



Training Handbook

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International Labour Conference

Delegate Handbook





International Labour Conference Delegate Handbook

The International Labour Organization (ILO) celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2019. Given the widespread labour unrest at the end of World War I, the Paris Peace Conference which opened on 29 January 1919, moved to establish a Commission to draft the Constitution of a new institution the International Labour Organization to appease the workers. The text of the ILO Constitution, which was adopted in April 1919, was included in the Treaty of Versailles that was signed on 28 June 1919. The same treaty also established the League of Nations.

The ILO outlasted the League of Nations and went on to become the first specialized agency to join the United Nations and continues to play a big role in establishing labour standards that can be legally binding on Member States of the UN. These standards are founded on the idea of 'social justice' and the principle that 'labour is not a commodity.' They are also driven by the assertion that peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice.

The struggle for social justice aims to create more egalitarian societies. Labour law attempts to address the inequality in bargaining power between the workers and their employers. It does this by protecting the workers' right to collective bargaining when negotiating the terms of a contract with their employers. To date, the ILO has adopted 190 legally binding Conventions on a wide range of work-related issues.

Finding decent work is the key to achieving social justice. Decent work is about:

- equal access to employment without discrimination;
- earning a living wage that allows workers and their families to live above the poverty line with dignity;
- social protection in case of illness, pregnancy or the normal ups and downs which most of us face in life;
- being free from exploitation;
- allowing people to organise themselves in trade unions and engage in making decisions on policies that affect their lives; and,
- working in safe conditions.

Another important way to achieve social justice is through social dialogue. That is why the ILO was founded on a tripartite system where representatives of three groups—governments, employers and workers — engage in consultation and negotiation to establish international labour standards and develop policy.



Structure of ILO

The International Labour Office

The International Labour Office is the permanent secretariat of the International Labour Organization - its operational headquarters. Administration and management are decentralized in regional, area and branch offices in more than 40 countries under the leadership of a Director-General.

Governing Body

The **Governing body** is the executive council of the ILO. It meets three times a year in Geneva. It takes decisions on ILO policy and establishes the programme and the budget, which it then submits to the Conference for adoption.

The Governing Body is the executive body of the International Labour Organization (the Office is the secretariat of the Organization). It meets three times a year, in March, June and November. It takes decisions on ILO policy, decides the of the International Labour Conference, adopts the draft Programme and Budget of the Organization for submission to the Conference, and elects the Director-General.

It is composed of 56 titular members (28 Governments, 14 Employers and 14 Workers) and 66 deputy members (28 Governments, 19 Employers and 19 Workers). Ten of the titular government seats are permanently held by States of chief industrial importance (Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States). The other Government members are elected by the Conference every three years (the last elections were held in June 2014). The Employer and Worker members are elected in their individual capacity.

International Labour Conference

The **International labour Conference** sets the International labour standards and the broad policies of the ILO. It meets annually in Geneva. Often called an international parliament of labour, the Conference is also a forum for discussion of key social and labour questions. The Committees that typically meet during the ILC include:

- **Standard Setting Committee**



- Committee on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
- General Discussion Committee
- Recurring Discussion Committee
- Finance Committee
- Selection Committee
- Credentials Committee





Additional information about the International Labour Conference

The Member States of the ILO meet at the International Labour Conference, often referred to simply as the “ILC”, held every year in Geneva, Switzerland.

At a real International Labour Conference in Geneva, each Member State is represented by a delegation consisting of two government delegates, an employer delegate, a worker delegate, and their respective advisers. (Employer and Worker delegates are nominated in agreement with the most representative national organizations of employers and workers within each country.) However, at WIMUN 2024, each delegation will consist of only one government delegate, one employer delegate and one worker delegate in order to maximize the number of countries participating in the simulation. To compensate for the absence of a second government representative in each delegation, if a vote is requested on an amendment, each government representative will be counted twice to maintain the balance that exists in an actual conference.

Every delegate has the same rights, and all can express themselves freely and vote as they wish, if and when a vote is requested. This means that the bloc of worker delegates and the bloc of employer delegates can vote against their government's representatives or against each other. This diversity of viewpoints, however, does not prevent decisions from being adopted by very large majorities.

