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Reports of the Board of the International Training Centre of the ILO

► Contents

	Page
Report of the 84th Session of the Board (24 May 2021)	3
Introductory remarks.....	3
Adoption of the agenda.....	3
The Centre's proposed operational model	3
Concluding remarks.....	11
Report of the 85th Session of the Board (25 October 2021)	11
Introductory remarks.....	11
Adoption of the agenda.....	12
Election of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Board for the period 2021–24.....	12
Interim Implementation Report for 2020 and updated training statistics	12
Strategic Plan of the ITCILO for 2022–25	14
Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23	14
Initial funding of institutional investments	14

Independent external evaluation of the ITCILO online training and learning activities.....	20
Report of the meeting of the Officers of the Board (May 2021).....	20
Financial statements and External Auditor's report for the financial year ended 31 December 2020	20
Plan for the audit of the 2021 financial statements	21
Report of the Chief Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 December 2020	21
Follow-up to the recommendations of the Chief Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 December 2020	22
Human resources questions.....	22
Administrative questions.....	22
Reports of the Trade Union Training Committee and the Employers' Training Committee	22
Concluding remarks.....	22
Appendices	
I. Statement by the representative of the Staff Union Committee to the Board of the Centre (84th Session of the Board of the Turin Centre, 24 May 2021).....	25
II. Statement by the representative of the Staff Union Committee to the Board of the Centre (85th Session of the Board of the Turin Centre, 25 October 2021).....	28

► Report of the 84th Session of the Board (24 May 2021)

1. The 84th Session of the Board of the International Training Centre of the ILO (the Centre) was held through videoconference on 24 May 2021.
2. The report of this meeting is submitted to the 85th Session of the Board (October 2021).
3. **The Chairperson, Mr Guy Ryder**, Director-General of the ILO, welcomed the members of the Board.

Introductory remarks

4. **The Chairperson** gave the floor to the representatives of the City of Turin and the Unione Industriale di Torino.
5. **The representative of the City of Turin, Mr Iaria**, reiterated the importance of the Centre and its campus for Turin. He welcomed the important future developments that would be allowed thanks to the recovery plan adopted by the Italian Government. He mentioned the support of the local authorities, among others in the field of artificial intelligence, in which synergies with the Centre were possible.
6. **The representative of the Unione Industriale di Torino, Mr Rosi**, thanked the Centre's management for the good cooperation. He expressed the continuing interest of the Unione Industriale to work in close collaboration with the Centre.

Adoption of the agenda

7. **The Chairperson** proposed to adopt the agenda ¹ and to proceed with the only item.
8. The Board adopted the agenda.

The Centre's proposed operational model

9. **The Chairperson** asked Mr Greg Vines, ILO's Deputy Director-General for Management and Reform, to introduce the document ² and reminded that this document was submitted for information and guidance and would inform the drafting on the Strategic Plan of the Centre for 2022–25 and the Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23.
10. **Mr Vines** introduced the document. This document was divided in four sections. The first part described the future service portfolio of the Centre; the second one looked at the implications of the proposed new operational model on the campus infrastructures; the third one depicted the possible impact of the three resizing scenarios on the Centre's staffing structure; and the fourth one described the financial implications of those scenarios.
11. The speaker underlined that the fundamental change the Centre was going through was not the direct result of the pandemic but had been accelerated by it, and praised the very positive results registered in 2020, particularly in terms of participants reached by the online activities. The Centre faced of course many challenges but had also great opportunities to seize in a near future. It should now capitalize on its world-wide

¹ CC 84.

² CC 84/1.

reputation as a centre of excellence, as a learning and innovation leader in the United Nations system, and make all possible efforts to meet the massive demand for training from the constituents on the general background of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

12. He briefly mentioned the different tables and figures shown in the document, emphasizing the increase of the outreach resulting from the shift to online activities and illustrated the three scenarios, in all of which the ongoing commitment of the host government and local authorities to cover costs as set out in the initial agreements would be essential to ensure the viability of maintaining the Centre and a reasonable level of activities in Turin. He privileged scenario 3 though, because it maintained the campus in its current configuration, but did not exclude the possibility of reverting to scenario 2 within two or three years if the situation imposed it.
13. About the human resources of the Centre, he ensured that there would be very limited impact, if any, on the current staff. A reprofiling and reskilling exercise would be needed, and the current and forthcoming vacancies provided opportunities to accelerate the implementation of changes in support of the new model and to maintain agility to adapt expertise and profiles to meet evolving needs. Generally, these changes would involve a redefinition of roles and responsibilities rather than a fundamental change to any job description, with an increased focus on digital competencies and the new delivery modalities.
14. The speaker referred to the institutional investments proposed in the document, which would be required to meet refurbishment needs not covered by ordinary maintenance, promote innovation in learning and knowledge-sharing tools and techniques, finance information technology (IT) infrastructure and software renewal, and establish a reserve for fellowships.
15. He concluded by saying that the proposed new operational model, once fully implemented on a renovated and resized campus, would significantly increase the outreach of the Centre in delivering its mandate, reaching many more constituents with a wider and more accessible offering of training services. As this model evolves, the Board would have the opportunity to review all of the proposed measures to ensure they remain appropriate.
16. **The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr Kyriazis**, thanked the Office for making the arrangements for this extraordinary meeting, which had been requested at the end of last year to help facilitate the Board discussions on the operational model of the Centre. It would not be possible to make everyone happy, but the common goal was to ensure the business sustainability and resilience of the Centre.
17. Before entering into specific comments, he recognized the positive elements of the proposal, among which: growing scope of online learning; making the Centre a learning and innovation hub; moving closer face-to-face activities to the field and to constituents, in partnership with local agents; foreseeing special events on the campus; focusing also on non-training services; and providing information on the different resizing scenarios and implications on human resources.
18. On the issue of principles being fit for the 2020's, the document referred to a rights-based approach, but this should be balanced, and nuanced, with a principles-based one. This is because ratified international labour standards could only be effectively promoted when there is an enabling environment for implementation. The need to transfer ownership of knowledge and expertise to local partners and leverage digital technology to increase outreach and ensure financial sustainability was of the utmost importance.

Those local partners should be either constituents or entities directly related to constituents.

19. The shift in the service portfolio would deserve more amplitude. The group's understanding was that constituents would be prioritized as recipients of non-training services such advisory services, as a concrete way of contributing to the institutional strengthening of tripartite vocational and technical training institutes, and to the training programmes or services that employers' and workers' organizations offer to their affiliates.
20. The Centre's management should develop a more refined participant tracking system in order to count on reliable information that could be of high value in strategic decisions. If non-training advisory services, as well as institutional capacity building were a growing trend as mentioned many times in the document, these activities needed to be clearly classified and tracked.
21. On the institutional investments, the group recommended to set up an emergency reserve funded from the budget surpluses. This would provide the Centre with a safety net to face any operational crisis in the future.
22. The Employer Vice-Chairperson urged to start taking action immediately on fundamental elements all members of the Board agree on, instead of waiting until the end of October, and raised two main concerns. Firstly, on the resizing scenarios, he was of the view that in practice, the Centre was already operating under scenario 2. In terms of delivery of training activities, the Centre had already fully converted into an online training institution, and it was highly unlikely that it would return to the levels of face-to-face activities seen in the past. Therefore, precise plans with a timeline, milestones and responsible units to gradually reduce campus occupation should be approved. Negotiations with the City of Turin to return excess facilities space, as well as negotiations with possible organizations that might be interested to move into the campus should start soon. Secondly, on the human resources, it was obvious that with the reduction in campus occupancy and the full conversion to online training, an important number of posts in the service units might need to be reviewed. In parallel with the Training Department's need of additional staff due to the changes in the delivery modalities, an opportunity to be reskilled and reassigned should be given to those colleagues. However, a clear message should be sent that the objective is not to reduce staff costs per se, but to reduce overhead by transferring much needed professional capacity to the Training Department. The human resources strategy should be completely redrafted and a real and meaningful performance management system should be put in place. Finally, the Employer Vice-Chairperson strongly recommended the Board to urgently set up an Implementation Task Force (ITF) which should include the Officers of the Board and the Centre's management. This ITF should oversee the implementation plan with a detailed timeline, with indicative milestones, anticipating bottlenecks and setting indicators of achievement. The Implementation Plan should be presented to the Officers of the Board before the regular meeting in October, and be convened roughly every three months for the necessary adjustments. We should not risk remaining "business as usual". The Employers' group expect the next version of the operational model to address these concerns.
23. **The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Cappuccio**, thanked the management for sharing this proposal for a new operational model for the Centre and shared some thoughts about the context in which the discussion was taking place. She then turned to the document itself, starting with an important remark on the introduction: the Board had never requested the Centre to reduce face-to-face learning. Shifting to the "all online"

