329. Paragraph 65 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 66

330. Paragraph 66 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 67

331. Paragraph 67 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 68

332. Paragraph 68 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 69

333. The Government member of New Zealand, speaking also on behalf of Canada and the United States, proposed an amendment to replace “particular areas where governments, workers, and employers respectively should take the lead and these are listed below.” with the words “areas where governments, workers, and employers respectively would play a particularly useful role as follows.” The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, and the Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, did not support the amendment. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to insert between the words “lead” and “and” the words “or would play a particularly useful role.” The amendment as subamended by the Employer members was adopted.

334. Paragraph 69 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 70

335. After consultation with the Vice-Chairpersons and numerous Government members, the Chairperson introduced a clustering of the issues addressed in paragraph 70 around the following five themes:

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- (a) governance;
 - (b) rural employment policy (national and local);
 - (c) rights in rural areas;
 - (d) services in rural areas;
 - (e) government capacity.

336. The suggested regrouping was accepted, and formed the basis of the discussion. As a result, the bullets were considered in a different order than that presented in the draft conclusions.

(a) Governance

337. Bullets 18, 20 and 23 were adopted without amendment.

338. The Government member of New Zealand, speaking also on behalf of Canada and the United States, introduced an amendment to create a new bullet point to read: “Ensure the rule of law and good governance based on transparency, stability and freedom from corruption.” The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment. The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to insert the word “predictability” between the words “transparency” and “stability”.

339. The amendment was adopted, as subamended. As a result bullets 8 and 19 were deleted.

340. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to create a new bullet to read: “Ensure the respect of property rights.”, and supported a subamendment from the Worker Vice-Chairperson for this bullet to read: “Ensure a formal and effective legal system which guarantees all citizens and enterprises that contracts are honoured and upheld, the rule of law is respected and property rights are secure”.

341. The amendment was adopted, as subamended.

(b) Rural employment policy (national and local)

342. Bullets 1, 5, 2, 21, 6, 4, 12, and 7 were adopted without amendment.

343. The Government members of Canada, New Zealand and the United States proposed deleting the word “ensure” in bullet 16 to better reflect what governments realistically can do. The Worker Vice-Chairperson responded that governments can and should ensure responsible enterprise-level practices through the rule of law and labour inspection. The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed with the Worker Vice-Chairperson that the original text should be retained. The Government member of New Zealand withdrew the amendment.

344. Bullet 16 was adopted without amendment.

345. The Government member of Turkey proposed a new bullet to read: “Ensure the sustainable utilization of environmental and natural resources”, which was seconded by the Government member of New Zealand. The Worker Vice-Chairperson further proposed “Ensure the sustainable utilization of the environment and natural resources”, which was adopted.

346. The new bullet was adopted as subamended.

(c) *Rights in rural areas*

347. Bullets 22, 10, 15, 9, and 13 were adopted without amendment.

348. The Government member of Canada, speaking also on behalf of New Zealand and the United States, introduced an amendment to bullet 11 to insert the words “employment and labour” after the words “extending existing” and before the words “rights to all”. The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons supported the amendment.

349. The amendment was adopted.

350. The Government member of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the Governments of Member States of the EU, proposed an amendment to add the following new bullet: “Promote gender equality, the empowerment of women, equal access to education and vocational training, and better possibilities for all to reconcile work, private and family life.” The Worker and Employer Vice-Chairpersons supported the amendment.

351. The new bullet was adopted as amended.

(d) *Services in rural areas*

352. Bullet points 3 and 14 were adopted without amendment.

353. The Worker Vice-Chairperson submitted an amendment to add a new bullet that reads: “Where there is no existing labour inspection in rural areas, establish a system of labour inspection”. Effective labour inspection systems were required in order to give effect to the desire of governments to introduce and secure labour laws in rural areas. The Employer Vice-Chairperson reiterated that labour inspection systems had to be resourced, equipped and adequately staffed and free from corruption in order to function effectively. He proposed a subamendment for the new bullet to read: “Where there is no existing labour inspection in rural areas, adequately staff and resource labour inspection services to cover rural areas”. The Government member of Morocco stressed that labour inspection systems should be strengthened rather than established anew. The Worker Vice-Chairperson accepted the subamendment proposed by the Employer Vice-Chairperson, but further proposed another subamendment so that the new bullet would read: “Where there is no existing labour inspection in rural areas, adequately staff and resource a labour inspection service”.

354. The new bullet was adopted as amended.

(e) *Government capacity*

355. Bullet 17 was adopted without amendment.

356. The Government members of Kenya, Morocco and South Africa introduced an amendment to add a new bullet. The Government member of Morocco revised the proposed amendment when presenting it to the Committee as follows: “Ensure that stakeholders at the local level work together and evaluate the activities and the projects at the rural level”. The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons both felt the intentions of the amendment were covered in other parts of the conclusions and objected to the proposed amendment.

357. The proposal was not adopted.

358. Paragraph 70 was adopted, as amended.

Paragraph 71

359. Paragraph 71 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 72

360. Paragraph 72 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 73

361. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to replace the words “rural development” with “rural employment”. The Government member of Egypt proposed a subamendment to replace the words “rural development” with “rural employment conditions”, which was rejected.

362. The amendment was adopted.

363. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed to delete “which are formulated ... 2010–15” and replace with the following text: “The ILO’s financial and human resource capacities should be extended to a level that enables the Organization to carry out that action plan. Taking into account the Strategic Policy Framework for 2010–15, any other resources that may be available during the 2008–09 period should be allocated to this action plan”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson thought this amendment went beyond the mandate of the Committee. The Government members of the EU supported the original text. The Government members of GRULAC supported the amendment. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to paragraph 73 so that the second line would read as follows: “The plan of action needs to be focused on practical interventions which are formulated in light of the ILO’s financial and human resource capacities taking into account the Programme and Budget for 2008–09 and the Strategic Policy Framework for 2010–15”. The Government member of the United Kingdom proposed a subamendment that added the words “rapidly and efficiently” before the word “focused”. This was agreed by both the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons.

364. Paragraph 73 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 74

365. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed replacing the words “focus its efforts on achieving progress on” in the third and fourth lines with the words “commit to develop and implement a strategy on rural development and rural employment in line with”.

366. The amendment was adopted.

367. Paragraph 74 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 75

368. The Worker Vice-Chairperson suggested replacing the words following the word “level” by the words “Governments should formulate and implement DWCPs in consultation with representative organizations of workers and employers”.
369. The amendment was adopted.
370. Paragraph 75 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 76

Bullet 1

371. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed replacing bullet 1 with: “In order to inform future workplans, provide the Governing Body with a comprehensive report analysing the impact of prior activities focused on rural employment and gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards in rural areas.”
372. The amendment was adopted as amended.
373. Bullet 1 was adopted as amended.

Bullet 2

374. Bullet 2 was adopted without amendment.

Bullet 3

375. The Worker Vice-Chairperson’s proposal to insert the words “and family” before the word “gender” in bullet 3 was accepted.
376. Bullet 3 was adopted as amended.

Bullet 4

377. Bullet 4 was adopted without amendment.
378. The Government members of the EU proposed a new bullet to follow bullet 4: “Promote small and medium-sized enterprises and, where necessary, cooperatives”. The Government member of Argentina proposed a subamendment adding the words “and other community-based organizations” after the word “cooperatives”. The Worker members supported the amendment as subamended and called for two new subamendments, namely, that the word “sustainable” be inserted between the words “promote” and “small” and that the words “where necessary” be removed.
379. The amendment, as subamended, was adopted.