Many of the government representatives are cabinet ministers responsible for labour affairs in their own countries. Heads of State and prime ministers also take the floor at the Conference. International organizations attend as observers.

The Conference, which is often called an international parliament of labour, has several main tasks.

- First, there is the drafting and adoption of international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations. Conventions are international treaties that, once adopted by the Conference, are open to ratification by member States. Ratification creates a legal obligation to apply the provisions of the Convention in question. Recommendations, on the other hand, are intended to provide guidance on how to implement a Convention on the national level, but are not open to ratification, and are not legally binding.
- The Conference also supervises the application of Conventions and Recommendations at the national level. It examines the reports which the governments of



all member States are required to submit, detailing their compliance with obligations arising out of ratified Conventions, and their law and practice with respect to the Conventions and Recommendations (ratified or not) on which reports have been requested by the Governing Body of the ILO.

- Since the adoption of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), another important function of the Conference is to examine the Global Report prepared by the Office covering the four fundamental rights, namely: (a) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; (b) the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; (c) the effective abolition of child labour; and (d) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.
- The Conference is also a forum where social and labour questions of importance to the entire world are discussed freely - sometimes passionately. ILO's Director-General presents a report each year that focuses on a different theme related to the course of social progress in the world. In past years, these reports have addressed many topics including but not limited to: Social insurance and social protection (1993), Defending values, promoting change: Social justice in a global economy (1994), Promoting employment (1995), Decent Work (1999), Reducing the decent work deficit: A global challenge (2001) and A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all (2004), Decent work for sustainable development (2007), A new era of social justice (2011), Fair migration: Setting an ILO agenda (2014), Work in a changing climate: The Green Initiative (2017), Work for a brighter future (2019), Work in the time of COVID (2021).
- The Conference also passes resolutions that provide guidelines for the ILO's general policy and future activities.

There will be two simulations of the ILC at WIMUN 2024. One will focus on simulating the General Discussion Committee where delegates will discuss the topic "Achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all". In the other General Discussion Committee delegates will discuss the topic "Decent work in the Platform Economy".

The outcome of the General Discussion Committee's deliberations is a document that summarizes the actions that Governments, Employers and Workers have agreed should be taken by to address the issue that was the focus of the Committee's discussions. The outcome document of this Committee is referred to as Conclusions. They are not legally-binding and are accompanied by a short resolution requesting that they be considered by the ILO Governing Body when planning future work on this issue.



Officials of the Conference

The **President** of the International Labour Conference is normally elected by the delegates of the ILC. However, in order to prepare for this conference, the President was chosen from the Secretariat staff.





Officials of the General Discussion Committee

While a typical International Labour Conference may include several different committees, such as the Committee on the Application of Standards, the Recurrent Discussion Committee, the General Discussion Committee, the Standard Setting Committee and others, the simulation of the ILC at the WIMUN 2024 will only focus on the General Discussion Committee. The agenda of each Committee that meets in a given session of the ILC is set by the Governing Body of the ILO.

The **Chair** of the General Discussion Committee is elected by the WIMUN delegates. The Chair is assisted by the **Coordinator** who is a staff member of the International Labour Office which serves as the Secretariat of the ILO.

Before the simulation can start, delegates representing employers and workers must each nominate a Vice-Chairperson to represent them during Committee meetings. The Vice-Chairpersons are the only ones allowed to speak on behalf of either the Workers or Employers during formal meetings of the Committee. In order to encourage the greatest participation of delegates during the conference, any delegate in the Worker or Employer groups can request to become a Vice-Chairperson of their bloc at any time during the conference.

In addition to these positions, the Governments must decide which government delegates will represent the Government group as a bloc as well as political and regional groups within their bloc.





Types of Meetings

The simulation of the ILC at WIMUN 2024 will start with **Committee** meetings and finish with a **Closing Plenary** to formally adopt Conclusions and a resolution to guide the Governing Body in its future work on Achieving a just transition a towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all in one Committee and Decent work in the Platform Economy in the other Committee.





