



Staff Union Position on the third version of the draft GB paper (GB.355/INS/7)

10.10.2025

Procedure

1. The SU deeply regrets that, once again, it was not meaningfully consulted on the content of the third version of the draft GB paper (GB.355/INS/7) and was again provided with limited time to review and comment on a document of considerable importance. While the SU acknowledges and understands that it was not included in the bilateral informal consultations held between the Office and the Constituents, it is nonetheless concerned that the Administration did not provide a formal briefing (through the Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC)) on the outcomes of those discussions, thereby making it more difficult for the SU to reflect on the revisions made to the draft GB paper (GB.355/INS/7).
2. These procedural shortcomings have persisted across successive iterations of the draft GB paper (GB.355/INS/7). The SU believes that lessons must be drawn to strengthen procedural fairness and ensure meaningful consultation. Moving forward, the process should include formal briefings at the JNC and allow sufficient time for the SU to review and comment prior to submission. This would promote good faith consultation, transparency, and accountability.

Content of the Document

Lack of transparency and accountability

3. The SU is alarmed by the lack of transparency and accountability regarding the development of the document and the various proposals therein. The principle of good faith - even in consultation - requires that the decision-making parties are willing to be influenced by the inputs of their counterparts. The current lack of transparency and accountability on the Administration's side not only makes it extremely difficult to understand the rationale behind the proposals as they stand, but also appears to overlook the fact that the options put forward by the Administration were themselves questioned and criticized both by staff and the SU (both in the field and HQ) and by directors (both in the field and HQ). The SU stresses that meaningful consultation requires not only the timely sharing of documents, but also transparent reflection of the views received.
4. The SU expresses serious concern about the inaccurate representation of its Position Paper (added as an Annex to the present document), which responded to the 14 August version of the draft GB paper (footnote no. 4, page 3 of the third version of the draft GB Paper). The document lacks a proper summary of the SU's positions and proposals and entirely omits reference to the 56 resolutions adopted by the SU's constituencies worldwide (Annex III of the SU Position Paper) and offers no indication of whether, or to what extent, these proposals were taken into account.

5. The SU also regrets that the current version of the document ends up introducing ambiguity under scenario 1 even in parts of the previous version where confusion did not exist (including reduction of management positions and consolidation of departments).
6. The SU takes note of the reference in paragraph 4 of the document to the UN80 Specialized Agencies cluster and the broader UN80 process, and raises concerns regarding the limited information available on the specifics of the ILO's role as co-lead of the cluster, as well as the ambiguity regarding the ways in which the UN80 process will be used as "reference points...particularly in the areas of efficiency, mandate management, and structural alignment". The SU must underline that the Rules and Regulations under the UN Common System have been developed with no or limited involvement of the various Staff Representative bodies, including that of the ILO's SU.

Matters subject to negotiations with the SU

7. The SU wishes to reiterate, yet again, that according to the Staff Regulations (Article 10.1), the SU is the sole recognized official statutory body entitled to represent the interests of the staff. It cannot be superseded or replaced in any way by other bodies like the ILO Review Team or the Sounding Board. Anything that will affect the terms and conditions of employment of staff is subject to negotiation under the Collective Bargaining framework of the Office. Any proposal that requires negotiation with the SU should not be submitted to the GB in a manner that would constrain the SU's bargaining position and pre-empt the process of good-faith negotiations. This would be tantamount to bad faith. In this context, the SU requests that the document's language be revised to accurately reflect the relevant obligations. We reiterate, as outlined in the Minute Sheet sent on 26 September 2025 (see Annex II) that the SU opposes any reference to consultations and interactions that misrepresents the nature and extent of the said consultations and interactions. The SU therefore requests that the term "discussions" not be conflated with meaningful consultations, and, accordingly, that the term "discussions" used in paragraph 5 of the third version of the draft GB paper (GB.355/INS/7) be replaced with "negotiations through the Joint Negotiating Committee," to ensure the terminology aligns with the formal processes and commitments in place.

Proposed measures

8. While the SU acknowledges the revisions made to the document following consultations with the constituents, it regrets that similar proposals put forward by the SU were not accommodated. Upon reviewing the latest version of the paper, the SU reiterates the points raised in its Position Paper and strongly urges the Administration to give due consideration to those recommendations in substance and engage in good faith and meaningful dialogue with the SU on its proposals.
9. The SU regrets that, like its previous iteration, the current document remains overly HQ and RB centric and fails to articulate a clear and forward-looking vision for the Organization. It justifies deep organizational and politically motivated changes primarily as a cost-saving and efficiency improving exercise rather than a mandate-driven reorganization. As an example, the proposed relocation of the Regional Office for Arab States from Beirut to Doha delivers negligible savings relative to the scale of the overall reform package and as such appears to have a justification that hinges far more on political arguments than on any meaningful budgetary impact. Other structural reforms - which include merging of departments, creating a "global service centre," and relocation of technical teams without any assessment of the real impact on service quality, efficiency, and

hidden costs - are presented as budgetary responses; they are not derived from strategic evaluation or tripartite guidance but are treated as financial and logistical adjustments.

