



FOR INFORMATION

SIXTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report on the meeting of the Officers of the Board

1. *The Chairperson* opened the meeting, recalling that, according to Article III, paragraph 5 of the Statute of the Centre, the three Vice-Chairpersons, together with the Chairperson, the representative of the Italian Government and the Director of the Centre composed the Officers of the Board, who "... shall be empowered, to take decisions in the name of the Board each time the Officers consider that it is in the interest of good management of the Centre that a question referred to them between two sessions of the Board be settled without waiting for the next session of the Board, and that such question is not of sufficient importance to justify the convening of an extraordinary session of the Board. Every measure taken by virtue of this delegation is to be made the subject of a report for presentation to the Board on the occasion of its next session".
2. *Ms. O'Donovan* also recalled that the meeting had been organized following comments made during the November 2007 session of Board to the effect that one year between two sessions of the Board was too long and that an interim discussion would be appreciated by all three Groups.
3. The agenda of the meeting was approved.

First item on the agenda: Presentation of the new formatting and order of documents for the Board of the Centre

4. *The Chairperson* informed the Officers that the document was submitted for information. Several participants in the November 2007 meeting of the Board had asked for a different presentation of the documents submitted to the Board because there were too many documents, too much to discuss and not enough time. The document under consideration was a proposal by the Director that described the manner in which the documents for the November 2008 session of the Board could be prepared and itemized. She said that the views and opinions of the Officers of the Board would be particularly important at this preparatory stage. The Board would, of course, have an opportunity to express its opinion on the new organization of the documents presented to it.

-
5. *The Director of the Centre, Mr. François Eyraud*, presented the document in more detail. He said that the idea was to try to group the different documents into specific sets. Due time could then be given to each of the documents that made up a set. No document was being eliminated; the only change would be simplification. He gave an overview of the proposal. The first set comprised the Director's Report and several documents that had previously been scattered. The Centre envisaged simplifying the Director's Report: the list of courses would be put on the Internet, or else in an appendix. It would contain a section on administration and the action taken in the wake of the recommendations by the external auditors, since such action was part of the day-to-day management of the Centre. The Report would also bring together the one-page documents which often covered very specific items on the agenda (for instance, the introduction of the euro or follow-up to various small points). The second group comprised the financial documents. The external auditors' report should henceforth limit itself to a financial audit. He confirmed that the new auditors would attend the next Board of the Centre, in November 2008, when they would explain their way of working. The third group of documents concerned staff questions. The aim was to bring together the four existing documents, especially since some of them were only submitted to inform the Board of decisions made within the UN system. The fourth set comprised the documents of the two training committees, which would not change. The final set comprised the ad hoc documents drawn up or submitted at the request of the Board or in response to political developments. Examples were matters to do with investment funds, the Development Plan or the Working Party. The Director said the Centre hoped to rationalize the discussion and thus have enough time to devote to each item. He then asked the Officers of the Board to offer comments and suggestions.
 6. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, thanked Ms. O'Donovan for again having agreed to represent the Director-General at a meeting of the Training Centre. He welcomed the Centre's wish for rationalization and analysis. It would be important to manage the points for discussion well, so that members of the Board would have enough time to share their different points of view. The previous sessions of the Board had revealed their limits when the documents were dealt with too fast. The Workers Group wanted to have time to study the documents. Moreover, he hoped that the documents would be sent well in advance. He said that the documents were grouped in an acceptable way, though he had a few reservations: simplification should not come at the expense of transparency and quality. The documents should go into detail. The tables in the Director's Report should not be left out, for they provided important data on participation by the regions and on sources of funding. On the second point, the financial documents, he suggested that information on the follow-up to the recommendations of the external auditor and financial questions be put into those documents rather than the Director's Report.
 7. *Mr. Renique, representative of the Employers Group*, stated that his Group supported the proposal because the clauses were a good way of working. However key tables and figures were presented, budget tables should be included. But tables with detailed breakdowns of participation in every course by country and other factors could be put on the Internet. A further example of better ordering would be to integrate the follow-up to the Development Plan into the Director's Report. Only if it were a new plan should it be a different document.
 8. *The representative of the Italian Government* supported the simplification and reduction in quantity of the documents and agreed that the tables should be kept in the Director's Report.
 9. *Ms. Lu, representative of the Governmental Group*, supported the proposal and had the same concern as the Employers Group: some key elements should be kept on paper.
 10. *The Director of the Centre* answered that the Centre would do its utmost to see that the Board documents were sent to the members in September: that was the objective. He

confirmed that the major tables would always be part of the Director's Report, and they would even go further. It was only the list of courses that would become an appendix available on demand. The same list would also be taken out of the financial reports. The follow-up to the Development Plan would become part of the Director's Report. The idea was to have no more small documents by incorporating them into the Director's Report or the financial documents.

