



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

Statement

350th Session of the ILO Governing Body

Agenda Item No. GB.350/INS/8

**Democratization in the ILO's governance and update on the status of the
1986 amendment**

**Statement delivered by Mr. Muhammad Abdullah, Counsellor,
Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN, Geneva**

(6 March 2024)

Honourable Chairperson,

We align with the statements delivered on behalf of significant inputs of ASPAG countries.

Pakistan commends the significant progress in ratifying the 1986 Amendment since the establishment of Tripartite Working Group on Democratization. With two-thirds of member States having ratified it, only three more ratifications from key industrial Members are required for its entry into force.

Pakistan holds a consistent and principled position on the issue of democratization. This aligns with ASPAG position reiterated in the Singapore Statement adopted at the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting expressing strong support for principle, set out in the 2019 Centenary Declaration and the resolution IV of the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference in 2021.

We also recall adoption of resolution on Africa's representation in the Governing Body at the 11th African Regional Meeting.

Chair,

The issue of democratization is beyond the ratification of 1986 Amendment. We recognise that there is a pronounced imbalance in the representation of Member States in the Governing Body as well as of regions, which needs to be addressed.

We wish to draw attention to the fact that the Standing Orders of the Governing Body refer only to geographical regions, yet the Industrialized Market Economy Countries (IMEC), because of their simultaneous representation, play a dominant role in the ILO decision making process in the Governing Body. This often prevents the emergence of a Government Group consensus and consensus within the regional groups. We note the double privilege enjoyed by IMEC due to its cross-regional nature, while being members of three geographical regions.

This representational asymmetry is also reflected in the tripartite Screening Group which determines the agenda of the Governing Body. The Screening Group is consulted on issues that arise during the sessions where consensus is not achieved. Instead of only four geographical regions represented in the Screening Group, we have six groups as Europe is split in two plus IMEC which, as earlier stated, is not a geographical region.

The obvious net result of this dual privilege of representation arising from multiple “regional (quote and unquote)” memberships of some economically powerful countries deprives legitimate rights of other Groupings to represent billions of people whose voices need to be heard. We deem this violation of the principle of equality of states enshrined in the UN Charter and International Law.

Chair,

As documented in the minutes of 343rd Session of the Governing Body and proceedings of the TWGD, it is evident that there is no legal basis for existence of cross-regional or sub-regional government groups beyond four recognised geographical regions.

This practice in absence of government group decision to have more than 4 regional groups, in our opinion, violates provisions of GB Standing Orders related to the autonomy of groups.

“Role and Responsibilities of Regional Coordinators in the International Labour Organization” prepared by Official Relations and Correspondence Unit (RELOFF) acknowledges “*There are six recognized Regional Coordinators*

in the ILO, although this is not regulated by any legal text.” We request the Office to revise this document to reflect four recognized regional coordinators.

While entry into force of 1986 Amendment is awaited, two-thirds ratification sends a clear signal that the Deputy Members of this house must be accorded full rights as the titular members i.e voting as well as right to move resolutions, amendments or motions as well as Governing Body positions available to the titular members.

We support the significant majority amendment to operationalise the proposal and request the Office to take necessary follow actions in this regard.

In view of discussions, we propose to lend this agenda to next week, so that the constituents could have consultations among themselves and discussions with the Office.

I thank you.
