EMPLOYERS’ STATEMENT

The Employers thank the two authors of the report for their detailed description of the ILO supervisory system. The report contains valid information regarding the evolution, the functioning and interrelation of the different procedures.

While the report finds that the “supervisory system functions adequately and generally meets its objective …”, it also raises concerns, such as an “overlap between, or a duplication of, procedures”. As regards possible improvements, the report considers that respective efforts must be made “on a continuous basis”. It also finds “that well-thought out adaptations that would streamline the current procedural and practical framework in order to make it more comprehensible and coherent” are required.

The report contains concrete proposals for improvement in paragraphs 126 to 144. The Employers consider that while these proposals are relevant overall, many are not new, have already been discussed or are being implemented, and often remain superficial. Where shortcomings are nevertheless acknowledged there are hardly any suggestions to rectify them. For instance, while the report expresses concerns “that there may be too many different committees involved in the system which may have negative effects on the transparency and effectiveness of the procedures for those involved”, no proposals are made to reduce the number of supervisory bodies.

In general, Employers consider that a critical approach is unfortunately lacking.

The Employers took note of the description of the supervisory machinery of human rights bodies outside the ILO. While this information is certainly of interest, it remains vague from the report how well these supervisory machineries work in practice. This information is critical to draw conclusions for possible improvements of the ILO supervisory procedures. The Employers noted that the report did not attempt to draw such conclusions.

The Employers made substantial comments both to the report project plan and to the first draft and requested that they be appended to the report. This important request was not taken up by the authors, much to the Employers’ regret.

For the Employers, the main finding from the report is that the ILO standards supervisory system has over time become very complex, which makes it difficult for ILO constituents to understand, properly use and most importantly “own” the system. In the Employers’ view, streamlining, simplification and consolidation of the system based on a clear understanding of the distinct mandates and functions of its individual components are required. Clarity and transparency are of the essence to restore tripartite governance in the system.

The Employers believe that the approach now should be more ambitious and trust that the DG will take this item as a clear priority and formulate substantial recommendations for consideration by the Governing Body in November incorporating the specific proposals of the social partners and Governments.

Having said this, the Employers agree with the point for decision in para. 3 (a) and (b). As regards point (b) and in order to take the matter forward, the Employers suggest setting up a working group of the Governing Body to coordinate specific follow-up action.