Second item on the Agenda: Proposal to change the dates of the Board of the Centre and to institutionalize the annual meeting of the Officers of the Board

11. *The Chairperson* pointed out that the document was submitted for discussion, on the basis of which a decision could be taken at the November 2008 session of the Board. In fact, the question of different timing of the Board's sessions had been raised on several occasions by members of the Board.
12. *The Director of the Centre* explained the rationale for the document. It was a response to requests by the Board, in particular the representative of Spain. It was true, for example, that in November 2007 the Board of the Centre had discussed questions relating to 2007 or 2006, in other words a year and a half later, so that it was working with "old" data. From that point of view, March would be a better time. However, the Board had to adopt the budget, and if it were to meet in March, it would be premature to adopt the budget for the following year. An analysis had been done, and it seemed that the answer was to hold the Board in November and a meeting of the Officers of the Board in March. The latter would serve as an interim session of the Board. The Director of the Centre hoped to take up the discussion again at the Board in November 2008.
13. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, said that his Group was sensitive to the position of the Spanish representative and the other members of the Board who had made the proposal, but the advantages had to be weighed against the drawbacks. The Workers Group did not think it would be a good idea to accept the proposal. It did not want to set up a two-tier Board, nor to accept the idea of a "steering committee", for that would mean that in November it would no longer be possible to comment on the activities and discuss them. If it was important to work as a team, then everyone should have the same amount of information. The Workers Group could accept a meeting of the Officers of the Board in March, but only if there were urgent matters to discuss, and without institutionalizing such a meeting.
14. *Mr. Renique, representative of the Employers Group*, saw the proposal as a better opportunity for dialogue and discussion, and recalled that countries such as Argentina, and the Employers' Group, supported the idea. He suggested that the Officers of the Board met in March to discuss the implementation of what had been decided in November. He suggested presenting the discussion to the next Board.
15. *The representative of the Italian Government* said she was flexible about the proposal, because she did not want to see the risk of a two-tier Board. In contrast, the reasons for holding the Board in March were clear enough: preparing the work in November better and lightening the Board's agenda a little. Her preference was for that proposal, which seemed to her both reasonable and workable.
16. *Ms. Lu, representative of the Governmental Group*, observed that the terms of reference of the Officers of the Board and of the Board of the Centre would be the same.

-
17. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, wanted as many governments as possible to take an interest in the Centre, not just a limited group. It was therefore important not to create a restricted circle. It was true that just one meeting of the Board of the Centre a year was not enough, but that was also tied to financial considerations that could be discussed when the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee met. It could be that funds were made available that would make it possible to hold a second meeting of the Board, but that would require a commitment on the part of the ILO.
 18. *The Director of the Centre* supported the idea that it was important to interest all governments in the discussions of the Board of the Centre. Nevertheless, the Officers of the Board meeting in March made it possible to deal with urgent matters like how to use the surplus. The Centre would clearly do a job of information by sending all the members of the Board the documents from the meeting of the Officers of the Board. In any case, the discussion would resume at the forthcoming Board of the Centre in November.

Third item on the Agenda: Proposal concerning the human resources issue of project posts and regular posts

