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Report of the Working Party on the New Social Contract for Our Common Agenda

Draft key messages of the tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development (2025)

▶ Introduction

1. Since the 351st Session (June 2024)¹ of the Governing Body, and in accordance with the road map adopted by the Governing Body at its 350th Session (March 2024)² the Working Party on the New Social Contract for Our Common Agenda held its fourth meeting on 7 August 2024 to prepare the draft key messages of the tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development to be examined and adopted by the Governing Body at its 352nd Session (October–November 2024). Upon the request of the Working Party, the Office had prepared a draft document, which the Working Party members considered a good basis for their discussion. Different views were expressed during the meeting of the Working Party, at the outcome of which the Office was requested to revise the draft key messages in the light of the input from the members and to append it to the report of the Working Party to the Governing Body.

¹ See [GB.350/INS/6](#) and [GB.351/INS/5](#) for additional information on the composition and previous meetings of the Working Party.

² [GB.350/PV](#), para. 232(c), and [GB.350/INS/6\(Add.1\)](#).

2. The draft key messages reflect the views of the tripartite constituents on the priorities to be addressed by the Second World Summit. They call for the development, in consultation with the social partners, of a renewed global social contract with a human-centred approach, based on the three core themes of social development, namely poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social inclusion. The messages do not address the role that the ILO and its constituents could play in the implementation of the outcome of the Second World Summit.
3. In line with the road map approved by the Governing Body,³ during the first week of its current session the Governing Body will meet as a Committee of the Whole to exchange views on the draft key messages and during the second week it will consider their adoption.

▶ Next steps

4. In accordance with the United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution on the modalities of the Second World Summit for Social Development,⁴ the Summit will be held at the level of Heads of State and Government on 4–6 November 2025 in Qatar. The General Assembly also provides that the Summit will adopt a concise, action-oriented political declaration – agreed in advance by consensus through inter-governmental negotiations in New York – which should have a social development approach and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is worth noting that the resolution explicitly recognizes the role and contributions of the ILO and its tripartite constituents in promoting social justice and decent work for all.
5. According to the road map,⁵ during the first week of its 353rd Session (March 2025) the Governing Body will meet as a Committee of the Whole to exchange views on the report of the Working Party. The co-facilitators will be invited to participate in the meeting. During the second week, the Governing Body will consider a draft resolution to be submitted for approval to the International Labour Conference at its 113th Session (2025). The content of the draft resolution could give momentum to the key messages of the tripartite input and address the role that the ILO and its tripartite constituents could play in the implementation of the outcome of the Second World Summit, taking account of the advancement of the intergovernmental negotiations on the Summit's political declaration.

▶ Draft decision

6. **The Governing Body:**
 - (a) **adopted the key messages of the tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development prepared by the Working Party on a New Social Contract for**

³ GB.350/INS/6(Add.1).

⁴ UN General Assembly, draft resolution, Modalities of the “World Social Summit” under the title “Second World Summit for Social Development”, [A/78/L.93](#) (2024).

⁵ At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body decided to place on the agenda of the 113th Session (2025) of the Conference an item on a tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development (see GB.350/PV, para. 232(d)).

Our Common Agenda, which are contained in the Appendix of document GB.352/INS/21/1(Rev.2);

- (b) requested the Director-General to transmit the key messages to the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental preparatory process leading up to the Second World Summit for Social Development, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Secretary-General;**
- (c) requested constituents to transmit the key messages to the representatives of their governments involved in the intergovernmental negotiations on the political declaration to be adopted by Second World Summit for Social Development;**
- (d) instructed the Working Party to prepare a draft resolution on the tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development, highlighting the role that the ILO and its constituents could play in the implementation of the Summit's outcome, for examination by the Governing Body at its 353rd Session (March 2025) and transmission to the International Labour Conference for adoption at its 113th Session (2025).**

► Appendix

Draft key messages of the tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development