was a short-term solution, not for the long run. The Workers' group had insisted in each of its interventions that face-to-face should remain at the heart of the Centre's training offer.

24. On exploring the market for capacity-development services, she reminded that through the ILO, the Centre was a UN agency, that is a public institution mandated to serve constituents and not the market, although it might of course and to a certain extent offer services outside this mandate. As the members knew, the Centre depended on public funding, mainly from the Italian Government and from the ILO. She recalled that the Centre's statute explicitly stipulated that "its teaching shall be objective and independent of any political or commercial considerations". Its public nature should be reflected in future discussions.
25. On the strengthening the focus on the aspects of the Centenary Declaration related to capacity development, the Worker Vice-Chairperson agreed on the further collaboration with other UN agencies in order to export the ILO mandate, especially its overarching goal of social justice and decent work for all.
26. On positioning the Centre as a learning innovation hub, she thought this was a way to increase its visibility in the international community but underlined that this depended on the continuous investment from the Italian Government. Therefore, the Centre should also explore which interactions could be held with other Italian education organizations to guarantee a long-term funding and positive collaboration with the host country and the City of Turin.
27. She welcomed the proposal to model the new service mix of the Centre on the UN common capacity-development approach and to take guidance from the ILO capacity-development strategy adopted in 2019, but the ILO agenda should of course have priority. With regard to beneficiaries, she feared that partnering with local institutions might mean a decentralization of the Centre in the practice and hinder the quality of learning. The Workers' group was not opposed to this option, as a way to bringing the Centre to the field, but it required further thoughts on how it would be put in practice and regulated or on the partnership conditions.
28. In relation to access to training, she agreed on the fact that digital learning is more flexible. However, this could also lead to excessive working hours. For years, the group had fought to make sure that training takes place during the normal working hours. The Worker Vice-Chairperson referred to a recent joint WHO/ILO report warning about the health consequences of overwork. About digital transformation, her opinion was that it should go hand in hand with the pedagogical methodology, and above all leave no one behind. The digital divide should not be minimized.
29. On the scenarios, the Workers' group preferred scenario 3 because it was the most convenient and most flexible. This was also the only scenario that leaves space for a possible return to face-to-face meetings and to transform the Centre into an international learning innovation hub.
30. In relation to the human resources, as the document did not provide sufficient information, the group would like to hear from the management what steps were being taken to have a proper consultation and social dialogue. Public Services International should participate in the social dialogue process.
31. Finally, about the financial implications, the Worker Vice-Chairperson thought that further financial analysis might be required, once the decision on the operational model would be made, which should be based on the mandate of the Centre as a public

institution. She recalled the strong dependence of the Centre upon the support of the host country and stressed that any decrease in face-to-face training would reduce not only expenditure, but also revenue. Pointing on online learning only was therefore not a sustainable solution. About the liabilities linked to separation entitlements and after-service health insurance, the Workers' group had always understood that these expenditures were supported by the ILO, as clearly stated in the financial statements. As to the Terminal Benefits Fund, it might be better to stick to the current practice, that is a periodic payment done as a defined contribution, calculated in percentage of the salary and paid by those who would benefit from this Fund, as provided by the ILO Conference in 1980. Until now, nobody had called for a revision of this system that had worked fairly well all these years. The Workers' group would also like to hear the Legal Adviser's opinion on this matter.

32. **The Government Vice-Chairperson, Mr Brizuela**, commended the efforts made to consolidate the Centre as an ILO learning innovation hub and saluted the synergies resulting out of the engagement with ILO headquarters and other UN agencies. The group also endorsed the implementation of learning services aimed at the realization of the Centenary Declaration.
33. Since the beginning of the informal consultations on this topic, the Government group had said that the Centre should adapt to ongoing changes, changes that were being accelerated by the pandemic. The Government group had understood from the beginning that the status quo was not sustainable in the long term. The Centre had indeed taken some steps, for instance by decreasing face-to-face training and increasing online training, but a holistic approach was needed to implement a successful new operational model. The group would like a clear picture of the short- and long-term implications of the implementation of a new model on critical aspects such as human resources and finances, as well as the future role of the campus.
34. In the area of human resources, the Government Vice-Chairperson took note that the document anticipated that the proposed operational model would require new ways of working and changes in the structure, job profiling and the skills set of the Centre's work force and that the total number of full-time equivalent staff would remain at a similar level. He asked further information in order to fully understand how the staff would be affected by the reform.
35. The current financial model of the Centre should be changed, and the speaker urged management to develop a plan for securing additional contributions by other donors to guarantee the Centre's financial sustainability in the long term and to seek more actively partnerships with the private sector and other members of the civil society. He expressed the group's appreciation to the Government of Italy for providing financial assistance to build a learning innovation laboratory that would expose participants to the next generation of learning technologies.
36. The campus should adapt, its staff should be retrained, and its financial model refitted. On this issue, he invited the management of the Centre to submit to the consideration of the Board reasonable measures to further increase savings that might arise out of the reduction of the size of the campus. On the other hand, it would be good to get some more insights in how the future size of the campus would be handled, especially if its full size was to be retained as described in scenario 3.
37. The Government Vice-Chairperson concluded by reiterating the group's willingness to engage in as many informal consultations as necessary to take a decision on this matter in October 2021, a decision that would lead to a Centre maintaining its prestige in the

academic sector, dedicated to ILO constituents and financially stable. The Government group expresses its conviction that the 2022–25 Strategic Plan and the Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23 should reflect real consensus among the three constituents.