Bullet 5

380. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, proposed to insert the words “women, indigenous peoples and smallholders” after the words “young people”. The amendment was supported.

381. Bullet 5 was adopted as amended.

Bullets 6 and 7

382. Bullets 6 and 7 were adopted without amendment.

Bullet 8

383. The Government member of the United States, speaking on behalf of the Government members of Canada and New Zealand, proposed deleting bullet 8 as they were uncomfortable with the unique focus on the issue of biofuels. The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed that bullet 8 be amended to read: “Undertake research on the enterprise and employment implications of biofuel production”. The amendment was adopted as subamended by the Worker members.

384. Bullet 8 was adopted as amended.

385. The Government members of the EU proposed a new bullet: “Focus research on examining how best to operationalize the policy guidelines set out in these conclusions.” The Worker and Employer members did not support the amendment and it was withdrawn.

Bullet 9

386. Bullet 9 was adopted without amendment.

Bullet 10

387. The Government member of New Zealand, in an effort to do justice to the broader scope of employment programmes and not limit the paragraph to employment guarantee schemes only, proposed an amendment to replace the text: “Support the implementation of employment guarantee schemes targeting rural workers for the purpose of delivering living wages, stimulating demand and developing infrastructure.” with “Promote effective employment programmes such as employment guarantee schemes that target rural workers for the purpose of providing decent work.”

388. The amendment was adopted.

389. Bullet 10 was adopted as amended.

Bullets 11 and 12

390. Bullets 11 and 12 were adopted without amendment.

391. Paragraph 76 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 77

Bullet 1

392. Bullet 1 was adopted without amendment.

Bullet 2

393. The Government member of Argentina, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, introduced an amendment to add the following Conventions to the list:

- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143);
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169);
- Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177);
- Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99).

394. Both the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons supported the amendment with an understanding that it had been agreed that the international labour standards referred to in the report would be listed in the annex.

395. The amendment was adopted.

396. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to add “Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156);” to the annex.

397. The amendment was adopted.

398. Bullet 2 was adopted as amended.

Bullet 3

399. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to insert “where appropriate” after “indigenous peoples,”.

400. The amendment was adopted.

401. Bullet 3 was adopted as amended.

402. Paragraph 77 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 78

Bullet 1

403. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted that the global social floor was not a concept that is widely understood but in the spirit of moving the discussion forward and in noting the reality that there would be future discussions in the Governing Body on this concept, proposed the following subamendment, to replace the bullet point with the following text: “Promote social protection to the most vulnerable groups in society. In this respect the

Governing Body is encouraged to explore the concept of a global social floor”. The Government member of the United States opposed the amendment although he recognized there were possibilities to further explore a common understanding of the meaning of “a global social floor”. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment, stating that the concept of the global social floor was referred to by the Workers’ group during the Committee discussion of Report IV.

404. The amendment was adopted.

405. Bullet 1 was adopted as amended.

Bullet 2

406. Bullet 2 was adopted without amendment.

407. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to add the following new bullet after bullet 2: “Promote the use of labour inspection to ensure compliance with occupational safety and health legislation in rural enterprises.” The Employer Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to insert the words “adequately staffed and resourced” between the words “of” and “labour”.

408. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

409. The new bullet was adopted as amended.

Bullet 3

410. Bullet 3 was adopted without amendment.

411. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to add a new bullet to follow bullet 3: “Promote access to potable water as a universal right.” The Government member of the United States introduced a subamendment so the sentence would read “Promote universal access to potable water.”

412. The amendment was adopted as subamended.

413. The new bullet was adopted.

414. Paragraph 78 was adopted as amended.

Paragraph 79

415. Paragraph 79 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 80

416. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to add, after the subtitle “Implementation” the following new paragraph: “All constituents must be satisfactorily engaged in the development of their DWCP. This means that the priorities of the constituents must be reflected in their DWCP so that they are demand-driven. In particular, DWCPs should help to build the capacity of constituents.” The Worker Vice-Chairperson proposed a subamendment to delete the word “satisfactorily”.

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417. The amendment, as subamended, was adopted.
418. The new paragraph was adopted as amended.
419. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to insert in paragraph 80, after the words “efficient manner”, the words “and in cooperation with other international bodies as appropriate”.
420. The amendment was adopted.
421. Paragraph 80 was adopted as amended.
422. The Employer Vice-Chairperson introduced an amendment to add a new Annex I after paragraph 80, that would quote from point 11 of the conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (96th Session, ILC). The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the amendment.
423. The amendment was adopted.

Resolution on the food crisis

424. The Chairperson sought the clear consent of the Committee to address at this point a draft resolution, proposed by the Worker members, and noted the Committee’s agreement.
425. The Worker Vice-Chairperson introduced a proposed resolution concerning the ILO and the tripartite constituents’ role in tackling the global food crisis, and noted a number of amendments. The Worker members strongly felt that the Committee could not conclude its work without reference to the food crisis and therefore welcomed the opportunity to move a resolution on the subject. The Worker members proposed that the ILO convene a technical workshop to discuss the social and employment impact of food prices on decent work, and noted that there were quick, efficient and cost-effective models in the ILO that could be drawn on. The ILO and its constituents had a tremendous amount of expertise, experience and passion concerning the importance of vital, viable rural areas and of ensuring decent productive work to achieve poverty reduction, which should be made available to other UN agencies. While stating that in general resolutions emanating from committee discussions were not a favoured idea of employers, the Employer members accepted the proposed resolution that was carefully worded, incorporated concerns by the Government and Employer members, and addressed an important issue of concern to both employers and workers. The Government members of the EU and IMEC supported the proposed resolution concerning the ILO and the tripartite constituents’ role in tackling the global food crisis. The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Committee.

Adoption of the report

426. The Committee considered the draft report at its 14th sitting. The Reporter introduced the draft report, with the annexed conclusions as amended by the Committee. She noted that the report reflected how the delegates, coming from different backgrounds, had been able to come together and find common ground. The report was the result of concerted efforts of many people, and she thanked the Chairperson, the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons, the Government members and the secretariat under the guidance of the Representative of the Secretary-General.

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427. The Committee unanimously adopted the report, subject to minor amendments and corrections to specific paragraphs submitted by some members. In addition, the Committee also adopted a resolution concerning the ILO's and the tripartite constituents' role in tackling the global food crisis.

Closing remarks

428. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed his thanks to the Chairperson, the Worker Vice-Chairperson, and the many Government members involved in the discussion, as well as the members of the Employers' group.
429. The Worker Vice-Chairperson also expressed his thanks to everyone, and his appreciation for the positive dialogue which had occurred.
430. The Government members of the EU, Lebanon, New Zealand, South Africa and GRULAC, also expressed their appreciation.
431. The Chairperson closed the meeting by expressing his gratitude for the positive and constructive contributions of all the Committee members. He appreciated the open and pragmatic dialogue and constructive compromises reached on more contentious issues. He congratulated the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons for their leadership and the Government members for their valuable contributions. Lastly, he expressed appreciation for the supportive role and contribution of the secretariat, the Reporter, the interpreters and the translators.

Geneva, 9 June 2008.