19. *The Chairperson* declared that this document was submitted for information. She recalled that comments on staff contracts at the Centre had regularly been made by the members of the Board. Accordingly, the Director had taken the initiative of analysing the current situation with a view to identifying solutions that would meet the interests of both the Centre and its staff. The document illustrated the Centre's initial (or preliminary) ideas on the matter.
20. *The Director of the Centre* presented the document and pointed out that the matter had been raised by the Board. Having different types of work contracts caused unease among the management and staff of the Centre. That was why the Centre had started to look into the matter. The Director recalled that a significant effort had already been made to combat precariousness in job contracts, especially by cutting down on short-term contracts in favour of fixed-term annual (project-based) contracts. The Centre wanted to go further in that direction so that staff members who did similar jobs would have the same working conditions. However, the difficulty of the task was not to be underestimated. Among the constraints, the Director cited the uncertainty of the Centre's financial resources and the need to keep in line with the United Nations system, in particular with that of the ILO, with whom mobility had to be increased. The Director stated that the Centre was carrying out risk assessment to establish, in association with Geneva's human resources and legal services, a general framework for negotiations with the Staff Union at the Centre.
21. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, insisted that the ILO should not necessarily fall into line with what was done within the United Nations system. On the contrary: it should set an example by offering its employees decent work conditions. He wanted to see a flow of workers between the Turin Centre and the ILO, and pointed out that job contracts were the means for achieving that. The ILO's zero-growth budget was dangerous because it put the workers in a precarious position and could have negative repercussions on the quality of the services provided. There should be a return to a growing budget, which would enable a rise in the ILO's regular contribution to the Centre and therefore less precariousness. Contracts could also be stabilized through the fixed contributions of member states. Enlarging the technical cooperation package allocated to the Turin Centre should also guarantee more stable human resources management. The two last-named aspects were overlooked in the document, even though they had been mentioned in the conclusions of the Working Party. Mr. Blondel also noted that the document gave no precise information on the number of people affected by such a change. It was also necessary for the Centre to consult the Staff Union and draw up a plan for

replacing staff due to retire. New contractual arrangements would also require consultation with the Staff Union.

22. *Mr. Renique, representative of the Employers Group*, understood the problem and the fact that it was necessary to strike a balance between flexibility and security. The Centre was a special case within the UN system. The financial stability of the Centre should be increased and this point would be discussed later on, under item six. The Centre should consider, under “any other business”, what its secure income was, including project income. If the income of a programme was stable or increasing, it should be used to match a position in a project. Security of work was essential to attract quality people.
23. *The representative of the Italian Government* noted that the document indicated the guidelines that the Centre was exploring. The Centre itself was also faced with the reality of “flexicurity”. She was satisfied with the set of measures put forward, and asked for the analysis to continue, in coordination with the ILO.
24. *Ms. Lu, representative of the Governmental Group*, proposed that such a review be presented to the Board so that it could explore different ways ahead.
25. *The Director of the Centre* thanked the three groups for their support. He pointed out that not all of the Centre’s Programmes made the same contribution to fixed costs. This made it necessary to change over to a logic of “sharing” risk among the Programmes so as to stabilize the Centre’s staff contracts. He then asked Mr. Villemonteix, Chief of the Human Resources Services, kindly to produce some figures.
26. *Mr. Villemonteix* explained that the Centre had 210 officials, 15 of them on short-term contracts and 40 to 50 on project-based contracts. In 2009, 13 people were due to leave the Organization. The Centre was working on a succession policy that would ameliorate the situation, following the guidelines of the International Civil Service Commission. The extra-budgetary nature of the Centre’s budget clearly posed a problem. There was a perception and an impression that precariousness was increasing. Debate had therefore been launched, and would be taken up again in November.

Fourth item on the Agenda: Follow-up of the implementation of the 2007-2011 Investment Programme

27. *The Chairperson* said that the document was submitted for information. She pointed out that in its session held in November 2006, the Board had authorized the transfer of US\$ 2,310,000 (approximately 1,500,000 euros at the current exchange rate) from the General Reserve Fund to finance an Investment Programme in support of the Centre’s 2007-2011 Development Plan. The document outlined the current status of the projects included in the Programme.
28. *The Director of the Centre* explained that the document was an account to the Board of the action that the Centre wished to take as immediate follow-up to the Board’s recommendations in the wake of the audit report on the previous investment plan. He highlighted two features of the present investment plan. The first was that, as far as possible, the subjects were given a multi-disciplinary treatment: discrimination was covered by the Gender Coordination Unit and by the Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Programme, migration by the Employment and Skills Development Programme and by the Social Protection Programme. The second feature was that covering certain subjects required the recruitment of specialists. The Centre hoped that the number and quality of the resulting activities would allow the contracts of those people to be extended beyond the investment plan. He also noted that the projects concerning the new Internet site and the Oracle system were already in progress.

