

**Board of the Centre**

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**FOR INFORMATION**

EIGHTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Report of the Employers' Training Committee**



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# Summary Report on the 29<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Employers' Training Committee

**Held on 30 May 2011**  
**International Labour Organization, Geneva**

**Members present:**

Mr. C. Renique  
Ms. A. Muñoz Maldonado  
Mr. P. O'Reilly  
Ms. C. Tugschimeg

Ms. P. O'Donovan  
Mr. A. Graziosi  
Mr. A. De Koster  
Ms. J. Schmitt  
Mr. P. Salvai  
Ms. B. Maino

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### **Executive summary of the Employers' Group speech at the meeting of the Employers' Training Committee (ETC).**

The Employers' representatives on the ETC have reviewed the 2010 activities of the Employers' Activities Programme. They deem its performance excellent, in both quantity and quality, and appreciate, in particular, the significant projects which the Programme has run. They are making a notable impact amongst constituents.

The ETC approves the work plan for 2011. It has ascertained that, thanks to the project funding mobilized by the Programme, it remains able to offset the decline in Italian funding and to maintain the annual output of training activities for employers. The Committee appreciates the accents in the work plan on quality, on the maintenance (though not the expansion) of volume, and on innovation.

The ETC, however, is deeply concerned about the continuous decline in stable funding of the Programme by ITC ILO funding sources, and the increasing dependence of the Programme upon project funding for a high proportion of its activities. The ETC wishes to stress the high potential of the Programme for employers and the need for the ITC ILO to invest more in the employers constituency, which provides a direct return to the ITC ILO in many forms.

The ETC therefore asks the ITC ILO management to make more resources available to the Programme. It reiterates its previous requests to re-allocate the Programme a third regular P post, which it had until 2009. Several factors support this request, such as the ITC ILO's improved finances, with a surplus well able to support such an investment. The post would improve the Programme's very thin resource base (two P posts). It would enhance the relevance of the ITC ILO to employers, elicit stronger participation and enable more training for the Employers' Group who, as a full constituent of the ILO, should be on a par with the other constituents. The Programme's allocation of financial resources should also be increased, hand in hand with granting the Programme more access to project funds secured by the ITC ILO.

The ETC also discussed tripartism. It is satisfied with the new approach taken in 2011, which gives the Employers' and Workers' Programmes a more active role in further mainstreaming tripartism in the Centre's activities. The new approach, with active input by employers into the content of tripartite and bipartite courses, will have to be tested in 2011, but looks both interesting and promising.

The ETC also discussed the future of the ITC ILO as a whole, on the basis of a draft paper on the new Strategic Plan, to be submitted to the Board in November 2011. It recalls the tripartite statement by the constituents, made during the November 2010 Board meeting on future strategic planning. That statement asked the ITC ILO management to take concrete steps towards further integration of the ITC ILO with ILO headquarters, a more predictable resource base for the ITC ILO, additional cost savings at the ITC ILO, especially on administration (without damaging training capacity), and an active resource mobilization policy.

The Employers' Committee has commented positively on the first drafts, and is looking forward to receiving a comprehensive Strategic Plan by November 2011. This Strategic Plan should provide a broad perspective on measurable and quantified outcomes, more efficient management of resources and closer integration with Geneva. It should be accompanied by concrete proposals and budget scenarios. The ETC hopes to be closely involved in the discussions on the future of the ITC ILO.

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## Report on the meeting of 30 May 2011