1. The Governing Body of the International Labour Office welcomes the decision by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly to convene the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025 to assess the progress and address the gaps, and to recommit to the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action and its implementation and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹ In today's turbulent times, the Second World Summit will be an opportunity to gather the international community behind the common objective of advancing social progress and social justice as a fundamental contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, peace and security. The recently created Global Coalition for Social Justice is a collaborative platform for actions contributing to this objective.
2. The Governing Body acknowledges the continued relevance and importance of the three core themes of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, considered to be the three pillars of social development – namely poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social inclusion – and their interrelated nature. Reaffirming that labour is not a commodity, the Governing Body recalls the centrality of the objectives of full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all, in advancing sustainable development and social justice. It further emphasizes the role of the private sector as the principal source of economic growth and job creation, while recognizing the role of the public sector as a significant employer and provider of quality public services and infrastructure.
3. Convinced that the realization of the ambitions of the Second World Summit for Social Development will require a favourable and stable economic, trade and regulatory environment, the Governing Body emphasizes the need for policies conducive to job-rich economic growth, employment creation and improved living standards for all. It is further convinced that the realization of these ambitions will also require the application of good governance principles based on the rule of law, accountable institutions and effective regulation, avoiding red tape and legal uncertainty. It underscores the need for an international financial system that supports countries in navigating the transformations affecting the world of work, taking account of the specific situation of developing countries.
4. Emphasizing that social dialogue contributes to societal cohesion and is crucial for a well-functioning and productive economy, the Governing Body calls upon the Second World Summit for Social Development to highlight the role and contribution of social dialogue as a key governance mechanism for the promotion of social development and social justice. Further emphasizing the social partners' critical role and democratic legitimacy to represent the real economy and their first-hand expertise in the world of work, it calls upon the Summit to take account of the social partners' views in its preparations, deliberations and outcome.

¹ See UN General Assembly, resolution 78/261, "World Social Summit" under the title "Second World Summit for Social Development", [A/RES/78/261](#) (2024); and UN General Assembly resolution 78/318, Modalities of the "World Social Summit" under the title "the Second World Summit for Social Development", [A/RES/78/318](#) (2024).

5. Highlighting the continuous relevance and importance of Commitment No. 5 of the 1995 First World Summit on achieving equality and equity between men and women, the Governing Body invites the Second World Summit to make the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (Sustainable Development Goal 5) a cross-cutting objective in its preparation, deliberations and outcome.

Towards a renewed global social contract

6. Recalling that, at the 112th Session (2024) of the International Labour Conference, the tripartite constituents of the International Labour Organization (ILO) unanimously welcomed the ILO Director-General's report, *Towards a renewed social contract*, the Governing Body invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to renew the global social contract to address the implementation gaps of the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action, as well as the current global challenges to social development.
7. Acknowledging that the world faces remarkable opportunities as well as significant risks and challenges driven by global trends such as technological innovations, demographic shifts and climate change; that progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development needs to be accelerated to tackle the persistence of poverty, informality and unemployment, as well as the growth of inequalities both within and between countries; and that the trust in public institutions and governance at both the national and the international levels needs to be enhanced, the Governing Body calls upon the Second World Summit for Social Development to reaffirm the collective responsibility of all States to deliver social justice through a renewed social contract with a human-centred approach, to be developed in consultation with the social partners and built on the three pillars of social development, with particular consideration given to the elements set out below.

Poverty eradication

8. With regard to poverty eradication, the Governing Body recommends a focus on the priorities that follow.

(a) Putting decent jobs, sustainable enterprises and economic development at the heart of poverty reduction strategies.

Convinced that without further progress in creating quality jobs, the goal of ending poverty by 2030 will not be met, the Governing Body notes that successful examples of poverty reduction strategies suggest that pro-development economic transformation, supported by sustainable enterprises and decent and productive employment creation, play a key role. It therefore invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to consider options to help countries to broaden their productive base, by moving from low to higher productive activities through the promotion of investments in targeted sectors, and by fostering a supportive environment for sustainable enterprises, including micro and small enterprises, all the while recognizing the public sector's significant contribution to poverty reduction through investments in employment intensive sectors, infrastructure development and public employment programmes. To ensure that the poor can benefit from the opportunities that emerge through broad-based and inclusive growth, the Governing Body emphasizes the importance of adopting effective productivity-enhancing measures, including skills development, and facilitating workers' access to adequate social and labour protection.