38. **The representative of the Government of Italy, Mr Mari**, aligned himself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Government group. Italy had been, and continued to be, a staunch supporter of a reform that could reinforce the status of the Centre as a leading training and innovation body for the United Nations. This commitment was a consequence of the fact that Italy can be considered to be the main stakeholder in the Centre, as it was the main contributor, the host country, the country of origin of more than half of the staff, and an active member of the Board.
39. On the service portfolio, the Government of Italy believed in the need to make the Centre leaner, faster at reacting to challenges, continuously up-to-date. More technology was welcome, in the wake of what had been done in the last years. More beneficiaries needed to be reached, and in more countries than before. The use of digital technologies could be a viable option to do that. Digital training and online services could be the answer, but face-to-face courses should remain an important asset for the Centre, although to a lower degree.
40. On the implications on the infrastructure, the reform would obviously affect the campus as a result of using space more efficiently. The document showed alarming figures, from €7 million for scenario 2 to €18 million for scenario 3, and it seemed that the ILO expected Italy to pay for the needed works. The Government of Italy believed that the campus is a unique asset to the Centre and that it should be maintained as is, similarly to what is described in scenario 3. However, the predicted cost was too high for Italy alone to bear. Serious financial support from the ILO and other donors would be indispensable. Furthermore, the search for new partners for the unused premises might take long and would require a joint effort for a successful outcome. If scenario 3 was not viable in that sense, then a strategic fallback towards scenario 2 would be needed in order to preserve a fully functioning Centre in Turin. However, for both scenarios Italy would request the ILO to review its estimates in order to truly extract all the savings from the size reduction: reducing the physical footprint and splitting the campus should yield a substantial return for everyone involved, much more than that was suggested in the document.
41. On the human resources, Italy would stick to the request made since the beginning of the talks on a potential reform that staff be protected in all possible ways. This meant no lay-offs. This meant that all rights should be guaranteed, that everyone should be properly reskilled and retrained. The speaker appreciated that the ILO was committed to doing that. Nevertheless, the document was worryingly vague. If human resources are the most important asset for a knowledge-based and training institution such as the Centre, then two pages were hardly enough to grasp the full implications on the staff that this reform might have and what the actual plans of the management were in that regard.
42. On the financial implications, he understood that the two main achievements would be the reduction of campus-related expenditure and a €2 million surplus per year. Many more details would have been necessary in order to have a solid basis for discussion. In particular, the speaker drew attention to the lack of the much-needed strategy for fundraising that Italy had been long requesting. This meant that the backbone of the Centre's budget would continue to be the Italian contribution which, proportionally, would become even more important to a reduced budget. During the session of the

Board in October 2020, several members had called on the ILO's and the Centre's management to find ways to bring in additional donors and resources. It was something that all UN organizations around the world do, and Italy would expect no less from the ILO and its Training Centre. It was quite difficult for his Government to understand how an institution that owes its own existence only to voluntary contributions had not managed to develop, in nearly 60 years, a reliable, diverse and stable pool of donors. A detailed proposal for a fundraising strategy would be most welcome in a near future. In addition, Italy recommended that other creative proposals that acknowledge the role played by the Centre in the interest of the ILO and all its Member States be submitted by the ILO management: for instance, one for absorbing part of the administrative costs of the Centre into the ILO regular budget.

43. On a separate note, the Government of Italy had been surprised to find in the document a suggestion to change the way the separation entitlements were being paid by the ILO. It had been like that since 1980, and there was no reason to change. Moving that expenditure into the Centre's budget would mean that a cost fairly shared by all ILO Member States would be suddenly paid mostly by Italy alone. The only way Italy could agree with something like that would be if the ILO decided to provide an additional matching contribution, exactly as proposed for the healthcare premiums.
44. Finally, a discussion on the proposed institutional investments could only take place in parallel with a discussion on the use of the Italian financial contribution and in connection with the projected budget surplus. In the speaker's view, the surplus and the Italian contribution were tightly linked to each other.
45. The representative of the Government of Italy concluded by saying that Italy was ready to support any well-thought, carefully planned, ambitious and innovative reform. There was still a lot of ground to cover before the Board could get a full picture of all the implications of what the ILO was proposing. Despite the early 2020 predictions, the Centre seemed to be at ease in this new digital and post-pandemic environment, so much that all the stakeholders could take their time to develop a really meaningful reform. Italy would continue to lend its fundamental financial support to the Centre. It would honour its obligations as the host country and bear part of the costs of the reform. Italy's annual contribution had remained at the same high level for almost 20 years. Not even the worst crises, including that financial one of 2007, had managed to reduce this commitment.
46. However, that contribution was somehow proportionate to a certain business model of the Centre at that time. The reform proposed now was instead based on a different model, that is on a downsized campus, on a more efficient use of resources, on savings – and all of this would need to be accompanied by the long overdue fundraising strategy. In this light, it seemed fair that the Italian contribution be adjusted to a more reasonable level according to the outcome of the reform, to the savings arising from it and to the renovation costs that Italy would be required to pay for. Italy was ready to keep contributing to the discussion in the next months, provided that all the Italian well-known priorities are met and that the burden of the reform is fairly shared among all stakeholders.
47. **The representative of the Government of China** thanked Italy for its support to the Centre and noted that although some parties had different concerns or positions on the reform, their common aspiration was a brighter future for the Centre. He expressed his conviction that wisdom and joint efforts from all the members of the Board would allow to reach a sound consensus on this important matter.

48. **The representative of the Government of Japan** agreed with the previous speakers of the Government group. She believed that the proposed new service mix would meet the demands of trainees and match the long-term trends accelerated by the pandemic. She reiterated her Government's support to the Centre's activities, including through the dispatch of two Japanese experts to Turin.
49. **The representative of the Government of India** mentioned the challenging phase the world of work was passing through. The repercussions included job and income losses, especially in labour-intensive sectors, and disruption in economic activities. Scaling up the potential to generate jobs and to provide income and social security, particularly to the disadvantaged categories of workers, would be pivotal for stimulating the rejuvenation of national economies. Collective action was thus needed, and in this context the speaker recalled the collaboration between the apex training institution of the Ministry of Labour and Employment of India and the Centre.
50. **The Chairperson** thanked all speakers and invited the management of the Centre to reply to the members' questions and comments.
51. **The Director of the Centre, Mr Liu**, took note of the comments made by members which, he ensured, would be incorporated into the Strategic Plan for 2022–25 and the Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23.
52. **The Director of Training, Mr Klemmer**, thanked the Board for its unanimous position on the future role of the Centre as a learning innovation hub. He acknowledged that the place of face-to-face training in the future service mix needed to be discussed further and wanted to make sure the management had understood properly the messages sent by the members, in order to reflect them in the strategic documents that would be submitted to the Board in October. In response to the Employers' request on service quality, he confirmed that monitoring and evaluation system would be refined to ensure the strongest impact possible of the activities. About digital inclusion, an important point raised by the Workers' group that should be reflected in the forthcoming strategic documents, he informed the Board that work had already started in this field and that a Digital Inclusion Summit would be convened in July to consult with constituents on this subject. About the right mix of training and non-training services and the balance between face-to-face and distance learning, he agreed that this should be discussed further. On the learning innovation hub, in particular the learning laboratory that would soon open its doors on the campus, the Director of Training hoped it would be an incentive for constituents from all over the world to come to Turin in order to experience cutting-edge digital learning and collaboration technologies.
53. **The Employer Vice-Chairperson** clarified the position of his group. He expressed the opinion that due to the unpredictability of the situation, the Centre should not adopt a "normative" agenda and that some flexibility would be necessary. The group's vision for the future should not be seen as "either/or" because face-to-face and distance learning are two different products serving different audiences. On the point made by the Italian Government, he hoped that the management of the Centre would be able to respond and to reflect this reaction in the eventual document to be submitted to the Board in October.
54. **The Worker Vice-Chairperson** confirmed that the main points did indeed remain open and that there was enough time for discussion and consultation until October. She reiterated her group's willingness to collaborate to find the best solution possible for the Centre. She insisted on the need to improve relations between the management of the

Centre and the Staff Union Committee, especially to integrate the impressions and feelings of staff into the reprofiling and reskilling exercise.

- 55. **The Government Vice-Chairperson** restated that his group was ready to engage in consultations.
- 56. **The Chairperson** thanked the members of the Board for their valuable contributions and assured them that both the Chairperson of the Board and the management of the Turin Centre would continue to operate on the basis of strong and inclusive consultation and constructive engagements with the staff representatives.

Concluding remarks

- 57. **The Chairperson** informed the members of the Board that the report of this meeting of the Board would be considered in the Institutional Section of the 343rd Session of the Governing Body, together with the report of the 85th Session of the Board. He proposed that, in order to facilitate the preparation and finalization of the report, the Board should delegate the task of approving the draft report to the Officers of the Board.
- 58. The Board approved the Chairperson's proposal.
- 59. The Chairperson closed the meeting.