10. The SU also notes that although the term “core mandate” is referenced repeatedly throughout the draft GB Paper, the Administration continues to avoid making the difficult decisions about what does *not* fall within that scope. While paragraph 18 explicitly states that the ILO should deprioritize non-core work (though it is unclear whether this refers to the Office or the Organization or both), the document omits further clarification as to what those activities might be or how such determinations will be made, nor what the practical implications of those decisions might be.
11. The document makes several aspirational claims regarding the intended outcomes of reducing senior management positions and consolidating departments to foster interdisciplinary collaboration through cross-functional teams. Yet, there is no explanation or evidence that such outcomes will result from the proposed, seemingly arbitrary grouping of work units. This is not just a numbers exercise; the restructuring could undermine its own goals. For example, removing line managers may hinder collaboration, as they are key to shaping teams, setting expectations, and resolving conflicts.
12. Under scenario 1, the document continues to reduce measures for enhancing effectiveness and efficiency to a myopic, HQ and RB-centric cost-cutting exercise. The document continues to lack rigorous assessment and justification of the proposed measures, including transparent costing and comprehensive cost-benefit or cost-efficiency analyses. It continues to lack a human centred approach and the recognition that while organizational decisions should establish the overall structure of the Organization, those decisions should not be detached from the individual realities and complexities of staff themselves. Regarding risks, it omits any substantive evaluation of the broader institutional risks the measures may pose to the Organization’s overall capacity to deliver on its mandate.
13. While the SU takes note that a new development cooperation strategy will be presented by the Office at the 356th (March-April 2026) session of the GB, it must reiterate the comments already made in its Position Paper and note with concern the lack of any detail provided until now. The SU invites the Administration to better reflect on how staff working under development cooperation contribute to the core mandate of the Organization and deliver on the ILO’s mandate jointly with staff funded through regular budget.
14. The SU continues to support the objective to strengthen the technical capacity in the regions and closer to constituents. Due consideration, however, must be given to the comments outlined in the SU’s Position Paper, including concerns about the absence of any strategic plan developed together with the field or in-depth risk assessment related to redeployment and how those risks will be addressed or the need to strengthen operational capacity ensuring effective and sustainable delivery. It, however, questions, among other things, the justification of the establishment of additional 18 professional positions - beyond the relocation of the planned 72 professional staff from HQ to the regions - for an approximate biennial cost of US\$8.0 million which is more than the projected biennial savings of about US\$6.0 million that would be generated by the relocation of 50 professional staff from HQ to Turin or other cities, without even adequately considering the various risks (including loss of technical expertise) that might come with such forced relocation to places other than the field.
15. The SU, as already raised in its Position Paper, notes that the proposed review mechanisms for agreed terminations continues to be undefined, despite the unusually high number of applications (in total of 162 staff members according to the revised draft GB paper). The SU is particularly

concerned with the lack of clarity regarding the criteria that will be applied to determine whether a request is “in the interest of the Office”. The paper estimates that approving 75 per cent of requests would require about US\$15.6 million in indemnities and generate US\$18.7 million in biennial savings. Yet, if all requests were approved, the Office could achieve even higher net savings. The SU calls for clarity on this process, including the distribution of approvals by duty station and criteria established for decisions regarding the future of the positions made vacant this way (i.e. abolished, reprofiled, downgraded), and confirmation that decisions are guided by transparent financial and organizational principles rather than by relocation targets.

16. The SU requests clarification on the proposed measures in Scenario 2, as paragraph 77 of the document appears to suggest that the significant budget cut would be entirely through staff costs, without a corresponding reduction in the associated non-staff costs – an approach that seems inconsistent with Appendix II of the paper.
17. The SU also request clarification regarding the specific point raised under paragraph 10 of the document regarding the Administration’s plans to broaden the resource base through non-traditional funding sources, including the private sector, foundations and civil society) and regrets that this point has not yet been further developed.