(Signed) N. Chisupa
Chairperson

E. Fehringer
Reporter

Annex

Fate of amendments to draft conclusions

1. The following amendments were adopted: D.8, D.25, D.28, D.39, D.47, D.55, D.62, D.72, D.75, D.81, D.83, D.86, D.89, D.90, D.93, D.95, D.98, D.99, D.100, D.102, D.105, D.111, D.118, D.121, D.124, D.129, D.134, D.138, D.142, D.143, D.145, D.149.
2. The following amendments were adopted as subamended: D.2, D.10, D.11, D.13, D.15, D.18, D.19, D.21, D.27, D.29, D.31, D.36, D.41, D.52, D.56, D.58, D.67, D.68, D.69, D.74, D.77, D.82, D.84, D.85, D.88, D.91, D.92, D.94, D.96, D.101, D.104, D.108, D.109, D.116, D.122, D.125, D.126, D.127, D.130, D.131, D.132, D.136, D.139, D.140, D.141, D.144, D.150, D.151, D.152, D.155.
3. The following amendments fell: D.4, D.9, D.14, D.32, D.33, D.34, D.35, D.40, D.44, D.48, D.53, D.54, D.59, D.60, D.70, D.79, D.87, D.106, D.107, D.110, D.112, D.113, D.114, D.115, D.123, D.128, D.146.
4. The following amendments were withdrawn: D.3, D.5, D.6, D.7, D.12, D.16, D.17, D.20, D.22, D.23, D.24, D.26, D.30, D.37, D.38, D.42, D.43, D.45, D.46, D.49, D.50, D.51, D.57, D.61, D.63, D.64, D.65, D.66, D.71, D.76, D.78, D.80, D.97, D.103, D.117, D.119, D.120, D.133, D.135, D.137, D.147, D.148, D.153, D.154.

Resolution concerning promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization, meeting at its 97th Session, 2008,

1. Having undertaken a general discussion on the basis of Report IV, *Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction*,

2. Adopts the following conclusions; and

3. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to give due consideration to them in planning future action on the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction on the Decent Work Agenda and to request the Director-General to take them into account both when formulating the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15, and when implementing the Programme and Budget for the 2008–09 biennium and allocating such other resources as may be available during the 2010–11 biennium.

Conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction

Introduction

1. As stated in the Declaration of Philadelphia, “poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere”.
2. The Governing Body, at its 295th Session in March 2006, chose the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction for discussion at the International Labour Conference. The intended outcome was to comprise: a stocktaking of the nature, magnitude and changing patterns of rural employment in the world, with a particular focus on developing countries; a comprehensive strategy to promote employment and decent work in rural areas around the world; and an integrated plan of action for the ILO to implement this strategy, including a conceptual framework, standard setting, technical cooperation and knowledge management.
3. The importance of the rural sector has risen on the political agenda both nationally and globally because of factors such as the persistence of poverty in rural areas, urbanization, globalization and climate change – and most recently, the food crisis, food shortages and rapidly increasing food prices. The Millennium Development Goal on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and the global goal of achieving decent work for all, will not be achieved unless rural poverty is reduced.
4. Historically, agriculture has been an engine of economic development, providing the food, feed, fibre and fuel with which to create more diversified products and services in other sectors. In many countries, agriculture continues to be the mainstay of rural livelihoods, a major contributor to GDP and an important source of export earnings. Agriculture cannot play this dynamic, wealth-creating role without an enabling policy environment, which ensures adequate institutions, decent work, and sufficient, well-targeted public and private investment.
5. Three-quarters of the world’s poor live in rural areas where decent work deficits are typically severe. Rural labour markets are often dysfunctional. Labour market institutions, organization and representation tend to be weak. Underemployment is widespread and incomes are generally low. Access to social protection is extremely limited. Rural workers are often vulnerable, they are, in numerous circumstances, not fully covered by national labour law and, more broadly, their rights are often not realized or enforced. As in urban areas, a large share of economic activity in rural areas tends to be informal.
6. A paucity of economic opportunities and under-investment in rural areas, together with poor infrastructure and public services including education and, in many cases, the prevalence of weak governance and underdeveloped markets compound the difficulties incumbent on working life in rural areas.
7. There are common and particular features to the world of work in rural areas. Among these are the predominance of agriculture and the importance of seasonal and climatic factors. Particular challenges include:
 - prevalence of child labour, migrant workers, family and informal work;
 - the unequal treatment of women in rural areas;

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- the unequal treatment of youth and indigenous peoples in rural areas;
 - poor occupational health and safety and working conditions;
 - poor infrastructure and access to public services;
 - lack of training.
8. However, rural areas are also characterized by great diversity and should not be conceived of as being exclusively agricultural. There is a mixture of on- and off-farm activities ranging from smallholder agriculture or pastoralism to highly sophisticated commercial agribusiness supplying global markets and with intense regional and national linkages with industrial and services sectors.
9. Because national and local contexts are diverse, there is no single policy response to the challenge of addressing rural employment for poverty reduction and decent work deficits. The diverse nature of rural communities affects employment patterns and income generation. Employment is characterized by seasonality and is often based on family units. Policies also need to recognize diversity of country and regional situations in line with the level of development, resources and institutional capacity, without undermining the importance of labour and environmental standards.

Framework for action

10. In developing countries, which suffer greatly from lack of resources and means, poverty reduction through job creation in rural areas cannot be achieved at the national level alone. The challenge posed by poverty in least developed countries represents a much more general challenge that must also be addressed at the global level.
11. Employment and poverty in rural areas are multifaceted and this calls for multifaceted policy responses. The Decent Work Agenda provides a framework for addressing the multiple challenges of promoting rural employment for poverty reduction. The four pillars of decent work – rights, employment, social protection and social dialogue – are recognized as interdependent and mutually reinforcing parts of a whole. The Global Employment Agenda (GEA) and the resolution on the promotion of sustainable enterprises additionally provide useful frameworks.

Strategies to promote decent and productive employment in rural areas

12. Rural employment strategies should form an integral part of national employment strategies and should aim to eliminate poverty. A key objective should be to develop and implement effective regulations, where applicable, that enable the shift from informality to formal status, which can assist in raising productivity, increasing earnings and extending coverage of existing rights, social protection and social dialogue.
13. Agriculture is usually the mainstay of most rural economies and can be an engine of economic growth, poverty reduction and social progress. Because increased per capita agricultural output and value added tend to have a disproportionately positive impact on the incomes of the poorest, and because of its strong linkages with non-farm activities, agriculture and rural development are key to promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction.

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14. Increasing diversification and agricultural productivity through technical progress and investment is central to poverty reduction. For this to happen, agricultural support services need to be tailored to serve the needs of small-scale farms that engage the bulk of the rural population and account for most food production in developing countries.
 15. New sources of demand, especially for certain high-value products, and the overall trend towards greater global integration, offer opportunities and challenges for rural employers and workers. Modern commercial farming is often associated with the concentration of commodity markets and the economic power of a limited number of multinational agribusinesses in the industrial food chain. Notwithstanding the potential of exploiting new market opportunities, in many countries, the production of food for local consumption remains the primary focus. Innovative measures are required to ensure that small farmers have access to wider markets. Strategies should be developed to ensure access to adequate training and technology, land and water for the development of food production, according to national circumstances.

Priority policy guidelines

16. The ILO's GEA is an integrated approach. The employment pillar of the Decent Work Agenda is fully relevant to the rural context. The GEA recognizes that decent and productive employment is the fundamental link between growth and poverty reduction.