(b) Achieving universal social protection, including social protection floors, to prevent and reduce poverty through the promotion of universal, adequate, comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems.

Despite some progress to extend coverage, today more than 4 billion people still lack access to any kind of social protection, including health coverage. The Governing Body therefore invites the Second World Summit to reiterate the urgent need to extend coverage so as to guarantee universal access to comprehensive, adequate, and sustainable social protection for all, especially for workers, including the self-employed, in the informal and rural economies. Noting that social protection financing gaps can be bridged through the mobilization of domestic resources in most countries, the Governing Body recommends that the Second World Summit entrust the multilateral system – both the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions of the UN system and international financial institutions – to work together more closely to support countries willing to expand their fiscal space for social protection in a sustainable manner.

Full and productive employment and decent work for all

9. With regard to promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, the Governing Body recalls the centrality of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) and recommends a focus on the priorities that follow.

(a) Strengthening both the institutions of work and people’s capacities to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world.

- (i) In taking a human-centred approach to the structural transformations affecting the world of work, the Governing Body invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to recommend to Member States to adopt effective and fair labour regulations and policies and to invest in robust, efficient and accountable labour market institutions, including social dialogue. This includes promoting the ratification, implementation and supervision of international labour standards, as well as promoting workers’ rights as a key element for the attainment of inclusive and sustainable growth, with a focus on freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining as enabling rights.

The Governing Body reiterates that all workers need adequate labour protection in line with the Decent Work Agenda including:

- respect for the five categories of the fundamental principles and rights at work, namely freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and a safe and healthy working environment;
- a living wage in line with ILO principles; and
- maximum limits on working time, taking into account national circumstances.

The Governing Body also reaffirms the continued relevance of the employment relationship as a means of providing certainty and legal protection to workers, while recognizing the extent of informality and the need to ensure effective action to achieve transition to formality. There is a need to ensure that diverse forms of work arrangements, production and business models, including in domestic and global

supply chains, leverage opportunities for social and economic progress, provide for decent work and are conducive to full, productive and freely chosen employment. It also reiterates that sustainable enterprises and the social and solidarity economy, as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work, need an enabling environment to prosper, as well as adequate incentives to adapt and invest.

- (ii) The Governing Body further invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to recommend enhanced coordination between employment and other macroeconomic policies at the national level, prioritizing quality education, skills development and lifelong learning in order to increase workers' employability and respond to current and anticipated labour market needs. This is particularly important in the different demographic contexts. Improving the quality and accessibility of public employment services is also critical to help workers and enterprises navigate current transformations. In this respect, the Governing Body invites the Summit to pay particular attention to youth employment, including the school-to-work transition, and to encourage the establishment of lifelong learning strategies as a joint responsibility of governments and the social partners.
- (iii) The Governing Body invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to acknowledge the inevitable challenges brought about by migration, due to factors such as conflicts, climate change, demographic shifts and poverty, which extend beyond national boundaries. It calls on the Summit to support international efforts to ensure decent working conditions for migrant workers and refugees, while recognizing their positive contribution to host countries and the value of harnessing their potential by promoting a rights-based approach to human mobility.

(b) Supporting the transition from the informal to the formal economy.

Noting that the informal economy represents close to 60 per cent of global employment, most of which is in the rural economy, and that more than 90 per cent of micro and small enterprises worldwide operate in the informal sector, the Governing Body invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to place the informal and rural economies at the heart of its priorities. Acknowledging that formalizing and preventing the informalization of jobs and economic units requires a comprehensive mix of coherent and coordinated actions, encompassing economic, regulatory, fiscal, employment and social policies, the Governing Body recommends the adoption of measures aimed at supporting sustainable enterprises – especially micro and small enterprises – through the promotion of an enabling business environment, including a sound regulatory and institutional framework, improved access to credit and productivity-enhancing measures. It further recommends the adoption of measures aimed at extending access to social protection, raising wages and incomes, and protecting labour rights including through labour inspection, as essential elements in the transition to formality. In addition, the Governing Body acknowledges the key role that new technologies can play in tackling the challenges of the transition by increasing labour productivity, expanding income and job opportunities, and supporting access to adequate labour and social protection.