Stages of General Discussion Committee Sessions

A formal meeting of the General Discussion Committee is divided into the following segments:

- 1. Nomination of the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairs**
- 2. Adoption of the Tentative Plan of Work of the Committee**
- 3. Election of the Reporter**
- 4. Overview of the Committee's Work** by the Deputy Director-General for Policy (also known as the representative of the Secretary General) or Chief of Unit that will provide a historical context on the agenda item of the current session of the Conference, on "Achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all" in one Committee and "Decent work in the Platform Economy" in the other Committee.
- 5. Adoption of Discussion Points**
- 6. Opening statements** by the Employer Vice-Chairperson, Worker Vice-Chairperson, political groups, Government, Employer and Worker delegates.
- 7. General discussion on Discussion Points**
- 8. Drafting of Conclusions**
- 9. Consideration of amendments** to the Draft Conclusions (see further comments on this stage below)
- 10. Adoption of title and draft Conclusions as amended**
- 11. Adoption of draft resolution**
- 12. Closing remarks** from government delegates, the Vice-Chairs of the Employer and Worker groups, the Chair and the Representative of the Secretary-General.





The Amendment Process

After the delegates have thoroughly discussed all of the Points in the draft Conclusions, they then turn their attention to discussing all of the amendments that have been submitted by Government, Employer and Worker delegates for consideration. All amendments must be submitted to the Coordinator of the Committee electronically. When submitting amendments, delegates must indicate the location of the amendment in the text, who is submitting the amendment and what the amendment is (see sample amendment in the Annex).

If it is clear that a majority of delegates favors the adoption of amendment and there are no strong objections to it being adopted, then it is usually adopted without a vote. The great majority of amendments are adopted without a vote. However, if the Committee is divided between those in favor and those who have strong objections against it, the Vice-Chairs of either the Employer or Worker groups or any of the government delegates can request a vote so that the Committee can move forward in its deliberation. Voting, however, should only be a last resort. When this occurs, the Chair can recommend that the Committee continue to discuss their differences in informal consultations with the aim of reaching a compromise before action is taken. If a vote is taken, only a simple majority of delegates is required in order for it to be adopted. If one government delegate requests a vote, the motion has to be first seconded by one or more delegates and then approved by a simple majority before the amendment is put to a vote. When a vote is requested by the Vice-Chairs of either the Worker or Employer groups, it does not need to be seconded.

If, on the other hand, it is clear that a majority of delegates oppose an amendment, then it is usually withdrawn by the delegate who proposed it rather than put it to a vote.

According to the ILO rules of procedure, if there are several amendments, on the same Point (see example of a Point in the Sample Conclusions found in the Annex), the Chair will determine the order in which they shall be discussed. The Coordinator normally assists the Chair in deciding on the order in which amendments are considered. An amendment that has the greatest impact on the content of an Article is considered first. If for example, there are a few amendments to make minor changes to a Point and another amendment to delete the entire Point, the latter would be discussed first because it has the greatest impact on the text. If that amendment fails, then the delegates turn their attention to the more minor amendments. If the amendment is adopted, then there would be no need to consider the other amendments. In this manner, the amendments are considered in the descending order of their impact on the content of a Point.



There are five types of amendments. Delegates can propose to: 1) delete, 2) insert, 3) add, 4) replace any part of the text and 5) merge or 5) move paragraphs. Here are some basic examples of these amendments:

- In the last line of Point 6, delete “national”.
- In the first line, of Point 6 replace “heart” by “core”.
- Between the third and fourth lines of Point 11, insert “For the purposes of this Paragraph, ...”
- At the end of the last line of Point 7, add “and social security contributions”.
- Move “where reliable mechanisms...” to the end of Point 4.

Each amendment must be discussed and a decision reached on its fate. There are four possible outcomes. Amendments can:

- Be adopted by consensus or vote.
- Be rejected by consensus or vote.
- Be withdrawn for lack of support, or some other reason.
- Fall if made irrelevant by the adoption of another amendment or if it fails to be seconded when proposed by a single government.

In contrast to negotiations taking place in other UN bodies, such as the General Assembly or Security Council, government delegates participating in International Labour Conferences are usually experts in their field and therefore do not have to contact their capitals before making decisions on amendments. This helps to speed up the negotiation process.