July 2021

► Report of the 85th Session of the Board (25 October 2021)

- 60. The 85th Session of the Board of the International Training Centre of the ILO (the Centre) was held through videoconference on 25 October 2021.
- 61. The report of this meeting is submitted to the 343rd Session of the Governing Body (November 2021).
- 62. **The Chairperson, Mr Guy Ryder**, Director-General of the ILO, welcomed the members of the Board. For the sake of time management, he asked the Board members to be as concise as possible in their comments about the documents submitted for information. This would allow more time for the discussion on item 2.

Introductory remarks

- 63. **The Chairperson** gave the floor to the representatives of the Government of Italy and the Piedmont Region.
- 64. **The representative of the Government of Italy, Mr Jovanovic**, reaffirmed the continued support of Italy for the Centre and its training activities, even in these very difficult times and insisted on the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders, including all Member States.
- 65. **The representative of the Piedmont Region, Mr Ricca**, acknowledged that the post-pandemic recovery was the greatest challenge Europe and most countries had experienced in decades and that the world would have to build back a better human-centred society in which the environment would have a central place as well. He insisted

on having participants return to the campus as soon as conditions would permit, as the Centre should be a systemic part of the regional innovation network.

- 66. **The Chairperson** read the written contribution sent by the President of the Unione Industriale di Torino.
- 67. **The Chairperson** congratulated the new Mayor of Turin on his recent election.

Adoption of the agenda

- 68. **The Chairperson** proposed to adopt the agenda.³
- 69. The Board adopted the agenda.

Election of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Board for the period 2021–24

- 70. **The Chairperson** invited each of the groups to nominate a Vice-Chairperson in accordance with Article III(4) of the Statute of the Centre. The Workers' group nominated Ms Moore; the Employers' group nominated Mr Kyriazis; and the Government group nominated Mr Aniefiok Etim Essah from Nigeria.
- 71. As there were no other nominations, the nominees were elected by the Board. The Chairperson congratulated the new Vice-Chairpersons.

Interim Implementation Report for 2020 and updated training statistics

- 72. **The Director of the Centre, Mr Liu**, presented the documents⁴ and commented that, in all aspects, 2020 had been an exceptional year for the Centre.
- 73. **The Director of Training, Mr Klemmer**, briefly highlighted the results achieved in 2020 under the technical and financial pillars of the Strategic Plan. Concerning the technical performance, measured against the outreach and the impact of the Centre's activities, the figures indicated that the dramatic fall in the number of face-to-face participants had been more than compensated by the substantial increase in the number of distance learning participants, thanks in particular to the commitment of the Workers' and Employers' activities programmes, that resulted in the Centre reaching its targets for constituents' participation, however this diversification of the service portfolio had not been dictated by the circumstances of 2020. Already in 2018, the Centre had reached as many participants through its face-to-face activities as through distance learning. Again, in the 2020–21 biennium two thirds of the activities had been delivered in collaboration with the ILO and one fourth with other training institutions. On the impact, the figures showed that distance learning is impactful. Regarding the financial performance, the Centre had once again managed to earn more than 70 per cent of its revenue and achieved a higher ratio of contribution to fixed costs, which supported sound financial management. The expected 2021 revenue was also a result of increased productivity, and he thanked the staff for this.
- 74. **The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr Kyriazis**, noted that outreach to participants had doubled in 2020 as compared to the previous year; there was an increase in outreach of

³ CC 85 rev.

⁴ CC 85/1 and CC 85/1 (Add.).

new individual learners and new institutional beneficiaries; and there was also an increase in the Centre's profile as a provider of innovative digital learning and collaborative tools. He saw evidence of a strong demand for non-training capacity-development support services and invited the Centre to continue developing such services.

75. The Employers' group was pleased to note that the ILO constituents had been the primary beneficiaries of the Centre's digital learning offensive, and that the figure of employers' representatives reached by the Centre had more than doubled than originally envisaged for the 2020–21 biennium. The Employers' activities programme team contributed to the overall performance of the Centre and recommended for Senior Management to reward good results and achievements in order to further encourage continuous high performance and delivery.
76. On the digital side, the Employer Vice-Chairperson acknowledged that almost all the barriers that had emerged had been overcome with the use of digital and communication tools. This meant that the Centre could manage challenging situations in the short and immediate term. He insisted on the importance of digital inclusion, which was rightly highlighted in the report, to enable learners to have access to online training classes and materials. He also mentioned the examples shown in the implementation report of pilot innovation schemes that had not been tried before but explained by the crisis, including digital credentials, conferences in virtual reality and the use of learning analytics.
77. However, for the Employers' group, the most relevant information regarded the financial position, in particular the higher contribution to fixed costs as compared to 2019, and the increase in voluntary contributions. On the latter point, the Centre should remain vigilant in light of the probable pressure on capacity-development budgets in the coming years. Therefore, the team responsible for applying for grants and tenders should be upskilled in order to have proven fund-raising capabilities that could secure large amounts of funding for the Centre's activities.
78. **The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Moore**, thanked the Management and the staff for the efforts carried out in addressing the pandemic challenges. She welcomed the quick adaptation of the courses into a digital format allowing constituents to continue their training. She sought additional information on the digital credentials, whose number is much lower than the total number of participants, the learning analytics system and requested the Review of the non-training capacity-development services commissioned by the Centre to be shared with the Board.
79. On the financial position, the Workers' group noted with pleasure the increase in voluntary contributions and thanked all donors. A long-term, predictable collaboration with the ILO would be beneficial for the economic sustainability of the Centre. The group also understood that the expected €3.8 million surplus for the 2020–21 biennium would provide some space for a prudent transition to the new operational model.
80. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the fact that, respectively 90 and 86 per cent of participants had stated that international labour standards and social dialogue and tripartism had been referenced during the training. She encouraged the Centre to maintain this trend and increase efforts to improve the percentage of training activities, incorporating sessions or learning tools on these three subjects.
81. **The Government Vice-Chairperson, Mr Essah**, explained that the group had not had time to adopt a common position on the different documents submitted to the Board, and stated that Member States would make individual comments and recommendations

if they wished to do so. This being said, the Government group took note of both reports and endorsed the remarks made by the two other groups.

82. **The representative of the Government of China** noted with satisfaction the continuous support provided by Italy and by the ILO. He thanked the Director for the good figures and congratulated the Centre for its reaction in the face of the pandemic.
83. **The Director of Training** replied to the Worker Vice-Chairperson's questions. With regard to digital credentials, these had been introduced for a selected range of activities in 2020, and extended this year. Their number had now reached around 17,000. Regarding the inclusion of international labour standards, social dialogue and tripartism into all activities, the Centre would of course strive to increase the ratio of activities that implicitly reference these themes.
84. The Board took note of the documents.