(c) Supporting the transition to an increasingly digital economy.

Technological innovations, including artificial intelligence, create both opportunities and challenges for the world of work. The Governing Body calls on the Second World Summit for Social Development to encourage international cooperation for safe digital transformations that contribute to sustainable development. One priority is to build

knowledge of labour market impact with a view to harnessing the fullest potential of technological progress and productivity growth for decent work and social development, while minimizing any negative impact. Highlighting that the ILO's constituents have agreed on the need for a more consistent approach to digital labour platforms, to be defined in 2025–26 through a standard-setting tripartite negotiation on “Decent work in the platform economy”, the Governing Body calls on the Summit to take account of the important role that the social partners play in shaping an environment that helps to narrow digital divides both between and within countries, create income opportunities, promote skills development, safeguard respect for workers' rights in a digital economy and enhance the potential of technological progress for the creation of decent work.

(d) Supporting just transitions to a green economy.

Recognizing that policies to mitigate climate change can have serious adverse effects, particularly on the most vulnerable, the Governing Body urges the Second World Summit for Social Development to promote just transitions of the workforce and enterprises when transitioning to a green economy. The specific challenges faced by small island developing States must be acknowledged. If carefully designed through robust social dialogue, and if adequately funded, the process of adapting to and mitigating climate change can create more robust ecosystems, new decent jobs and sustainable enterprises, and more inclusive societies, while leaving no one behind. The Governing Body calls on the Second World Summit to prioritize the social and employment dimensions of the transitions to a greener economy, with the support of a holistic skills development framework and an enabling financial system. A concrete example of such an approach is the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions.

(e) Supporting comprehensive care economy frameworks.

The Governing Body recommends the Second World Summit for Social Development to highlight the enormous societal value and economic potential of care work and to provide guidance to Member States in addressing the undervaluation of care work, promoting investment and advancing decent work in the care economy, in line with the conclusions of the general discussion on the care economy held at the 2024 International Labour Conference.

(f) Implementing a transformative agenda for gender equality.

The Governing Body invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to promote the implementation of a transformative gender agenda for the world of work which includes the elimination of gender stereotypes and discrimination, both in law and in practice, in all areas of employment and social policies, and the promotion of a work–life balance for both women and men. Achieving equal pay for work of equal value, and eliminating violence and harassment at the workplace remain unfulfilled commitments calling for more efforts. Further, the Governing Body invites the Summit to encourage investments in women's skills development and entrepreneurship, as well as in girls' education, including in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), thereby creating opportunities to improve women's livelihoods while sustaining economic growth.

Social inclusion

10. With regard to social inclusion, the Governing Body recommends a focus on the priorities that follow.

(a) Strengthening rights and equal opportunities for persons and groups in vulnerable situations.

The Governing Body invites the Second World Summit for Social Development to focus on accelerating progress in respecting, promoting and realizing the human and labour rights of persons belonging to one or more vulnerable groups, or groups in situations of vulnerability facing exclusion and discrimination. This includes the right to equal treatment and equal access to employment and education opportunities, essential services, decent work and productive resources. Specific actions are needed to accelerate the participation of vulnerable groups in the decisions that affect them.

(b) Taking decisive actions to tackle inequalities both within and between countries.

According to the United Nations,² in 2020 71 per cent of the world's population lived in countries where income inequalities had increased since the 1990's, mostly in advanced and middle-income economies, while inequality among countries had declined in relative terms. Reducing inequalities both within and between countries is a priority of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the objective of Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries). Acknowledging the diverse forms and multifaceted nature of inequalities, the Governing Body calls on the Second World Summit for Social Development to take decisive actions to reduce inequalities, including by encouraging progress on Goal 8 and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development). It invites Member States to implement the comprehensive and integrated ILO strategy to reduce and prevent inequalities in the world of work, which includes a set of guiding principles and priority actions. Lastly, the Governing Body recommends the Second World Summit to call upon the multilateral system, including the United Nations, its funds, programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions, as well as the international financial institutions, to work more closely together to address the root causes of inequalities at both global and national levels.

² UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *World Social Report 2020: Inequality in a Rapidly Changing World*, 2020.