-
29. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, announced that his Group had no particular comments. He nonetheless hoped for greater social partner representation in the Centre's activities and wondered whether the funds allocated to CSR did not exceed real needs. While advocating integration with the ILO, the Centre had to follow the guidelines of the sub-committee on multinational enterprises. Similarly, signing a code of conduct did not exonerate anyone from ratifying ILO Conventions.
 30. *Mr. Renique, representative of the Employers Group*, gave the example of Flemish funding as an example of a direct contribution to the Centre. He underlined the role of employers when dealing with CSR questions and agreed with the workers' representative that codes of conduct were not a substitute for the ratification of Conventions.
 31. *The representative of the Italian Government* was pleased at the implementation of certain suggestions made at the last Board of the Centre and the follow-up to the recommendations by the Italian Government, such as those on the subject of migration.

Fifth item on the Agenda: Initial proposal for the use of the 2007 surplus

32. *The Chairperson* informed the Officers that the document was submitted for decision. Following the modification of Article 7 of the Centre's Financial Regulations, which had been decided upon during the 68th Session of the Board in 2006 (document CC68/2/Add.2), it was now possible for the Centre to allocate the surplus in a more timely manner. The paper under consideration made some new proposals for the use of the 2007 surplus.
33. *The Director of the Centre* informed the Officers of the Board that the results for the year 2007 showed a surplus of between 800,000 euros and 1.3 million euros. He thought it was important right away to submit for the Officers of the Board's approval the investment the Centre wished to make, so as not to have to wait for the meeting of the Board of the Centre. That investment was essentially to boost the Centre's capacity for "training engineering". It was a priority in the Centre's development. The proposed investment also concerned human resources and training logistics. On the first point, the proposal was to recruit a specialist in training technology for two years to make the Learning and Communication Service better able to enhance the quality of the technical units' training. It was also proposed to recruit, for one year, someone who would galvanize the Centre's ability to run a permanent training programme for ILO staff. On the second point, the Centre needed to upgrade and renovate its classrooms if it wanted to establish itself as a centre of excellence. The City of Turin, the Piedmont Region and local private foundations had done a great deal in this respect, but further investment was needed.
34. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, acknowledged that urgent works on the campus were justified and necessary. He noted a contradiction between the project-based recruitment of two new people and what had been said under item 3 on the agenda. He wondered how funds might be found to turn them into long-term posts. He thanked the Italian Government for the constant support it had given the Centre but asked for an explanation of why a new conference hall for 300 people was being built.
35. *Mr. Renique, representative of the Employers Group*, also asked for an explanation.
36. *The representative of the Italian Government* appreciated the thanks for her Government's financing of the Centre. The Italian Government hoped it was not the only one to believe in what the Centre did. The ILO should give the Centre more support, either by increasing its direct funding or by integrating it into its technical support work. She thought that the recruitment of the two experts was a step in that direction.

-
37. *The Director of the Centre* answered the question about the long-term funding of the two new posts. They were posts that he hoped would generate growth in the Centre's activities and help it to gain recognition by both academia and the world of work as a real centre of excellence. As regards the post in the Learning and Communication Service, natural staff turnover would allow it to be made long-term, if need be. The conference hall, for its part, was funded from resources made available by the Piedmont Region and a private foundation, not from the surplus. It would be useful to the Centre in organizing high-level meetings.
38. *The Deputy Director of the Centre, Mr. Arrigotti*, took the floor at the invitation of the Director. He explained that the campus held 19 pavilions, and covered 42,000 mq. They had been built in 1961, except for two, which went up in 1981. The current conditions of the pavilions varied. Four of them had been renovated ahead of the Olympic Games. The Centre now had 300 bedrooms and could accommodate more than 400 people. The level of occupancy of the rooms was increasing, but big activities like the Boulder workshop needed space, which the Conference Centre would provide. Moreover, in answer to the question raised by the Employers Group, Mr. Arrigotti explained that the Conference Centre would be modular, and could therefore also be used for regular training activities.
39. *The Chairperson* asked for and got approval of the proposal to spend 300,000 euros on training capabilities and of 445,000 euros on works on the campus.