Economic policies to support rural employment for poverty reduction

17. *Growth and macroeconomic policy.* The generation of more and better jobs in rural areas requires first and foremost an enabling legal and regulatory framework for the promotion of growth and investment that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Monetary, fiscal and exchange rate policies should guarantee stable and predictable economic conditions and should avoid biases against rural areas. Sound economic management should balance the twin objectives of creating more and better jobs with combating inflation, and provide for policies and regulations that stimulate long-term productive investment.
18. *Trade and investment policy.* The varying development levels of countries must be taken into account in lifting barriers to domestic and foreign markets. Efficiency gains caused by trade integration can lead to positive employment effects either in terms of quantity or quality of jobs or a combination of both. However, as trade integration can also lead to job dislocation, increased informality and growing income inequality, measures must be taken by governments in consultation with the social partners, to better assess and address the employment and decent work impact of trade policies. Actions are also needed at regional and multilateral levels to remove trade distortions and to assist developing countries in building their capacity to export value-added products, manage change and develop a competitive rural and agricultural base.
19. *Productive physical and social infrastructure.* Investment in rural infrastructure is crucial for employment and growth. It works as a bridge between rural and urban areas and between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. Transport and IT infrastructure, for instance, is crucial to link rural producers and businesses to markets. A wide variety of infrastructure projects can directly support agricultural productivity and lend themselves to implementation using labour-intensive methods, where appropriate. Social infrastructure, such as schools, health, potable water and other basic facilities, are also essential to stimulate shared and sustainable rural development. Public-private partnerships can extend the reach of resources.

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20. *Technology policy.* Public and private investment in research and development activities is an important catalyst for innovation in agriculture and other rural sectors as well as in environmental protection and can stimulate strong productivity gains. Communicating the results of research and providing training in good agricultural practices and the use of new technologies to small and medium-sized farmers through extension services contribute to raising agricultural productivity, improving livelihoods and environmental sustainability.
 21. Technical progress is not just a question of mechanization, but rather the application of good agricultural practice and new technologies with a view to improving sustainable productive land use. In that sense, technical progress is aided by the tripartite partners facilitating the development of a skilled and educated agricultural workforce as well as on the availability of information, credit and markets. Application of technologies in agriculture may be labour displacing or labour augmenting. Hence, the employment impact of various approaches to increasing productivity needs to be considered and strategies developed to manage these effects, including economic diversification in rural areas.
 22. *Sectoral approaches.* At the heart of the sectoral approach is the effort to strengthen mutually beneficial linkages among enterprises so that they work together to take advantage of market opportunities. Targeting labour-intensive subsectors as well as sectors with high growth potential in rural areas has significant potential to integrate farmers and rural enterprises into national and global production systems. More and better jobs could be created.

Policies to develop skills, technology and employability

23. In developing policies for extending the availability and improving the quality of skills development provision in rural areas, it is important to take account of the strategic orientations of the conclusions to the general discussion on skills for improved productivity growth and development (ILC, 2008).
24. Education, skills training and lifelong learning are key drivers of capability, productivity, competitiveness, and social development in rural areas. The development of a skilled workforce and the strengthening of human capabilities through appropriate systems of education, vocational and technical training and lifelong learning are important for helping workers to find and sustain decent and productive jobs and keep pace with changing technologies and new employment opportunities.
25. Public policy should provide access to quality compulsory and free, basic public education without denying access due to inability to pay. Public policy also should target investment to rural areas in developing countries to ensure basic education, reduce illiteracy and strengthen numeracy skills. Policies should also strengthen secondary education and vocational training in rural areas and ensure equal access for all men and women with a view to creating career pathways to retain workers in rural areas. Quality education is a key tool in eliminating child labour. As part of the process to encourage lifelong learning, public policy should give due recognition to prior learning as a means to promote access to education.
26. The outreach and effectiveness of rural training infrastructure may be improved, among others, through the use of community-based intercultural training approaches, mobile training and the use of mass media and the Internet.
27. Modern agriculture is characterized by improved plant varieties, poultry, fish and livestock, the application of new technologies and sophisticated processing and handling techniques. Workers should be consulted prior to the introduction of significant new

technologies and work processes. Non-farm enterprises, too, increasingly use modern information and management systems requiring new capabilities for workers and managers alike, as well as expanding electricity distribution. New measures for sustainable development and quality standards require continuous skills upgrading, which is the joint responsibility of governments, employers and workers. In order to upgrade their skills, workers should have access to and opportunities for training.

Policies to promote sustainable enterprises

28. The conclusions of the 2007 discussion on the promotion of sustainable enterprises provided detailed guidance on what constitutes a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises and responsible enterprise-level practices. These conclusions in their entirety provide a relevant framework for promoting sustainable rural enterprises and paragraph 11 of these conclusions is included in Annex I.
29. Policies to promote non-farm employment and enterprise creation in rural areas are essential if development is to be sustainable. Small and medium-sized enterprises, including cooperatives or other community-based organizations, provide a major source of rural employment. Rural non-farm activities are especially critical as they offer the rural poor economic alternatives to traditional activities.
30. Cooperatives are often a major source of employment in rural areas. Cooperatives can be an important element of local economic development. It is important to ensure an appropriate legal framework in line with the ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).
31. Entrepreneurship needs to be fostered in order to stimulate the creation of rural enterprises and create the conditions for innovation, the uptake of new technologies and participation in expanding markets. Awareness raising of the benefits of enterprise and training in basic management skills can encourage the creation of enterprises and be targeted at women and specific groups and sectors such as youth, indigenous peoples and smallholders.
32. Within a rural context, the following elements are particularly important to facilitate the creation and development of sustainable enterprises:
 - (i) *Access to financial services.* A well-functioning financial system provides the lubricant for a growing and dynamic private sector. Making it easier for SMEs, including cooperatives and start-ups, to access financing, for example, credit, leasing, venture capital funds or similar or new types of instruments, creates appropriate conditions for a more inclusive process of enterprise development. Financial institutions, particularly multilateral and international ones, should be encouraged to include decent work in their lending practices.
 - (ii) *Enabling legal and regulatory environment.* Poorly designed regulations and unnecessary bureaucratic burdens on businesses limit enterprise start-ups and the ongoing operations of existing companies, and lead to informality, corruption and efficiency costs. Well-designed transparent, accountable and well-communicated regulations, including those that uphold labour and environmental standards, are good for markets and society. They facilitate formalization and boost systemic competitiveness. Regulatory reform and the removal of business constraints should not undermine such standards.
 - (iii) *Rule of law and secure property rights.* A formal and effective legal system which guarantees all citizens and enterprises that contracts are honoured and upheld, the rule of law is respected and property rights are secure, is a key condition not only for

attracting investment, but also for generating certainty, and nurturing trust and fairness in society. Property is more than simply ownership. Extending property rights can be a tool for empowerment and can facilitate access to credit and capital. They also entail the obligation to comply with the rules and regulations established by society.

- (iv) *Access to transparent and competitive markets, services and inputs*, including through clusters and to national and global value chains. This includes local infrastructure, efficient customs systems, predictable legal systems and effective public services.
 - (v) *Social dialogue*. Social dialogue based on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, including through institutional and regulatory frameworks, is essential for achieving effective, equitable and mutually beneficial outcomes for governments, employers, workers and wider society.
 - (vi) *Respect for universal human rights and international labour standards*. Competitiveness should be built on values. Respect for human rights and international labour standards, especially freedom of association and collective bargaining, the abolition of child labour, forced labour and all forms of discrimination, is a distinctive feature of societies that have successfully integrated sustainability and decent work.
 - (vii) *Social justice and social inclusion*. Inequality and discrimination are incompatible with sustainable enterprise development. Explicit policies for social justice, social inclusion and equality of opportunities for employment are needed. Effective exercise of the right to organize and bargain collectively is also an effective means to ensure fair distribution of productivity gains and adequate remuneration of workers.
 - (viii) *Adequate social protection*. Sustainable tax-based or other national models of universal social security that provide citizens with access to key services such as quality health care, unemployment benefits, maternity protection and a basic pension, are key to improving productivity and fostering transitions to the formal economy. Protecting workers' health and safety at the workplace is also vital for sustainable enterprise development.
33. Local economies usually have specific roots and traditions, are anchored in social networks and woven into unique institutional relationships. Local and regional development approaches need to be promoted that build on the unique potential of rural economies and that foster dialogue and cooperation among local governments and organizations of workers and employers, in cooperation with other community organizations. National policies for rural employment promotion can be made more effective by adapting them to the economic, environmental and social conditions of specific territorial contexts.