Strategic Plan of the ITCILO for 2022-25

Programme and Budget proposals for 2022-23

Initial funding of institutional investments

85. **The Director of the Centre** introduced the first two documents ⁵ and highlighted their main points. The heart of the proposed programme of work and budget arrangements was to consolidate the Centre's services to ILO constituents in designing and implementing productive and economic development strategies to create more and better jobs and sustainable enterprises, strengthening the ILO's normative mandates and the human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
86. The implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2022-25 and the Programme and Budget for 2022-23 would enormously expand the number of beneficiaries of the Centre's services, further strengthen the impact of ILO capacity-development initiatives and ensure an improved and more sustainable financial performance for the Centre. It would also ensure coherence with the ILO strategies because the Centre's areas of expertise were shaped by the ILO Strategic Plan for 2022-25 and the thematic priorities of the ILO Programme and Budget for 2022-23.
87. The Centre would accelerate its digital transformation along six paths: expand the eCampus; build external platforms on behalf of institutional clients; strengthen the operational backbone, in order to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness; implement measures to upskill the Centre's staff; scale up the use of digital learning analytics and artificial intelligence; and nurture a culture of innovation and quality that embraces digital learning technology and applications and harnesses artificial intelligence. The Centre's new service mix met the demands for a combination of individual capacity development and institutional capacity-development services, blending face-to-face training and online training, and complementing it with advisory services.
88. Regarding face-to-face training, both in Turin and in the field, the Centre would reach more participants than in the 2020-21 biennium. It would market its campus as a destination for interregional larger-scale academies, conferences and dialogue events, where scale effects can be reached. With regard to the digital divide, the Centre would ensure that its services are digitally inclusive, that is, namely that they "leave no-one

⁵ CC 85/2/1 rev. and CC 85/2/2.

behind”, whether staff or participant, promoting digital learning and collaboration technologies and applications that have low barriers for learners with vulnerabilities.

89. Regarding the financial performance, the Centre would continue to seek to further diversify its revenue mix. Stronger emphasis and efforts would be placed on the active search for new non-traditional development partners, through the promotion of dynamic, inclusive and strategic partnerships involving a variety of stakeholders, and on innovative financing modalities, including South-South and triangular cooperation.
90. The Director concluded by saying that the proposed budget for 2022-23 was based on the new operational model and aligned with scenario 3, which foresees that the Centre maintains full responsibility over the whole campus in its current size. It included the creation of two new funds, the ITC Development Fund and the Fellowship Fund, along with the existing ones, which include the Campus Improvement Fund and the Innovation Fund, for which systematic funding had been proposed within the biennial budget.
91. **The Treasurer, Ms Boulanger**, introduced the third document.⁶ This document sought the approval of the Board to provide initial financing of the four reserves to be funded through the provision for institutional investments. She clarified that such approval did not relate to the use of the funds during the biennium. This initial funding was being proposed in order to support the Centre’s operations from 1 January 2022 and allow planning to commence immediately. While the systematic financing mechanism would start during the next biennium, the full biennial provision would only be available during 2024 with limited funds available in 2022 and 2023. The projected financial results for 2020-21 indicated a continued strong performance that could easily absorb initial financing. In the document, the Centre also provided the high-level objectives and parameters to be applied in the use of each fund reserve. Regarding the Fellowship Fund in particular, the objective in the use of this fund was to promote tripartism, social dialogue and labour standards as well as promoting gender and diversity in the workplace, and to help participants from less developed countries attend training activities. The use of the Fund, based on priorities and needs, would also include a separate consultative process with the Officers of the Board, as required.
92. **The Employer Vice-Chairperson** stated that the proposed documents addressed many of the points raised by the group during the formal and informal consultations. He noted that although an Implementation Task Force consisting of Board Officers was not created, the group understood from the Centre’s Director that the frequent informal meetings arranged between the Officers of the Board and management would be used to give an update on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the programme of work and allow for an exchange of views.
93. On the Strategic Plan in particular, he saw great difficulty in that the Centre would keep the responsibility for the whole campus until 2023. The Employers’ group would continue to monitor the situation and push for changes if forecasted developments did not take place.
94. The initial funding of the institutional investments was a very critical issue for the three groups as constituents’ capacity-building was fully anchored on fellowships being allocated to workers, employers and governments. Whichever avenue was to be proposed by the Centre’s management in this direction, it would have to be one with the needed flexibility for the Centre’s technical programmes to effectively address the constituents’ needs in a timely manner. Therefore, the Employers’ group was very

⁶ CC 85/2/3 rev.

concerned about the many conditions and restrictions imposed to access the Fellowship Fund and about the impossibility of carrying over any unspent balance from the first year of the biennium to the second one.

95. With those comments to be taken on board, the Employers' group could endorse the Strategic Plan and approve the programme and budget proposals.
96. **The Worker Vice-Chairperson** thanked the management of the Centre for addressing some of the concerns expressed earlier by the group. More exchanges were nevertheless needed to reinforce and strengthen the role of the Centre.
97. From the group's point of view, both the Strategic Plan and the programme and budget signalled a shift away from the strategic role of the Centre as a public international institution which serves constituents to either a market-oriented organization, or a dual role – one which serves constituents and the other which targets the market. The Worker Vice-Chairperson saw a commercialization risk, in particular in the expansion of the service mix. The Centre did need to secure external funding, but focusing on or extending the outreach to external clients might lead to an unintended distancing from the core role of the Centre, which is to provide training for constituents. Attention should be given to finding the right balance in the service mix.
98. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the fact that the documents acknowledged the existence of the challenges posed by the digital divide and proposed technological solutions to address them. Training should target reduced inequalities and the achievement of social justice. She feared though that these solutions might not be sufficient to solve the many issues and problems linked to technology and urged the Centre to keep having the content of its training courses determined by the realities of the world of work and not by technology or the search for innovation. Still on digital learning, she conveyed the group's concerns that this individual experience should not replace collective training and believed that efforts should be made to build a clear methodological proposal that promotes the collective nature of training.
99. About the partnerships and the diversification of the service portfolio, the Workers' group saw both risks and opportunities in the proposal to expand alliances and partnerships with ILO constituents and other clients and warned that, without a clear governance and clearing process, this might lead to imbalances between and among the social partners. In relation to funding partners, she welcomed the recognition of the need to develop "an in-house clearance process that ensures the public nature of the Centre and takes into account the corresponding ILO guidelines for public private partnerships" and requested receiving a draft proposal of the clearance process.
100. The Worker Vice-Chairperson noted the proposal to build external platforms and that these developments should be accompanied by an explanation of "for whom" and "with whom". She stated that workers should continue being the main beneficiaries of the Centre's activities. In the same vein, the prominent role that would be given to digital learning analytics might lead to results oriented by artificial intelligence or algorithms that would be disconnected from the ILO agenda.
101. On the new operational model, the speaker appreciated that there would be no changes in the size of the campus before 2023 and that many provisions had been taken to retain and upskill staff, but asked for clarification on the latter point. Unlike the proposal for campus management, there is not a defined road map or a time frame for staff changes, and those should be developed in consultation with the Staff Union.

102. The Worker Vice-Chairperson thanked management for the prudent approach adopted. She commended the continuous support of the Government of Italy and acknowledged all donors who allowed for the continuity of the Centre. However, the Workers' group did not feel comfortable with the establishment of a Fellowship Fund without clear access rules which should reflect what happened historically with the surplus that was allocated in favour of workers. And that the group would not favour a fellowship fund which does not reflect that reality.
103. Based on all these comments, the Worker Vice-Chairperson thought that many things still needed to be discussed, the Board should adopt an overall prudent approach and suggested adopting the budget as proposed, bearing in mind that adaptations might become necessary to better respond to the constituents' needs. For that goal, further Officers and Board meetings in 2022 may prove necessary. However, she did not agree on the institutional investments, preferring that the budget surplus remain within the General Fund during the transitional period, and until a clear consensus about the use of each of the four funds could be reached.
104. **The Government Vice-Chairperson** welcomed the well-articulated Strategic Plan for 2022–25, which set out in broad terms the challenges in the market for capacity-development services, a four-year strategic outline for the Centre; and a specific framework for performance measurement. He hoped that the evolution progress of the Centre's vision, mission and core principles would strictly anchor on the outcomes of the ILO Centenary Declaration and the *Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic*.
105. The Government group noted the shift in global demand for the services of the Centre, exacerbated by technological innovation and the negative impact of COVID-19. They also noted the repositioning efforts made to take advantage of the opportunities presented. The Government group supported the intensification of online, institutional and system-level capacity-development services but would appreciate a gradual implementation process so that States and constituents with weak technological frameworks would not be left behind. Taking into consideration all comments and guidance provided during the discussion, the Government group endorsed the Strategic Plan for 2022–25.
106. On the other two documents, the Government Vice-Chairperson proposed to listen first to the individual comments of the different Member States.
107. **The representative of the Government of Belgium** reiterated the importance of the Centre for her country, as witnessed by the presence of the Federal Government of Belgium on the Board. The submitted documents satisfied the ambitions nourished by Belgium for the future of the Centre and she had therefore no reservations in providing its support.
108. **The representative of the Government of Japan** commented on the three documents.
109. **The representative of the Government of China** commended the great efforts made by the Centre in these difficult times and invited it to further adjust its service mix to the evolving needs. He welcomed the ten guiding principles for the work of the Centre in the coming years, in particular the human-centred approach, diversity, quality, innovation and sustainability. He encouraged the Centre to pay due attention to all three dimensions of institutional performance. The programme and budget proposals seemed well balanced and allowed the Centre to continue working in an evolving environment. Therefore, the Government of China endorsed the points for decision contained in the three submitted documents.