Stages of ILC Closing Plenary

Following the General Discussion Committee sittings, a Closing Plenary will be convened to consider the following items:

1. **Listen to, discuss and approve the report of the General Discussion Committee**
2. **Adopt the Conclusions on Achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all and Decent work in the Platform Economy towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all by consensus**
3. **Adopt a resolution (see sample in Annex)**
4. **Closing statements of delegates**
5. **Closing statement of President**
6. **Close of conference**





ILO Rules of Procedure

Plenary meetings

1. No delegate shall address the Conference without having asked and obtained permission of the President.
2. Speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they have signified their desire to speak.

General Discussion Committee meetings

1. No motion or amendment shall be discussed unless it has been seconded.
2. Motions as to procedure include the following:
 - (a) a motion to consider two or more Points together that are considered a package;
 - (b) a motion to discuss amendments in a caucus;
 - (c) a motion to defer discussion on one part of the Conclusions until discussion of another part of the Convention has been concluded;
 - (d) a motion to adjourn the debate on a particular question;
 - (e) a motion for the closure of the discussion.





Things to Know about the Rules of Procedure

1. There are no moderated and unmoderated caucuses.
2. Passing notes during Formal Meetings is not allowed.
3. The presiding officer during meetings will never ask, "Are any points or motions on the floor?"
4. Parliamentary points (e.g., Points of Personal Privilege, Points of Information, and Points of Inquiry) and motions (e.g., Motion for Moderated or Unmoderated Caucuses, Motion to Set Agenda, Motions to Set Speaking Time, Motion to Move to Voting Procedures, etc.) **are not used** during the conference. Parliamentary rules of procedure are not used at the ILO because it is not a Parliament.
5. Delegates will not be allowed to yield their time to the Chair or another delegation.
6. The only time seconding a motion is required is when an amendment is proposed by a single government. If it is not seconded by another government, it will not be considered by the Committee. Amendments that are proposed by two or more governments or the Workers or Employers, do not need to be seconded.





Terms not used in in the simulation of ILC at the WIMUN 2024

1. **Dais:** This term is not used at the UN and is therefore not a part of the terminology used at WIMUN 2024. The officials presiding over a meeting comprise what is called the Bureau.
2. **Honourable Delegates, Honorable President, or Honourable Chair:** These terms are used in a Parliament and since the UN is not a Parliament it is not appropriate to use them during the simulation of UN meetings. When making a statement during the General Debate, delegates should address their comments directly to the person presiding over the meeting (e.g., Mr./Madame President during Plenary meetings or Mr./Madame Chair for Committee meetings) and not to the delegates.
3. **House:** In some conferences, the person presiding over a meeting might say, "Will the House come to order" if the delegates are making too much noise. Again, since the UN is not a Parliament, it is inappropriate to refer to the Assembly or a Committee as the "House" when addressing delegates.
4. **Director:** Most MUN conferences have a Director that oversees working papers and draft resolutions and acts as an expert on topics. The simulation of the International Labour Conference does not have Directors. There is a President who presides over Plenary meetings and a Chair who presides over Committee meetings and the ILO Secretariat staff who assist in making sure that meetings run smoothly.
5. **Friendly and Unfriendly amendments:** These terms are not used at the UN and are not used when referring to amendments or sub-amendments that are proposed by government, employer and worker delegates.
6. **Moderated and Unmoderated Caucuses:** These terms do not exist at the UN. Sometimes delegates may "caucus" informally to discuss amendments with the aim of reaching agreement on whether to accept, reject or agree to an alternate wording of the amendment but they are not referred to as moderated or unmoderated. In most cases, amendments are discussed during a formal meeting of the committee and if consensus is not reached on whether to accept, reject or agree to an alternate wording of the amendment, a decision can be taken by putting the amendment to a vote. When a vote is taken, government delegates, employer delegates and worker delegates each control one third of the votes.

ANNEX

A. Excerpts from Sample Conclusions

Note: Conclusions are divided into Sections. Each Section is divided into Points. If Points are further divided into clauses, then it must begin with a Chapeau. Clauses can be further divided into sub-clauses.