Labour market regulations, institutions and policies

34. Rural areas need strong labour market institutions and effective labour administration, including labour inspection and appropriate training and extension services. Rural areas also need the strong involvement of independent representative organizations of workers and employers in social dialogue. Collective bargaining is one important means of promoting decent and productive employment and livelihoods in rural areas. All these must be relevant to, and meet the needs of, rural communities.
35. In order to formulate effective evidence-based policies and regulations for rural areas, better data collection on rural employment is required and the ILO may assist with this process.

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36. Meeting the employment challenge in rural areas requires specific and effective active labour market policies. These could include demand-led technical and vocational training, labour market information services, enterprise promotion, and employment guarantee schemes.
 37. Governments, employers and workers should promote employment opportunities for youth who have reached the minimum legal age for employment in their country, whether in agriculture or in non-farm activities in rural areas. This means addressing the quality of employment provided, especially levels of skills training and career prospects, when creating decent jobs for rural youth.

Strategies to extend rights at work in rural areas

38. Most rural workers, especially those working in agriculture, are poorly protected by national labour law. Many are excluded from the scope of legislation, such as casual or seasonal workers, due to the nature of their employment. Others are excluded on the basis of their membership in a particular group, such as migrant workers or indigenous peoples. Governments should ensure that national labour standards are applicable to all forms of contractual arrangements, including those involving multiple parties, so that employed workers have the protection they are due. The legal protection afforded to rural workers is often not realized in practice.
39. The huge gap in protection and implementation affects not only the realization of fundamental principles and rights at work – freedom of association, forced labour, child labour and discrimination – but also other workers’ rights related to wages, working time, occupational safety and health, and social security, for example. To create decent jobs in rural areas, legal and practical hurdles to effective protection must be removed.
40. International labour standards are one of the essential elements to guide national legislation and policy to help address labour protection gaps, as they provide an internationally recognized framework for governments in the implementation of decent work principles in all areas of labour, including in rural areas. Most ILO Conventions and Recommendations are of general application, that is, they cover all workers, including rural workers. However, the fundamental principles and rights at work – in particular freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining – are essential as they are enabling rights for access to other rights.

Priority policy guidelines

41. *International labour standards.* The ratification and effective implementation of the fundamental Conventions, that play an important role in the attainment of social justice, should be promoted. In addition, other instruments relevant to rural employment for poverty reduction should be promoted (see Annex II). This should not compromise the consideration of other relevant international instruments.
42. *Labour legislation.* National legislation should be reviewed with a view to promoting the extension of national labour law to all rural workers, including agricultural workers, as well as its effective implementation. National legislation should take into consideration the specificities of rural work and spell out the rights and responsibilities of all concerned, governments, employers and workers.

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43. *Occupational health and safety.* Urgent, immediate and effective action is needed where necessary by governments and employers to improve safety and health in agriculture. Use of WIND (Work Improvements in Neighbourhood Development) methodologies can also improve occupational health and safety for rural communities.
 44. *Freedom of association and collective bargaining* are enabling rights. They are a means to achieve decent work for all. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining can contribute to stable economic development and sound industrial relations. Therefore governments should facilitate a conducive environment to the creation of independent rural workers' and employers' organizations and eliminate obstacles to their establishment and growth.
 45. *Equality of opportunity and treatment.* Many rural workers, in a number of countries, can suffer from discrimination on a number of levels. Certain groups of rural workers are particularly disadvantaged, including women, migrant workers and indigenous peoples. Effective action needs to be taken to remove all forms of discrimination, which have the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment and occupation. Extending coverage, implementing laws and enforcing rights at work in rural areas are essential for equality.
 46. *Forced labour.* Forced labour is a significant feature in the rural areas of some countries. Induced indebtedness is often backed by intimidation and the threat of violence against workers or their families. The legal status of millions of migrants in an irregular situation makes them particularly vulnerable to coercion, because of the additional and ever-present threat of denunciation to the authorities. Member States need to address the structural concerns, including policy failure, that give rise to forced labour. Governments should take active measures to enforce the rule of law, and to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of ILO Conventions on the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour so as to eradicate the use of forced labour and apply criminal sanctions to those who exploit forced labour.
 47. *Child labour.* Urgent, immediate and practical action is needed by governments, employers, and employers' and workers' organizations and in cooperation with other partners, to eliminate child labour in rural areas. Governments should ensure that the fundamental principles as derived from the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), are applied to agriculture. Approximately 70 per cent of working children are found in agriculture. Child labour should be seen not only as a breach of labour law but equally as a violation of children's rights. Child labour undermines decent work, and the effective functioning of rural labour markets is undermined by the presence of child labour. It exacerbates existing insufficient household income and deepens poverty. Strengthening cooperation among relevant ministries is critical to addressing this problem.
 48. *Labour inspection.* Labour inspection is often absent or inadequate in rural areas. This contributes to poor compliance with labour law. An effective system of labour inspection at the national level, carried out by professionally trained and adequately resourced inspectors, who are suitably qualified and knowledgeable about rural labour market issues and independent of improper external influence, benefits governments, employers and workers. Labour legislation based on transparent and predictable laws and regulations can assist in this regard. It provides better protection of rights, encourages safe and healthy work practices and productivity improvements at work including through the provision of information and advice, and contributes to the creation of a workplace health and safety culture. The Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129), provides guidance on improving labour inspection in agriculture.

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49. *Information on rights and responsibilities.* There is a need to embark on advocacy and information dissemination campaigns to inform rural workers and employers on their rights and responsibilities. Awareness raising is not a substitute for law enforcement.

Extending social protection and social inclusion

50. Rural populations are often characterized by high levels of vulnerability. Many rural people rely on small-farm agriculture, casual and temporary work that renders them particularly vulnerable to exposure to chemical hazards, climatic and natural disasters as well as the seasonal variations in the availability of work and food. As they can lack basic services, they are particularly at risk in terms of health shocks, illiteracy, poverty and social exclusion and low levels of education and skills. Internationally, agriculture is one of the most dangerous occupations in terms of accidents at work, fatalities, injuries and work-related ill health. Rural populations share with their urban counterparts the risk of exposure to major pandemics, in particular HIV/AIDS, which is devastating many rural communities. The high level of poverty and underemployment in many rural areas also reduces the capacity for rural workers and their families to cope with the financial impact of risks. Geographical isolation, lack of health services and poverty also reduce access of rural workers to treatment and antiretrovirals.
51. Too few people have access to the strategies and mechanisms usually employed to face risks. In many developing countries, social security coverage is quite low or non-existent in rural areas. Access to market-based and other savings and insurance mechanisms remains low, especially for the poorest. Preventive measures to minimize, control or eliminate occupational risks do not reach the most vulnerable, especially in remote rural areas, and legislation in this field is rarely applied.

