



# **European Union**

## **Statement**

**ILO Governing Body, 325<sup>th</sup> session**

**29 October – 12 November 2015**

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**Follow-up to the resolution concerning the recurrent discussion on the  
strategic objective of social protection (labour protection) – GB325/INS/5/1**

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**Geneva, 10 November 2015**

**- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -**

**ILO Governing Body, 325<sup>th</sup> session**

**(29 October – 12 November 2015)**

**(GB.325/INS/5/1)**

**Follow-up to the resolution concerning the recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of  
social protection (labour protection)**

**EU Statement**

Thank you, Chairperson.

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Norway, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.

We would like to thank the Office for the follow-up proposed to the resolution adopted at the 104<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference.

We appreciate that during the recurrent discussion on labour protection this summer there was a common understanding of the necessary action to be taken by all ILO constituents to keep pace with the transformations in the world of work and an agreement on the priorities to extend the coverage of labour protection to all workers, determine the appropriate level of protection and ensure compliance.

Conclusions underlined a comprehensive approach in addressing all four priority areas: wages, working time, occupational safety and health, maternity protection. Therefore we welcome the fact that the Office maintained this comprehensive approach in the proposed plan of action.

We are satisfied that we find a number of essential areas of future ILO work highlighted in the plan.

In particular, integrating gender equality and non-discrimination across its activities as proposed in paragraph 9. Effective labour protection is the key to proper participation of women in the labour market, to equal treatment and to their health and dignity when it comes to maternity protection, pay and related benefits, working arrangements or working time.

We support targeting action at specific groups of workers who are more vulnerable to labour protection deficits, such as migrant workers, as highlighted in paragraphs 15 and 16.

Non-standard forms of employment can also lead to decent work deficits and inequality in particular affecting the most vulnerable groups in the labour market. Therefore we are looking forward to the proposed activities in this field, including as regards nursing personal and domestic workers as well as migrant workers. We look forward to the results of the 2016 General survey on migration instruments and of the 2017 General Survey on OSH instruments to inform this work.

In this regard, we would like to reiterate that it is vital to ensure that non-standard forms of employment meet the legitimate needs of workers and employers and are not used to undermine labour rights and decent work, and that adequate labour protection is in place for workers in all types of employment relationship.

Concerning assessing and addressing possible regulatory gaps regarding non-standard forms of employment, we attach great importance to effective application of the existing framework provided by the international labour standards. We also highlight the special role of the Standards Review Mechanism that is about to be set up.

Paragraph 5 of the report rightly emphasises labour protection challenges for small and medium-sized enterprises. In this light we think that the proposed plan of action should provide more attention to SMEs, especially concerning the implementation of occupational safety and health legislation, in line with ILC conclusions on SMEs.

We believe that occupational health and safety policies not only safeguard workers' life and health, but also play a vital role in increasing the competitiveness and productivity of enterprises in facilitating the establishment of a level playing field and in contributing to sustainability of social protection systems.

We welcome the attention paid to building a knowledge base and the reference made to cooperation with EU agencies in this field. At the same time we would like to emphasise that special attention should also be paid to investigating the link between labour protection and enterprise productivity, supporting more equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth.

We look forward to discussing the proposal to hold a tripartite meeting of experts on working time and work-life balance made in paragraph 14, when such a proposal is submitted to the 326th Session of the Governing Body in March 2016.

In conclusion, we support the decision point provided that our guidance is taken into consideration.

Thank you, Chairperson.