Conclusions concerning decent work in global supply chains

[Section title]

Opportunities and challenges for the realization of decent work and inclusive development emerging from global supply chains

[point]

1. *Global supply chains are complex, diverse and fragmented. Across textile, clothing, retail, footwear, automotive, food and agriculture, seafood, fisheries, electronics, construction, tourism and hospitality, horticulture, transport and other sectors, global supply chains have increased, facilitated by technological development. They have contributed to economic growth, job creation, poverty reduction and entrepreneurship and can contribute to a transition from the informal to the formal economy. They can be an engine of development by promoting technology transfer, adopting new production practices and moving into higher value-added activities, which would enhance skills development, productivity and competitiveness.*

[point]

2. *The positive impact of global supply chains on job creation is important in view of demographic changes in terms of aging, population growth and the increase of women's participation in the labour market. Across the world, millions of young women and men are looking for opportunities to enter the labour market. Participation in global supply chains increases their chances of getting a foothold in the world of formal work, doing well for themselves and their families, and succeeding in life.*

[point]

3. *At the same time, failures at all levels within global supply chains have contributed to decent work deficits for working conditions such as in the areas of occupational safety and health, wages, working time, and which impact on the employment relationship and the*

protections it can offer. Such failures have also contributed to the undermining of labour rights, particularly freedom of association and collective bargaining. Informality, non-standard forms of employment and the use of intermediaries are common. The presence of child labour and forced labour in some global supply chains is acute in the lower segments of the chain. Migrant workers and homeworkers are found in many global supply chains and may face various forms of discrimination and limited or no legal protection.

.....

[point]

16. **[chapeau]** Governments should:

[clause]

(a) Strengthen labour administration and labour inspection systems in order to ensure full compliance with laws and regulations and access to appropriate and effective remedy and complaints mechanisms. The responsibility for law enforcement lies with governments, taking into account that employers,

workers and their organizations have an important role to play in promoting and ensuring compliance.

[clause]

(b) Actively promote social dialogue and fundamental principles and rights at work, including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining for all workers, regardless of their employment status, including in EPZs.

[clause]

(c) Use public procurement to promote fundamental principles and rights at work, taking into account the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94), as this can have an important effect on workers' rights and working conditions along global supply chains.

.....





B. Sample Resolution preceding the Conclusions

Proposed resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization, meeting at its 107th Session, 2018,

Having undertaken a general discussion on effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals,

1. Adopts the following conclusions;
2. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to guide the International Labour Office in giving effect to the conclusions; and
3. Requests the Director-General to:
 - (a) prepare a plan of action to give effect to the conclusions, for the consideration of the Governing Body; and
 - (b) communicate the conclusions to the relevant organizations at the global and regional levels for their attention.



C. Sample Amendments to Conclusions

Examples of how to word an amendment:

1. Delete “_____” between “_____” and “_____”.
2. insert “_____” between “_____” and “_____”.
3. Add “_____” at the end of “_____”.
4. Replace “_____” with “_____”.
5. Replace clause (a) with “_____”.
6. Insert “_____” after “_____”.
7. Replace “_____” with “_____” after “_____”.

Location	Submitted by	Amendment
Point 3	the Employer members	Replace “global supply chains have resulted in” with “freedom of association and collective bargaining can be found in some global supply chains” after “working time”
Point 16 sub-clause (f)	Netherlands on behalf of EU	Add new sub-clause: “Fight corruption, including by protection of whistle-blowers”
Point 18	the Worker members	Replace “complaints” with “operational-level grievance” and to delete “for workers within their supply chains”

8. Add “_____” after “_____”.
9. Delete the final word “_____” and clauses (a) to (c) inclusive.
10. Insert “_____”, before “_____”.
11. Add a new clause: “_____”
12. “_____” after the chapeau.
13. At the end of the clause, add “_____”.
14. Insert a new clause: “_____”.
15. Move clause (a) after clause (b).

When submitting amendments to the Coordinator you must indicate the location of where the amendment will go, who is proposing the amendment and what the change is that is being proposed.



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