Priority policy guidelines

52. Social protection is an important means of reducing poverty and vulnerability and of improving the health, nourishment and literacy of populations, and greatly improves chances of achieving sustainable and equitable growth, well-being and high productivity. Social protection is indispensable to social inclusion to assist women and disadvantaged groups in rural areas, notably children, the elderly, the disabled, and the large number of unemployed and underemployed rural people. Measures to extend social protection, particularly social security, should be a priority.
53. Social protection should be based on sound and stable macroeconomic policies. Extending social protection to all is a shared responsibility. Successful strategies should be specific to national circumstances, but are likely to involve a number of complementary approaches. Regardless of the approach adopted, sound administrative and financial management is essential.
54. To strengthen capabilities of poor people, to maximize their access to opportunities and to improve financial sustainability, measures to extend social protection should be linked with efforts to provide basic education and health services, to boost rural employment and to enhance employability. Recent approaches to extend social protection in rural areas, such as employment guarantee schemes or conditional cash transfer programmes that require school attendance, may offer useful examples.
55. Governments, employers and workers should take urgent, immediate and effective action to reduce workplace accidents and work-related ill health, to secure a safe and healthy

working environment and to develop a safety and health culture based on prevention in rural workplaces. National strategies to improve occupational safety and health need to be developed and implemented by the tripartite partners.

56. Migration is a common feature of many rural societies. Migrant workers in rural areas are in many cases vulnerable groups that often experience discriminatory treatment on the job and can face strong disadvantages in terms of pay, social protection and representation. The non-binding principles and guidelines for labour migration included in the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration provide useful guidance to address such situations and indicate how best to facilitate access for migrant workers to decent work. Governments and the social partners should strive for better integration of migrant workers and full respect of their human rights. One of the main outcomes of migration is the growing flow of remittances to developing countries. Remittances contribute to domestic consumption, growth and economic security. Lowering the costs of remittances is an important step to enhancing their development impact.
57. Efforts to promote the application of the ILO *Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work* must continue. This code of practice is a comprehensive vehicle that covers education, prevention, training, assistance, discrimination, and occupational safety and health among other issues. It forms a sound basis for developing partnership at the workplace as well as for effective action on HIV/AIDS beyond the workplace in rural and urban areas. United action among the key actors on HIV/AIDS should also be strengthened.

Promoting social dialogue and better governance

58. Decent work deficits are often traceable to governance deficits. The interests of poor rural populations should be reflected in national policy frameworks on employment, rural development, health, education, social security, agriculture and infrastructure.
59. Good governance covers tripartism, employment policy and labour inspection. Good governance means voice and accountability, and construction of a legal infrastructure establishing public institutions that are characterized by predictability, transparency and are reliable over time. The purpose is to hinder corruption and inefficient administration and to create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises which will assist in the migration of informal enterprises into the formal economy.
60. Knowledge and enforcement of the law tend to be weak in rural areas and labour codes frequently treat the agricultural sector differently from other sectors for a variety of reasons. Collective agreements can play an important role in setting out agreed principles and processes of governance at the enterprise or sectoral level, defining the terms and conditions of employment, and clarifying the rights and duties of employers and workers, and can thus provide the basis for stable labour relations.
61. Wage fixing is one of the most contentious rural labour issues, largely due to the lack of bargaining mechanisms through which workers and employers can freely negotiate mutually agreeable outcomes. Wages in agriculture tend to be low, with many workers being paid below the national minimum wage, where one exists. Non-payment or deferred payment of wages, inappropriate deductions from wage packets and other abusive practices deepen the poverty of the working poor.
62. Sharp inequalities in the distribution of and access to land are a major source of extreme poverty. However, land reform alone does not offer a universal solution to reducing

poverty. In some countries, successes have been achieved, where distribution of and access to land have provided a sustainable livelihood and stimulated rural employment, whilst in others land reform has led to damaging effects. Effective land reform relies on broad political support and substantial state support in the form of registration of land rights, public investment, credit and technical assistance to enable newly endowed farmers to make productive use of their land, access markets and raise themselves from poverty. The International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) in 2006 provided useful insights in this regard.

Priority policy guidelines

63. Social dialogue based on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining and supported by institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks is one of the most essential means for achieving effective, equitable and mutually beneficial outcomes for governments, employers, workers and wider society. Better organization of rural employers and workers and stronger labour market institutions are necessary to foster social dialogue in rural areas.
64. Strong institutions of social dialogue can promote good governance in the world of work. In this context, good governance requires the representation and participation of the social partners at national, regional and local levels. The social partners need to increase their outreach to rural employers and workers, and to assist in developing social dialogue for workers and employers to assist in the migration of the sector into the formal economy.
65. Social dialogue, at international level, can include the conclusion of International Framework Agreements between multinational enterprises and Global Union Federations in different sectors.
66. Employers' and workers' organizations should fully participate in the formulation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and should seek to include rural employers and rural workers to encourage the inclusion of rural issues in DWCPs.
67. Sound labour administration enables governments to give effect to key economic and social policies that have direct impact on the workplace. In the context of an effective regulatory and legal framework, government and the social partners should work together to extend the functions of effective labour administration and labour inspection to informal entities and, through information and training, encourage compliance with labour law.
68. In the context of a coherent national plan, governance may be improved by decentralizing or delegating powers to competent and accountable local and regional authorities. Greater effectiveness and efficiency of local administrations may be realized through ongoing training of locally elected officials, empowerment, flexibility and capacity building.
69. National policies for rural employment promotion can be made more effective by adapting them to the economic, environmental and social conditions of specific contexts. An approach that integrates different sectoral or territorial policies can improve the coherence and effectiveness of public expenditure in rural areas.

The roles of governments, employers and workers

70. Cooperation between governments, workers and employers at the national, regional and local levels is an important element in promoting employment through the development of

integrated strategies and programmes that are focused on reducing poverty in rural areas. This cooperation requires the support and commitment of the tripartite parties to shared roles and responsibilities, for example in promoting social dialogue, partnerships and access to services such as education and training. In addition to these areas of shared responsibility, there are areas where governments, workers and employers respectively should take the lead or would play a particularly useful role and these are listed below.

71. Governments should:

A. Governance

- Promote peace and social stability.
- Ensure the application of the rule of law and good governance based on transparency, predictability, stability and freedom from corruption. Good governance also covers tripartism, employment policy and labour inspection.
- Create an enabling environment for effective social dialogue and tripartism in rural areas.
- Develop policies in a manner that ensures the systematic analysis of their potential impact on different policy spheres and stakeholders.
- Ensure a formal and effective legal system which guarantees all citizens and enterprises that contracts are honoured and upheld, the rule of law is respected and property rights are secure.

B. Rural employment policy (national and local)

- Include rural employment issues in national development policies.
- Encourage a coherent and integrated approach to employment promotion and poverty reduction in rural areas among all relevant government ministries and agencies at all levels of government.
- Consult representative organizations of rural employers and workers at the national and local levels with regard to:
 - the formulation and implementation of national and local policies on rural development;
 - the formulation, implementation and evaluation of DWCPs.
- Invest adequately in agricultural and rural development taking into account national conditions.
- Encourage and support territorial approaches to rural development, where appropriate, and ensure coherence with the national development policy framework including sound environmental practices.
- Support skills development including lifelong learning and vocational education and training for both farm and non-farm activities.
- Create, maintain and promote as appropriate a conducive enabling environment for sustainable rural enterprise development and ensure responsible enterprise-level practices.

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- Promote the formalization of work in rural areas without hindering the livelihoods of the rural poor.
 - Encourage the effective use of public–private partnerships to implement policy measures in rural areas.
 - Ensure the sustainable utilization of the environment and natural resources.