- 110. The representative of the Government of Italy** reaffirmed Italy's commitment to a reform process which enables the Centre to overcome the new challenges and reinforce its status as a leading training and innovation body for the United Nations. He confirmed this support, both in political and financial terms, on the premise that the Italian financial contribution to the Centre would remain paramount to its activities. Italy concurred with the new operational model based on the digitalization and diversification of the capacity-development services and its implications on the Centre's financial aspects, human resources and facilities. The submitted proposal appeared to be well respondent to the host country's demand to make the Centre leaner, faster in reacting to challenges and capable to reach more beneficiaries in more countries. While being in favour of a larger use of digital technologies and online services, Italy welcomed the fact that face-to-face courses would remain an important element of the proposed service mix of the Centre, though to a lower degree.
- 111.** The Government of Italy supported the proposed expansion of the Centre's service portfolio and the idea of increasing its impact, including through the strengthening of its learning analytics capabilities. It appreciated the proposals made to further diversify the Centre's revenue mix. On the operating costs, the Government had no remarks to make but, as already mentioned during the previous meeting of the Board, would like to see a concrete effort by the ILO, in acknowledgment of the role played by the Centre in the interest of the Organization and all its Member States; for instance a proposal from the ILO management to have part of the Centre's administrative costs absorbed into the ILO's regular budget.
- 112.** Regarding the organizational performance, Italy had always demanded that the Centre's staff be protected in all possible ways and repeated this request. The Government appreciated the commitment to maintaining the total number of full-time equivalents at a similar level as the current one. On the renovation and rightsizing of the campus, Italy welcomed the proposed scenario, which envisages the Centre's overall responsibility for the full campus in the next biennium. Italy would continue to support the renovation process, both in financial terms as well as in pursuing partnerships with compatible organizations, and honour its obligations as the host country and bear part of the costs of the reform and renovation process. However, in a longer-term perspective, Italy could not bear the projected renovation costs alone. Financial support and active searching for partnership agreements and new donors from the ILO was required.
- 113.** On the budget proposals, the Government of Italy stressed that its contribution had remained at the same high level, notwithstanding the worst crisis, including the financial and economic crisis of 2008. It was surprised to find in the document an item on the after-service health insurance as this had never been included in the Centre's budget in the past. Therefore, while approving the budget proposals, Italy expressed some reservations on the inclusion of item 16 in the budget and called on the ILO and Centre's management to conduct a detailed study, also from the legal point of view, on the ownership of such liability and on possible future financial implications for the Centre and its budget.
- 114.** On the institutional investments, the Government of Italy recalled that, during last May's meeting of the Board, it had stressed the importance of a discussion on the proposed institutional investments together with the use of the Italian financial contribution and in connection with the projected budget surplus. Italy expressed some reservations on the establishment of the new funds and, while approving the initial funding of institutional investments, would like to receive additional information on the financial

procedures and terms of reference to ensure their optimal use, as well as an update on their initial use.

115. The representative of the Government of Italy concluded by ensuring the audience that the host country endorsed the strategic vision for 2022–25 but recalled that the Italian contribution to the Centre was based on a different business and organizational model. Accordingly, Italy would evaluate future contributions also taking into consideration the outcomes of the proposed strategy and its future implications on the campus and on the human resources of the Centre.
116. **The representative of the Government of Japan** stated that, to his understanding, the question of the scenario to be followed for campus right-sizing remained open for future discussion.
117. **The Chairperson** thanked the members for their contributions and invited the management of the Centre to answer the questions raised.
118. **The Director of Training** stressed that there was no commercialization risk associated to the new operational model. The Centre's vision and action were aligned to and governed by the ILO framework, and the key performance indicators mentioned in the programme and budget proposals were those of a non-profit organization. On digital inclusion, he confirmed that distance learning would not replace face-to-face training and that it should be seen as a sign of the Centre's commitment to "build forward better" and to bring down costs in order to democratize access to training. On data security, he ensured that the Centre's analytics system was fully compliant with the ILO's data security standards.
119. **The Treasurer** indicated that detailed procedures governing the use of the institutional investment funds still needed to be defined. Consultations with the groups would be held on the matter, including in particular on the Fellowship Fund. She insisted that the first step was to secure the funding of the reserve funds and that this was not about the allocation or use of the funds for which procedures still needed to be developed.
120. **The Director of the Centre** stated that the submitted documents were the result of collective efforts and represented the response to the evolution of the Centre's operating environment. Taking good note of the comments made by the members, he considered the adoption of the three documents as the only reasonable option and confirmed that all details on their implementation would be discussed further.
121. **The Chairperson** thought that the tripartite nature of the ILO was well reflected in the operations of the Centre. He recalled that, on one side, constituents should of course be primarily and properly served, but on the other side, the Centre had to earn three quarters of its revenue. Finding a right balance was paramount, and there was no question of the Centre becoming a profit organization. At times, circumstances demanded difficult decisions. He assured the Board that intensive formal consultations and meetings would be held to further inform the members on the progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the programme and budget, should the Board decide to adopt them now. On the initial funding of the institutional investments, the Chairperson urged the members to look at the high-level objectives of the four funds.
122. **The Government Vice-Chairperson** felt that there were some convergences among the members of the Government group and, upon reflection and consultation with them, presented their common position. The Government group endorsed the points for decision contained in the three documents, bearing in mind that the Office and the Centre would take into consideration all the issues raised during the discussion.

- 123. The Employer Vice-Chairperson** confirmed that the group approved the three documents as presented.
- 124. The Worker Vice-Chairperson** conveyed her group's willingness to adopt the documents provided further discussions on the actual implementation would be held.
- 125.** The Board adopted the points for decision contained in paragraph 25 of document CC 85/2/1 rev., paragraph 209 of document CC 85/2/2 and paragraph 8 of document CC 85/2/3 rev.

Independent external evaluation of the ITCILO online training and learning activities

- 126. The Chairperson** stated that the document ⁷ was submitted for information and requested the Board to take note of it.
- 127. The Employer Vice-Chairperson** took note of the ten recommendations and asked the Centre's management to keep the Board updated on their follow-up.
- 128. The Worker Vice-Chairperson** took note of the timely evaluation and asked if it would be possible to have a follow-up evaluation on the 2021 activities to inform the future decisions of the Board. She took note of the recommendations, which were pertinent and provided good guidance for future work. She also asked for some clarifications on a few recommendations, among others those on basing the expansion of the outreach on the market analytics and on granting a Creative Commons licence.
- 129. The Government Vice-Chairperson** took note of the document.
- 130. The Director of Training** replied to the Worker Vice-Chairperson. On using market analytics as a basis for the expansion strategy, he stated that this allowed a deeper mining of information and that learning analytics was about maximizing the impact of the learning effort by understanding better the online participants' learning behaviour and preferences. He agreed on the possibility of carrying out in 2022 a follow-up evaluation of the 2021 online learning activities and explained that a Creative Commons licence allows partners to use material produced by the Centre as long as they mention the source and do not alter the content.
- 131.** The Board took note of the document.