Sixth item on the Agenda: Follow-up on implementation of the Working Party document on funding of the Centre and cooperation between Geneva and Turin on technical cooperation programmes

40. *The Chairperson* informed the Officers that the document was submitted for information. The PFA Committee of the Governing Body had adopted a Funding Strategy for the Turin Centre in November 2007. The paper presented an overview of the progress made to date on implementing the strategy, and highlighted areas where work was in progress, especially collaboration between Turin and Geneva on technical cooperation issues.
41. *The Director of the Centre* stressed that the document took stock of the situation regarding collaboration among headquarters, the field and Turin, and regarding technical cooperation and resource allocation. He spotlighted measures taken to boost synergy between Turin and the other ILO structures. The Turin Centre had thus decided to present its activities following the ILO model of four strategic objectives. It was working with PROGRAM to get its activities incorporated into the IRIS system. With the field, a significant investment was currently being made through missions. A lot of meetings were being held with CODEV and PARDEV to get collaboration going, especially as regards technical cooperation projects. Turin would naturally have to attend the negotiations with donors from the beginning. Staff exchanges should also be encouraged, and it was disappointing to note that, for ILO job competitions, Turin staff were considered as being external to the organization. Nevertheless, there was good cooperation between Turin and Geneva's human resources departments. Six colleagues were currently mobile between the two institutions.
42. *Mr. Blondel, representative of the Workers Group*, was glad the Centre wanted to follow up the Working Party's proposals quickly. He also wanted to have more time to discuss this item on the agenda, and for PARDEV to be represented. He noted with satisfaction the Centre's action to align itself with the ILO's strategic objectives. He pointed out that joint planning called for stable, long-term funding by the ILO, which meant increasing the ILO's regular budget for the Centre. The Programme, Financial and Administrative

Committee must therefore continue to look at the issue every year. His Group supported the lines of action set out in paragraph 8. It would be interesting to know what objective PARDEV and the Centre set themselves in terms of increasing the amount of technical cooperation entrusted to the Centre. He wondered whether donors had already promised to make a direct contribution to the Centre's programmes. He hoped that PARDEV would invite the Centre to meetings with donors. As regards staff exchanges, he thought that integration had not yet taken place. He asked for both ACTRAV and ACTEMP to be brought into ILO staff training in tripartism.

43. *Mr. Renique, representative of the Employers Group*, hoped that certain countries had come forward concerning direct funding. He said that the Turin Centre should really be in the vanguard of offering capacity-building courses to the social partners. As concerned technical cooperation, he wondered what the future procedure for developing those programmes would be, given the debate on the change in the field structure and the idea of "One UN". He had noticed that the Director was to approach the missions of the Working Party members, but the working documents should address all governments, not just the Working Party members. The DG should also take some initiatives towards the countries. Concrete follow-up should be discussed by the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee.
44. *The representative of the Italian Government* found the document positive. It gave the impression that new collaboration was afoot, even though certain factors still gave the idea that there was a distance between the two organizations. The ILO did not know the Centre well, but the agreements with PARDEV showed the right way forward. It was unacceptable for staff of the Centre to be considered outsiders by the ILO.
45. *The Director of the Centre* explained that PARDEV was not one of the Officers of the Board, which was why it was absent, although that could change in the future. It was true that the Centre made a lot of effort to get closer to Geneva, and, likewise, technical departments at headquarters (IPEC, STEP, Safework) held training in Turin, so real exchange was in fact taking place. Moreover, almost all the Centre's programmes had a working relationship with the corresponding department at headquarters. It would be ideal to have a fixed objective set for the ILO technical cooperation funds to be allocated to Turin. That, however, was complicated. It was a question for the Technical Cooperation Committee. The Director went on to underline the growing difficulties that the decentralization of technical cooperation would entail for the Centre. The Centre did not have a field structure, so that the ILO Offices abroad would have to incorporate Turin into their priorities. For the time being, the Centre was trying to create focal points within the Offices abroad.
46. *Mr. Graziosi, the Centre's Director of Training Programmes*, stressed the importance of the donors' meeting that was to be held in the following few days to detail the Centre's strategy in that area. The approach to Denmark had not proved successful, but the Centre had obtained good results from the Netherlands and had high hopes of Sweden, Germany, Ireland and Portugal. Spain and Switzerland had also been approached.
47. *The Chairperson* thanked Mr. Graziosi for the explanation and noted that the Centre was going in the right direction, even though work still needed to be done. The ILO recognized the value added by the Centre. She pointed out that the absence of the DG did not signify a lack of commitment on his part. She recalled that the report on the session would include the comments and suggestions made, and would be submitted to the coming November session of the Board of the Centre.

Geneva, 7 March 2008.