C. Rights in rural areas

- Ensure that national legislation guarantees and defends the freedom of all workers and employers, irrespective of where and how they work, to form and join organizations of their own choosing without fear of reprisal or intimidation.
- Prevent violence against employers, leaders of employers' organizations, workers and trade union leaders.
- Develop and enhance social protection for all which is sustainable and adapted to national circumstances.
- Provide the necessary legal and institutional provisions in order that rural workers can access their rights.
- In the context of a national plan, review legislation with a view to extending existing employment and labour rights to all.
- Conduct information campaigns to better inform rural employers and workers including:
 - their rights and responsibilities at work;
 - occupational safety and health;
 - HIV/AIDS at the workplace;
 - fundamental principles and rights at work.
- Promote gender equality, the empowerment of women, equal access to education and vocational training, and better possibilities for all to reconcile work, private and family life.

D. Services in rural areas

- Improve and promote access to basic services and investment in rural areas, including in the fields of health, education, energy, transport, technology and communications.
- Adequately staff and resource labour administrations, including labour inspection services.
- Where there is no existing labour inspection in rural areas, adequately staff and resource a labour inspection service.

E. Government capacity

- Collect reliable data on the livelihood characteristics of rural households, including gender-disaggregated data, to assist policy-makers in evidence-based policy

formulation and make such data available in accordance with national law and practice.

72. Employers' organizations should:

- Advocate for effective rural economic and social development policies that produce an enabling environment conducive to enterprise creation and development.
- Extend their representation to rural areas and help their members in terms of representation to gain the benefits of cooperative actions.
- Act as a coordinator or broker among value chain actors from rural and urban areas to promote improvements and bring together member companies to negotiate with third parties.
- Provide direct services to help enterprises develop, along with information on legislation, markets, market and regulatory requirements, as well as quality and safety standards of importers and retailers.
- Promote training to improve productivity and good enterprise practices.
- Participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of DWCPs and ensure adequate attention to issues of rural employment and poverty reduction.

73. Workers' organizations should:

- Organize and represent rural workers through the processes of collective bargaining, including at sectoral level.
- Continue efforts to extend their representation to rural areas, including by organizing workers in the informal economy.
- Assist workers – including migrant workers – with information, services, and education.
- Strengthen the participation of women and youth in workers' organizations in rural areas.
- Promote youth employment.
- Promote occupational safety and health in rural enterprises and communities.
- Participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of DWCPs and ensure adequate attention to issues of rural employment and poverty reduction.

Plan of action for the Office

- 74.** The ILO should develop a strategy and a programme of work for rural employment. The plan of action needs to be rapidly and efficiently focused on practical interventions which are formulated in light of the ILO's financial and human resource capacities taking into account the Programme and Budget for 2008–09 and the Strategic Policy Framework for 2010–15. Actions will draw on the ILO's comparative advantage and core mandate. In this regard, it is important to recall instruments which guide the ILO's wider Decent Work Agenda. The ILO Constitution, including the Declaration of Philadelphia, as well as the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, 1998,

emphasize that economic and social policies are essential and mutually reinforcing components in leading to broad-based sustainable development and social justice in rural areas.

75. The ILO is well equipped to develop a strategy on rural employment for poverty reduction due to its mandate covering the world of work and its unique tripartite structure, which constitutes a comparative advantage in the multilateral system. The ILO should commit to develop and implement a strategy on rural development and rural employment in line with its four strategic objectives in relation to social and economic issues in rural areas. The ILO should coordinate efforts with other intergovernmental agencies at both the international and country levels in order both to achieve greater policy coherence in the multilateral system and to deliver as one. The growing collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) should be further encouraged, as should the ILO's engagement in the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture.
76. The plan of action should take DWCPs as the ILO's entry point at the country level. Governments should formulate and implement DWCPs in consultation with representative organizations of workers and employers.

Employment

77. *The ILO should:*

- In order to inform future workplans, provide to its Governing Body a comprehensive report analysing the impact of prior activities focused on rural employment and gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards in rural areas.
- Ensure that national employment strategies and DWCPs adequately incorporate the promotion of productive employment in rural areas in accordance with the strategic orientations provided by these conclusions and the GEA.
- Encourage member States to adopt gender- and family-sensitive national rural employment policies.
- Promote the implementation of the 2007 conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises in rural areas.
- Promote sustainable small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and other community-based organizations.
- Promote entrepreneurship in rural areas, paying particular attention to the situation of women as well as young people, indigenous peoples and smallholders.
- Review data-collection systems and tools in order to support government efforts to strengthen evidence-based policy-making concerning rural employment and related issues.
- Provide technical assistance to constituents and support research on the linkages between economic growth, productive and decent employment and poverty reduction, including in the context of trade policies and practices.
- Undertake research on the enterprise and employment implications of biofuel production.

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- Support constituents in developing policies to extend education, skills development, training and retraining programmes.
 - Promote effective employment programmes such as employment guarantee schemes that target rural workers for the purpose of providing decent work.
 - Develop territorial approaches to promote rural employment and poverty reduction.
 - Promote accessible, universal, quality education and skills training in a system of lifelong learning in accordance with the needs of the rural economy.

Standards

78. *The ILO should:*

- Promote the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998.
- Promote the ratification and effective application of labour standards relevant to rural areas. (See Annex II.)
- Promote the extension of national labour laws to all rural workers, including agricultural workers, migrant workers and indigenous peoples, where appropriate, through a programme of advocacy, capacity building and technical assistance.

Social protection

79. *The ILO should:*

- Promote the extension of social protection to all, including the rural poor. In this respect the Governing Body is encouraged to explore the concept of a global social floor.
- Promote occupational safety and health in rural enterprises and communities.
- Promote the use of adequately staffed and resourced labour inspection to ensure compliance with occupational safety and health legislation in rural enterprises.
- Promote the ILO *Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work* in rural areas.
- Promote universal access to potable water.

Social dialogue

80. *The ILO should:*

- Support the development and help build the capacity of rural employers' and workers' organizations, particularly in the agricultural sector.
- Encourage linkages between rural employers' and workers' organizations and their national and international counterparts.
- Promote effective social dialogue and labour market institutions in rural areas.

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- Provide training, policy advice and technical assistance to build capacity in labour administration, including labour inspection, in rural areas.

Implementation

- 81.** All constituents must be engaged in the development of their DWCP. This means that the priorities of the constituents must be reflected in their DWCP so that they are demand-driven. In particular, DWCPs should help to build the capacity of constituents.
- 82.** Within the parameters of the programme and budget, the Office should ensure that the above plan of action is implemented by the concerned programmes at headquarters in a coordinated and efficient manner and in cooperation with other international bodies as appropriate. Priority should also be given to ensuring that the plan of action is reflected in the design and implementation of DWCPs. Arrangements should be put in place to adequately monitor progress and impact. In addition, progress should be reported to the appropriate Governing Body organs.