Report of the meeting of the Officers of the Board (May 2021)

- 132. The Chairperson** stated that the document ⁸ was submitted for information and requested the Board to take note of it
- 133.** The Board took note of the document.

Financial statements and External Auditor's report for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

- 134. The Chairperson** recalled that the document ⁹ had already been formally adopted by the Officers of the Board in May 2021 and was submitted for information.

⁷ CC 85/3.

⁸ CC 85/4.

⁹ CC 85/5/1.

135. The Board took note of the document.

Plan for the audit of the 2021 financial statements

136. **The representative of the External Auditor, Mr Martin**, presented the plan.¹⁰ This audit aimed to express an independent opinion and provide reasonable assurance on the financial statements of the Centre, as well as make recommendations with respect to the efficiency of financial procedures, the accounting system, the internal financial controls and in general, the administration and management of the Centre. The operational audit would focus on the asset management.

137. The Board took note of the document.

Report of the Chief Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 December 2020

138. **The representative of the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight (IAO), Mr Watson**, presented the audit report¹¹ for the year ended 31 December 2020. The IAO had undertaken a remote audit on the pre-qualification phase of the tendering process of the renovation works of the Africa 10 and 11 pavilions, and found that controls over the renovation of the pavilions were operating effectively. It had however raised one concern, namely that the substantial changes in the Centre's operating environment might have a knock-on effect on the non-structural work with implications on budget and schedule. The Centre had replied that the current project management structures provided sufficient flexibility to address such concerns without affecting delivery and costs. About the audits planned for 2021, the IAO hoped to commence a second audit on the procurement process for these works, as well as a review of digital governance. The IAO had also received in 2020 one allegation of administrative misconduct. The fieldwork was completed and the draft report was about to be sent to the Director of the Centre for consideration and follow-up.

139. **The Worker Vice-Chairperson** asked what aspects would be included in the audit of digital governance.

140. **The Employer Vice-Chairperson** was surprised to hear about the investigation made by the IAO and invited the management of the Centre to make every effort possible to rapidly solve this case of misconduct.

141. **The representative of the IAO** explained that the audit of digital governance would focus, among others, on data security and quality, on the regulation of associated risks, on the core team in charge of the learning analytics system and on the assessment of the related strategy.

142. The Board took note of the document.

¹⁰ CC 85/5/2.

¹¹ CC 85/5/3.

Follow-up to the recommendations of the Chief Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 December 2020

143. The Chairperson stated that the document ¹² was submitted for information and requested the Board to take note of it.

144. The Board took note of the document.

Human resources questions

145. The Chief of the Human Resources Services, Mr Lopez-Armand, introduced the document. ¹³ This document reported on the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission applicable to the organizations belonging to the UN common system, and on the proposed amendment of Article 7.3 of the Staff Regulation on the Reports Committee.

146. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, the Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Government Vice-Chairperson endorsed the report and supported the point for decision.

147. The Board approved the point for decision contained in paragraph 20 of document CC 85/6/rev. 2.

Administrative questions

148. The Chairperson stated that the document ¹⁴ was submitted for information and requested the Board to take note of it.

149. The Board took note of the document.

Reports of the Trade Union Training Committee and the Employers' Training Committee

150. The Worker Vice-Chairperson took note of the reports and encouraged the respective technical units to implement the adopted programmes for the upcoming period.

151. The Employer Vice-Chairperson praised the dedication and the resilience of the ACT/EMP Turin team and encouraged them to keep up the good work.

152. The Government Vice-Chairperson had no comments to make.

153. The Board took note of the documents. ¹⁵

Concluding remarks

154. The Chairperson proposed that the 86th Session of the Board of the Centre be held just before the 346th Session of the Governing Body of the ILO, which should take place in Geneva from 31 October to 10 November 2022. Therefore, the 86th Session of the Board would be held, if possible, in Turin, the week before at a date decided in consultation with the Officers of the Board.

155. The Board approved the Chairperson's proposal.

¹² CC 85/5/4.

¹³ CC 85/6 rev. 2.

¹⁴ CC 85/7.

¹⁵ CC 85/8/a and CC 85/8/b.

- 156. The Chairperson** informed members that the report of this meeting of the Board would be considered in the Institutional Section of the 343rd Session of the Governing Body, together with the report of the 84th Session of the Board. He proposed that, in order to facilitate the preparation and finalization of the report, the Board should delegate the task of approving the draft report to the Officers of the Board.
- 157.** The Board approved the Chairperson's proposal.
- 158. The Chairperson** thanked the Director of the Centre for his excellent work over the course of his six years as the head of the Centre, especially at a time of considerable challenges, and wished him good luck for the future.
- 159. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, the Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Government Vice-Chairperson** added their thanks and congratulations to those of the Chairperson.
- 160. The Director** thanked all members, and in particular the Officers of the Board, for assisting him in his work, the members of the Senior Management Team and all the Centre's staff for their dedication and commitment.
- 161. The Chairperson** closed the 85th session of the Board.

November 2021

► Appendix I

Statement by the representative of the Staff Union Committee to the Board of the Centre (84th Session of the Board of the Turin Centre, 24 May 2021)

Director General, distinguished members of the board, colleagues, it is with regret that today I must share with you the Staff Union's disappointment that we the Staff Union Committee, as the elected representatives of the Staff of the Centre, continue to be excluded from the ongoing HR decisions ensuing from the reform of the Centre.

Of the four meetings of the JNC held in 2021 there was no information on which it was possible for the Staff and Management representatives to discuss: no possible future organization chart was shared, no information has been provided regarding what kind of staff retraining is envisaged, no financial information. Nothing at all.

The management has also recently excluded the Staff Union from the decision making process on two important matters:

- The decision to limit the number of staff that may opt for a voluntary departure should they be unable or unwilling to be reskilled and/or accept changes to their current tasks, as required by the new operational model of the Centre, introducing new criteria;
- Changing the current ratio of General Service to Professional and Higher Categories decreasing the number of General Service positions devoted to support functions. More on this point shortly.

We also note with dismay that the Management and the Staff Union continue to have very different approaches regarding the way social dialogue principles are understood and applied within our institution. This includes in regards to the recent communications of the Director of the Centre in regards to the application of the ILO's own Guidelines on Managing Change and Restructuring Processes.

On the implementation of the new business model, we would like to make the following comments and suggestions.

Concerning table 4 on page 7 of the documents – Number of Participants we note the lack of sex disaggregated data. This has been an ongoing request. We do not understand why the data in table 4 is not disaggregated by sex. This was in the past requested by the Director General of the ILO, asking to see differentiation across different levels and categories of staff in the section on gender equality within the Centre (GB.337/INS/11).

On the issue of staff, we recently saw some estimates released by the ILO on its own intranet showing the gender balance at each grade. We would encourage the management of the Centre to report in a similar manner.

The document on the new business model talks about digital inclusion but does not consider how this will be ensured according to the different profile of participants attending our courses.

The data under tables 7 and 8 under human resources implications should be disaggregated because the impact of the Centre's new operational model may penalize more women than men.

The staff needing to be reskilled seems to be General Service staff (in training as well as in administration), and this category is mainly composed of women. The resulting negative impact of the reform on participants and on female staff is concerning to us because these two consequences of the reform could be classified as forms of indirect discrimination.