1. *Mr C. Renique, Chairperson*, opened the meeting and presented the agenda. The Chairperson suggested opening with a brief presentation of the results obtained in 2010 and concentrating on the Committee's reactions to the draft strategic paper during the second part of the meeting.
2. *Mr A. De Koster, Manager, Programme for Employers' Activities, Turin*, presented the results for 2010. He stressed that, in terms of training, the programme had concentrated on the three ACTEMP outcomes, namely making EOs more representative, helping EOs provide effective services to members and, finally, increasing EOs' policy influence. He pointed out the excellent results in both quantitative and qualitative terms, obtained in spite of a reduction in so-called "captive" funds, thanks to the team's resource mobilization, which had resulted in several major projects. Impact was measured, he said, through monitoring outcomes from most of the activities. In 2011, the reduction in captive funds would be severe: about one third. However, thanks to the continuation of major projects, the Programme expected to maintain the previous year's level. Far less predictable was the situation in 2012. Mr De Koster underlined that the quantitative reduction was also a result of the requests by ACTEMP at headquarters to prioritize structural work over participants' training, in order to respond better to the beneficiaries' needs. Finally, a major effort would be made to enhance tripartism by ensuring that employers' issues and perspectives were taken on board and reflected in the content of courses run by all ITCILO units. To conclude the challenges, Mr De Koster in agreement with the Committee, mentioned staff, in particular Professional staff. To summarize, 2010 had been a very good year; forecasts for 2011 were still very good; but there were concerns about 2012. (see attached presentation)
3. *Mr C. Renique* took the floor to congratulate the team. He stressed the importance of consolidating the third Professional staff position within the team. Mr Renique expressed the Committee's satisfaction with the efforts by the Programme to run training activities in line with the ILO outcomes and to mainstream tripartism, not only by increasing employers' participation but above all by looking more deeply at course curricula to ensure that employers' perspectives were reflected in them. He then gave the floor to Ms Patricia O'Donovan, Director of the Turin Centre
4. *Ms Patricia O'Donovan, Director of the Turin Centre*, congratulated Mr De Koster and his team. She expressed appreciation of the work done and of the way it was illustrated in the report, whose clear style she particularly liked. Key things emerging were the alignment with ACTEMP at headquarters, rightly considered a priority and, as a consequence, the alignment with the ILO's outcomes, which also met the Board's request. The Centre as a whole should reflect on increasing integration with the ILO, including its results-based framework. She was asking for access via IRIS to the results-based matrix, for all the Centre's Technical Programmes. The issues of resources and staff were common to all technical units of the Centre and should be looked into from that perspective. That analysis would be done at the budget meetings in July 2011, taking into consideration each individual Programme's case and, in particular, the critical mass needed to be able to deliver. Proposals would be presented to the Board in November, since the issue could not be treated in isolation.
5. A second comment she made concerned the successful efforts to mobilize additional external funds, especially through the European Commission. This has been the Centre's necessary response to the cut in the Italian voluntary contribution. It had been achieved

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successfully for 2010 and 2011 but was less certain for 2012. However, the Centre had gained valuable expertise in competitive bidding.

6. Basically, *the Director* thought the Programme had not only performed very well but had done so in an innovative way. Its products and training materials had met the employers' needs, and it had been willing to make them available to the beneficiaries, even giving away the intellectual property. Its Web pages and Web-based platform were innovative and well designed. The Director therefore invited the Programme to continue in that direction and to keep on aiming not at an increase in quantity but at a deeper response to the beneficiaries' strategic needs.
7. *Ms O'Donovan* made a final point on tripartism. She considered it very important and thought important steps forward had been taken. She was ready to make further efforts with the support of the social partners.
8. *Mr Antonio Graziosi, Director of Training Programmes*, then took the floor. After joining colleagues in congratulating the Employers' Programme team, he took up some of the points mentioned in the presentation. He considered the issue of division of responsibilities among the team in Turin, the Centre itself, ACT/EMP at headquarters and field offices an important one. Active involvement of the field employers' specialist in designing and running training activities was of great importance and should not be considered an "either/or" choice. A training activity ownership depended mainly on agreement on major principles, contents, methodology and evaluation, and not necessarily on the presence of a Turin Centre official. That was an issue that should be further explored, especially considering its impact on the team's resources and needs. On resource mobilization, Mr Graziosi commented that due to diminishing Italian funds, the need to be creative in searching for external resources had increased. He pointed out that priority for access to project funding had been given, whenever possible, to social partners, and also depended on the donors' characteristics and requests. Finally, on tripartism, which had historically been a major concern for ACT/EMP, ACTRAV and the Board, he stressed that the number of social partner representatives had remained high, in spite of the dramatic cut in the "Social Partners Support Facility" intended to cover their participation costs. The ITCILO management was looking forward to proposals from ACTEMP and ACTRAV. Mechanisms had been put in place to adapt and evaluate the relevance of ITCILO curricula to the social partners. Time and resource constraints were limiting that exercise.
9. *Mr Phil O'Reilly* welcomed Ms O'Donovan in her new role. He reiterated the need to strengthen the Programme's team, in particular considering that it was a net contributor to the Centre and a fund-earner for it. He also pointed out that a minimum critical mass of capacity had to be available within the Programme, which represented the employers' constituents.
10. *Mr. Renique* then invited Ms O'Donovan to introduce the second main point on the agenda, the ITCILO's strategic plan.
11. *Ms. O'Donovan* introduced the ITCILO's draft Strategic Plan (2012-15). The current one was to end in December 2012. Basic documents taken into consideration in designing the new plan were the Working Party report (2007), the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008) and the ILO Review Team recommendations (2010). The Director highlighted the main points of the plan. She underlined the Centre's strengths, namely skilled and competent staff, close collaboration with ILO technical units and regions, outreach to national and regional training and learning institutions, new partnerships, collaboration with other UN system organizations and excellent relations with Italian Ministries (in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the Region and the City of Turin. She indicated the major challenges as the Centre's difficulty in finding its place within the