Annex I

Paragraph 11 of conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises

11. The enabling environment for sustainable enterprise development comprises a large array of factors, the relative importance of which may vary at different stages of development and in different cultural and socio-economic contexts. However, there are some basic conditions that are generally considered to be essential. These interconnected and mutually reinforcing conditions are the following:
 - (1) *Peace and political stability.* Peace and political stability are basic preconditions to nurture the formation and growth of sustainable enterprises while war and civil conflict are major deterrents of investment and private sector development.
 - (2) *Good governance.* Democratic political institutions, transparent and accountable public and private entities, effective anti-corruption measures and responsible corporate governance, are key conditions for making market economies and enterprises perform in superior ways and be more responsive to the values and long-term goals of society.
 - (3) *Social dialogue.* Social dialogue based on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, including through institutional and regulatory frameworks, is essential for achieving effective, equitable and mutually beneficial outcomes for governments, employers, workers and wider society.
 - (4) *Respect for universal human rights and international labour standards.* Competitiveness should be built on values. Respect for human rights and international labour standards, especially freedom of association and collective bargaining, the abolition of child labour, forced labour and all forms of discrimination, is a distinctive feature of societies that have successfully integrated sustainability and decent work.
 - (5) *Entrepreneurial culture.* Governmental and societal recognition of the key role of enterprises in development and strong support, both public and private, to entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity and the concept of mentorship, particularly for start-ups, small enterprises and targeted groups such as women and youth, are important determinants of a conducive business environment. Respect for workers' rights should be embedded in programmes targeting entrepreneurial culture.
 - (6) *Sound and stable macroeconomic policy and good management of the economy.* Monetary, fiscal and exchange rate policies should guarantee stable and predictable economic conditions. Sound economic management should balance the twin objectives of creating more and better jobs with combating inflation and provide for policies and regulations that stimulate long-term productive investment. Attention should also be given to increasing aggregate demand as a source of economic growth contingent on national conditions. In the case of developing and least developed countries, achieving sound macroeconomic conditions usually requires the decisive support of the international community through debt relief and official development assistance.
 - (7) *Trade and sustainable economic integration.* The varying development levels of countries must be taken into account in lifting barriers to domestic and foreign markets. Efficiency gains caused by trade integration can lead to positive employment effects either in terms of quantity or quality of jobs or a combination of both. However, as trade integration can also lead to job dislocation, increased informality and growing income inequality, measures must be taken by governments in consultation with the social partners, to better assess and address the employment and decent work impact of trade policies. Actions are also needed at regional and multilateral levels to remove trade distortions and to assist

developing countries in building their capacity to export value-added products, manage change and develop a competitive industrial base.

- (8) *Enabling legal and regulatory environment.* Poorly designed regulations and unnecessary bureaucratic burdens on businesses limit enterprise start-ups and the ongoing operations of existing companies, and lead to informality, corruption and efficiency costs. Well-designed transparent, accountable and well-communicated regulations, including those that uphold labour and environmental standards, are good for markets and society. They facilitate formalization and boost systemic competitiveness. Regulatory reform and the removal of business constraints should not undermine such standards.
- (9) *Rule of law and secure property rights.* A formal and effective legal system which guarantees all citizens and enterprises that contracts are honoured and upheld, the rule of law is respected and property rights are secure, is a key condition not only for attracting investment, but also for generating certainty, and nurturing trust and fairness in society. Property is more than simply ownership. Extending property rights can be a tool for empowerment and can facilitate access to credit and capital. They also entail the obligation to comply with the rules and regulations established by society.
- (10) *Fair competition.* It is necessary to establish, for the private sector, competition rules that include universal respect for labour and social standards, and to eliminate anti-competitive practices at national level.
- (11) *Access to financial services.* A well-functioning financial system provides the lubricant for a growing and dynamic private sector. Making it easier for SMEs, including cooperatives and start-ups, to access financing, for example, credit, leasing, venture capital funds or similar or new types of instruments, creates appropriate conditions for a more inclusive process of enterprise development. Financial institutions, particularly multilateral and international ones, should be encouraged to include decent work in their lending practices.
- (12) *Physical infrastructure.* Enterprise sustainability and human development critically depend on the quality and quantity of the physical infrastructure available, such as physical facilities for enterprises, transportation systems, schools and hospitals. Reliable and affordable access to water and energy also remains a major challenge, especially in developing countries. Enterprises are also particularly assisted by local access to supporting industries such as service providers, and machinery suppliers and producers.
- (13) *Information and communication technologies.* Expanding access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) is another crucial challenge in the era of the knowledge economy. The use of ICTs is, therefore, fundamental to the development of sustainable enterprises and must be fully utilized in this regard. Affordable broad-band technology is also of extreme importance to countries and enterprises and should be facilitated.
- (14) *Education, training and lifelong learning.* Human talent is the single most important productive factor in today's economy. Focusing on the development of a skilled workforce and the expansion of human capabilities through high-quality systems of education, training and lifelong learning is important for helping workers to find good jobs and enterprises to find the skilled workers they need. Financial support should also be made available to enhance access of poor workers to training and skills upgrading. In this way, society can achieve the twin goals of economic success and social progress.
- (15) *Social justice and social inclusion.* Inequality and discrimination are incompatible with sustainable enterprise development. Explicit policies for social justice, social inclusion and equality of opportunities for employment are needed. Effective exercise of the right to organize and bargain collectively is also an effective means to ensure fair distribution of productivity gains and adequate remuneration of workers.

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- (16) *Adequate social protection.* Sustainable tax-based or other national models of universal social security that provide citizens with access to key services such as quality health care, unemployment benefits, maternity protection and a basic pension, are key to improving productivity and fostering transitions to the formal economy. Protecting workers' health and safety at the workplace is also vital for sustainable enterprise development.
- (17) *Responsible stewardship of the environment.* In the absence of appropriate regulations and incentives, markets can lead to undesirable environmental outcomes. Tax incentives and regulations, including public procurement procedures, should be used to promote consumption and production patterns that are compatible with the requirements of sustainable development. Private market-based solutions, such as the use of environmental criteria in assessing credit risk or investment performance, are also effective means to tackle this challenge.

Annex II

Instruments of the International Labour Organization relevant to the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction

I. Core Conventions

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

II. Priority Conventions

- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
- Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)

III. Other relevant instruments

A. Conventions

- Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95)
- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)
- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110)
- Protocol of 1982 to the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110)
- Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)
- Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121)
- Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128)
- Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130)
- Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)
- Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141)
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)
- Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)

Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177)
Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184)
Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)

Conventions with interim status ¹

Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)
Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26)
Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47)
Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99)
Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)

B. Recommendations

Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)
Equal Remuneration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 90)
Indigenous and Tribal Populations Recommendation, 1957 (No. 104)
Plantations Recommendation, 1958 (No. 110)
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 111)
Tenants and Share-croppers Recommendation, 1968 (No. 132)
Rural Workers' Organisations Recommendation, 1975 (No. 149)
Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151)
Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976 (No. 152)
Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation, 1981 (No. 165)
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Recommendation, 1983 (No. 168)
Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
Home Work Recommendation, 1996 (No. 184)
Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191)
Safety and Health in Agriculture Recommendation, 2001 (No. 192)
Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 2006 (No. 197)

Recommendations with interim status ¹

Social Insurance (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 17)
Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1951 (No. 89)

¹ Interim status refers to a category of instruments which are no longer fully up to date, but remain relevant in certain respects.

Resolution concerning the ILO's and the tripartite constituents' role in tackling the global food crisis

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having adopted the report and conclusions of the Committee on the Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction, meeting in Geneva, 2008,

Noting that the Executive Heads of the UN specialized agencies, Funds and Programmes and Bretton Woods institutions (CEB), meeting in Berne, 28–29 April 2008, chaired by the United Nations Secretary-General, agreed on a common strategy in support of developing country governance to confront the global food crisis,

Further noting that the UN Secretary-General called on world leaders to make every effort to participate in the High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy in Rome on 3–5 June 2008,

Mindful that the dates of the High-Level Conference coincided with those of the International Labour Conference 2008 thereby limiting participation of the ILO's constituents,

Confirming that the poor are the hardest hit by the food crisis,

Noting the vital role of workers and employers in food production and distribution, and that they are affected by this crisis,

Concerned that even before the food crisis there were 800 million people living in hunger;

Calls on the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization to request the Director-General to consider allocating resources to enable the ILO to convene a tripartite technical workshop on the global food crisis and its impact on decent work. Such a meeting should:

- take account of the work by the CEB Task Force on the Global Food Crisis;
- share with other UN agencies the expertise of the ILO tripartite partners on rural employment and poverty reduction;
- contribute to an informed discussion within the UN on the social and employment impact of food prices on decent work.

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