With regards to the reduction of General Service staff according to our estimates we would go from 38 per cent General Service and 62 per cent Professional/Higher Category to 34 per cent General Service and 66 per cent Professional/Higher Category. We would like to know what the corresponding shifts would be in terms of female vs male.

In regards to Professional and Higher category while there is the possibility for voluntary departures we are concerned that this may not be taking place on the basis of equal opportunity as the newly introduced HR criteria does not foresee, it would seem, the same possibility for colleagues in lower grades or with less tenure.

While indeed, it is worth mentioning that the early departure of colleagues on early retirement or on the basis of agreed termination will create opportunities for more mid-level technical roles, past hiring practices in similar attrition cases resulted very often in the opening of positions at the more junior P2 level.

This has in fact been the practice in recent years leading to a de facto situation where these more junior officials are expected to perform and deliver at a level commensurate to that of their more senior peers. Yet they are not remunerated at the same level. These inequities, in our view, should be avoided in the future.

A key emphasis of the document is on financial sustainability. But, the human dimension must also be taken into account. Firstly, we are concerned about increased workload levels and the ensuing stress resulting from the shift to digital learning.

Digital learning is more labour intensive than we may have thought. This needs to be objectively assessed. In the meantime, we have anecdotal information from colleagues regarding the impact on working time. Many of them have told us that they are required to conduct webinars in the middle of the night, early in the morning and late into the evening.

The core work hours, principally in tune with the face-to-face training modality, have been suspended; yet no commensurate measures have been put into place to address the changes which have taken place to the working time of staff.

Regarding paragraphs 3, 4 and 11 in the document which speaks about the need for the "diversification of the service portfolio and for the capacity development strategy of the Centre needs to further evolve", it is our strong view that a commensurate investment in the people of the Centre, namely its staff is needed to ensure this.

In the recent joint Management - Staff survey on the reform of the Centre, five (5) pages of inputs were provided in reply to the question on new staff skills.

We are disappointed that table 10 on page 24 (Institutional Investments) does not foresee any institutional investments to secure the human dimension of the Centre's sustainability.

We therefore request that the modalities of the current staff development fund be strengthened. Firstly, to substantially increase the allocation, at least as a transitional measure for the period 2022–25. This through an appropriate funding allocation – higher than the current one.

We propose the establishment of a fixed percentage of the staff payroll to ensure its replenishment.

This increase to the staff development fund should also be guaranteed through the establishment of a binding indicator in the strategic framework document.

Lastly, the fund should be managed on a paritarian basis that is jointly by the Management and the Staff Union.

Regarding, mobility and career development for staff, these are acknowledged as important, but, are seemingly hollow words, as there are no concrete proposals in the document in contrast to the extensive details provided in the document on the reduction of staff.

Thank you.

► Appendix II

Statement by the representative of the Staff Union Committee to the Board of the Centre (85th Session of the Board of the Turin Centre, 25 October 2021)

Mr Director-General,

Distinguished members of the Board, Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour and a pleasure to address you today on behalf of the Centre's staff in my role as Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee. We would like to extend our greetings to Mr Ryder, who, as Director-General, has always chaired the meetings of the Board of the Centre.

One more time, and thanks to the ITCILO staff (176 members) and its extraordinary ability to work and adapt, the Centre has been able to obtain excellent results in past years and has faced the current crisis by acting diligently, efficiently and effectively. The efforts already shown by the ITCILO staff especially the past 18 months adapting the F2F training offer to digital modalities in the framework of the pandemic, with the good results that we currently see.

We can read in the document presented to the Board that ".../... the success of the new model relies on the further empowerment of staff by exploring new ways of working and changes in the structure, job profiling and the skills set of the Centre's work force", will require the formulation of a new human resources management strategy, a process that we are willing to accompany as ITCILO Staff Union, based on the decisions taken by this Board.

To reiterate the importance of the JNC's role as the institutional channel for discussion on the staff implications that may arise as a consequence of the business process review, we say here very firmly that the JNC should serve as a real space for discussion and bargaining regarding the staff implications of the ITCILO reform process.

The Staff Union Committee of the Centre is committed to this collective bargaining process stemming from your decisions as Board, referring in particular to, inter alia, the following:

- .../... changes in the staffing profile and in the distribution of staff between support functions and training delivery roles.
- Profile definition for current and new vacancies.
- Update of job descriptions.
- Challenges regarding procedures, and how the work process is changing.
- Recruitment of temporary staff fairly and transparently, especially if done on a large scale.
- Regarding the working time, a clear policy needs to be in place to provide a common framework, clarify the rationale, establish boundaries, while also making sure that availability outside of more traditional working time does not

lead to inequities (for example, due to family or personal life situations), and this is true both for G and P staff.

- Design of a staff development programme with a vision and structure to promote career development of current staff.
- In the light of the new model, the revision of the staff regulations on these issues becomes urgent. It is clear that working conditions may be strongly affected by this revision so the participation of the Staff Union will obviously be necessary.

The Staff Union has made several proposals via the JNC regarding the review of the current rules on teleworking arrangements, flexible working and work-life balance, to reiterate our commitment to continue to improve the working conditions on the campus.

The roles and responsibilities of staff, especially in the training department but not only, should be defined based on a careful analysis of workflows and processes in the life cycle of activities. The nature of the tasks and functions has certainly changed, but the volume of effort required to achieve it has never really been assessed. What is the new life cycle of online training activities, what skills but also what functions and tasks are involved in its design and delivery? How are these distributed and is that efficient, fair, sustainable? In 2020, the management had committed to carry out such a review. So far to the knowledge of the Staff Union Committee nothing on this has been undertaken, or if implemented no information has been shared with the Staff Union Committee or the staff.

The Staff Union appreciates very much that the document presented, literally states that ".../... Following guidance from the Board on the proposed new operational model, these changes will be implemented by the Centre's management in consultation with staff representatives and in accordance with the ILO Guidelines on Managing Change and Restructuring processes and the Centre's Staff Regulations, HR policies and procedures".

The ILO Guidelines on Managing Change and Restructuring processes and the Centre's Staff Regulations, HR policies and procedures, are a key tool for this process, with concrete implications stemming from its implementation, via the JNC.

We should guarantee equal opportunities, transparency and non-discrimination, based on age or gender. Career development should be accessible to all staff regardless of years of service. The Staff Union Committee has spoken out on many occasions in the past on the need for such opportunities for long-serving General Service staff, in particular in the training department.

During the period 2020-21, there already were several transfers of positions (with associated budget) among departments and/or technical programmes, based on an individual/case-by-case approach. The Staff Union Committee was not involved; therefore, we can say that there was not a guaranty of equal opportunities for the staff.

Concrete and clear new rules will mean equal treatment.

However, we view with concern that "the Centre may decide as part of the process to increase its use of consultants, short-term contracts and service contracts to maintain agility, to adapt expertise and profiles to meet evolving needs and to reduce its fixed cost structure". From the Staff Union point of view, we think that we should guarantee that the Centre is not creating precariousness and hiding

labour dependent relationship behind other “flexible formulas” without labour rights.

On the other hand, we are happy to see that, for budgetary purposes, the current number of positions forecasted has been maintained at the same level as 2020–21 for a total of 176 positions, with retention of these positions in their respective units, based on the situation as of July 2021.

As the Staff Union Committee, we feel deeply committed to defending and valuing the great potential of the Centre’s staff who have amply demonstrated their capability, commitment and professionalism to pivot to online training under the weight of expectations and the pressure of time. And while experiencing for many of us a global pandemic for the first time.

It is in very large part thanks to the precious contribution of every single worker of the Turin Campus that ITCILO has been able to weather the storm and will be able to meet head-on the challenges that lay ahead of us.

Thank you for your attention.