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ILO results-based framework, due in part to its being outside the IRIS system, uneven visibility and understanding of the Centre's unique competitive advantages, lack of clarity as to its role within the ILO knowledge system, and resource-base instability. Areas for innovation were programmes, learning methodology and training modalities. Finally, the campus needed to be upgraded in terms of learning facilities, accessibility and "greenness" to state-of-the-art level, in order to remain competitive. Priorities for 2012-15 were therefore to move into the ILO results-based framework, including investment in integrating the Centre into IRIS, at least for access to its strategic-planning module. Given her experience in chairing the Board, the Director aimed to reinforce the role of the Centre's Board by dedicating more time to strategic discussion, thus reinforcing governance and obtaining guidance and oversight on key issues. The Centre should take early action to get its technical work into the mainstream of ILO outcomes and knowledge-sharing. The Centre should make use of its flexibility to build new partnerships for accessing new donors and increasing outreach. In conclusion, innovation in training and learning methodology should be an on-going process. To meet beneficiary needs, it was necessary to invest in innovative technology, streamline the Centre's heavy administrative system, and refurbish and constantly improve the Centre's facilities.

12. *Mr. Renique* thanked the Director for presenting the draft strategic paper, and asked for clarification of points raised during the Committee's preparatory meeting. In particular, the Committee would like more details on the future role of the Centre within the ILO in terms of country programmes, technical cooperation and the coming revision of the administration system. In relation to upgrading the Centre's facilities, he welcomed and supported the idea of looking into public-private partnerships. The Committee, he said, was keen to look into a long-term business model and development plan for the Centre. Concerning the points raised by the Board, he expressed the group's wish to increase the governance role, for which it needed detailed information, with a view to increasing collaboration with the ITCILO management, without, of course, micro-managing.
13. *Mr. O'Reilly* particularly appreciated the presentation of the strategic paper and the list of strengths, from which only the role played by the social partners was missing. On the challenges, he considered the lack of resources the major one, to which all the others were related. However, he also thought that investment in innovation could itself lead to new donors, and should therefore be prioritized. The list of priorities, he said, was too long. Priorities, in his opinion, were increasing outreach, improving training and learning methodology (strongly connected with each other) and reinforcing the Board's governance function, which would be possible only with a strong strategic plan, statistical data and information. As a Board member, he said, it would be of great help to have a common vision of what the ITCILO's success would look like and what the Centre would do to achieve it and warrant its viability.
14. *Ms. Albis Muñoz* stressed the importance of investing in human resources in order to ensure sustainability of the different projects, in particular in the employers' team, which was weak in staff resources. Before the Board in November, she suggested, there should be meetings with the GB members to clarify and possibly align the vision at headquarters with the Centre's needs.
15. *Ms O'Donovan* thanked the Committee's members for the comments on the paper which, she underlined, was a draft. The Centre's management was ready and willing to shift the Centre in a new direction, but had to keep in mind its operational environment. There was a strong commitment to change, also by the staff. She thought the role of the Centre was pretty well defined and there was no specific need to investigate it further with the ILO. Nonetheless, the idea of defining what success looked like was appealing and should be taken further with the Board. The Strategic Paper, she concluded, would be revised in the light of the comments of the Trade Union Training Committee and of the Employers'

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Training Committee, and would be re-circulated before being presented to the Board in November.

- 16.** *Mr Graziosi* mentioned that future versions of the paper would include further information and targets. More detailed information could also be included, but that would lead to a far bigger document. Concerning the definition of success, he commented that one of the ways of defining it for the Centre was by measuring participants' satisfaction and the impact of training. In conclusion, he said that viability of the Centre should not be seen only from the financial point of view, but also from that of the Centre's ability to contribute to the operational objectives for which it had been created.
- 17.** *Mr Renique* requested a different date for the ETC meeting next year, possibly right after the March session of the Governing Body, in order to facilitate members' participation. Mr Renique reiterated the concern of all the members over the staffing of the Programme for Employers' Activities. He said he appreciated the discussion of the paper and was looking forward to the Board meeting in November. Mr Renique concluded by announcing his retirement, underlining the honour and pleasure he had enjoyed as employers' spokesperson over the past five years. He called the meeting to an end at 4 p.m.
- 18.** *Ms O'Donovan* took the floor to express sincere appreciation to Mr Renique on behalf of the Centre and the Office for the great work he had done.