SU’s position

18. While the SU acknowledges and agrees that the seriousness of the Organization’s financial situation may require urgent decision-making, it regrets that the Administration has not, to date, presented the necessary information in a transparent and comprehensive manner to enable the GB to provide effective strategic guidance.
19. Given the growing likelihood of a significant budget reduction, the SU strongly urges the Administration to reassess the necessity and feasibility of the proposals outlined under Scenario 1 (Limited budget reduction – zero nominal growth). Instead, priority should be given to ensuring that Scenario 2 is supported by sufficient detail and analysis, including a clear picture of the Organization’s financial situation (e.g. available cash for future RB expenditures and details regarding the status of internal reserves). However, both proposed scenarios should avoid specifying the number of staff potentially affected by the proposed measures given that the primary purpose of the GB paper should be to establish guiding principles for reform and the consultation and negotiation process, not to pre-empt its outcomes.
20. Should Scenario 1 proven to be deliverable, the SU urges the Administration to refrain from implementing high-cost measures and instead focus on consolidating ongoing reforms, particularly those aimed at strengthening technical capacity in the regions, streamlining internal processes and modernizing working methods. Stability achieved through such decision would support more effective decentralization, enhance coherence between HQ and the field, and allow resources to be more effectively directed toward the Organization’s core mandate of promoting decent work and social justice, without resorting to major cost cutting or restructuring measures.
21. Considering the existing statutory provisions that designate the SU as the sole entity authorized to represent the interests of staff and considering that the measures outlined under both Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 have significant implications for staff terms and conditions of employment (involving post reductions and/or relocations), the SU reaffirms that such measures must be subject to negotiation under the Office’s collective bargaining framework, in line with the staff rules and regulations and our collective agreement. Accordingly, the SU - aligned with the *Guidelines on Restructuring and Change Management* - is requesting the Administration to negotiate as soon as

possible under the JNC a comprehensive framework in the form of a collective agreement on workforce adjustment. These negotiations will aim to safeguard continued employment for affected staff through effective reassignment, redeployment, training and/or exchange of posts. The SU will continue to oppose any personnel policy that is based on narrow short-termism; absent of objective, transparent and equitable criteria; and lacks clear commitment to minimize the impact of the change or restructuring on job security and maintenance of employment.

22. The SU demands the utmost attention of the Administration to ensure that the Standing Orders of the GB and other applicable rules, including the ILO Constitution, are respected. According to Article 8(1) of the ILO Constitution, the DG, while responsible for the efficient conduct of the ILO, is subject to the instructions of the GB. The SU stresses that the legal framework limiting or setting the boundaries of the exercise of the discretionary power of the DG is found in the ILO Constitution, the ILO Staff Regulations, the Standing Orders of the Governing Body, and all rules and regulations in force which prescribe procedural requirements or processes to be followed, e.g. obligation to consult with all parties. In the ILO, this also includes collective agreements (ILOAT Judgment 4808) and Memorandum of understandings negotiated or concluded within the JNC.
23. Given the persistent lack of clarity, justification, and details outlined above, the SU expresses serious concern as to whether the Administration is providing the GB with sufficient background information to enable it to offer informed strategic guidance on measures that remain inadequately understood. The SU considers it essential that the GB explicitly clarify that any strategic guidance provided at this stage must not be interpreted as authorization for the implementation of structural measures that have not been fully costed, substantiated, and negotiated in accordance with established procedures.
24. The SU expresses deep concern over the impact that the proposed reforms will have across the Organization. The envisioned changes fail to address the long-standing divide between the field and HQ, between different staff categories, and between departments competing for limited resources and survival. The Administration appears to present a narrow, two-dimensional view of reforms - one in which, for example, the advancement of a single office comes at the expense of dismantling a department; where financial stability is pursued by leaving local staff behind; and where the very *raison d'être* of the Organization is put at risk. The SU welcomes genuine change and transformation that keeps the ILO relevant and alive. Its goal is not to preserve the status quo, but to promote the vision of One ILO - a united Organization built on inclusion, evidence-based decisions, and solidarity - rather than on the Administration's divisive and unsubstantiated approach to reform. The SU firmly opposes the fragmentation of the Organization and any forced redeployment that undermines staff well-being. However, this opposition is not at the expense of field colleagues, who require robust technical, administrative, and operational support to continue delivering effectively.
25. The SU strongly calls on the Administration to earn the trust of all staff - by ensuring that proposals are grounded in solid evidence, developed through fair and transparent processes, and guided by the principles of unity and mutual respect. True change must include everyone: every individual working within this Organization should be seen, valued, and able to take pride in meaningful work that fosters joy, well-being, and care.
26. The SU also reiterates its concern regarding the way the Administration communicates to staff information related to the Review process and urges it to take all necessary measures - including transparent, timely and human-centred communication - to avoid causing anxiety and negatively impacting staff mental health and well-being. The SU notes, for example, that the DG's update on

the ILO Review, published on the 6th of October 2025, referenced revised proposals - including potential contract terminations - without simultaneously releasing the updated GB paper. This lack of transparency prevented staff from fully understanding the context and content of the proposals, contributing to heightened uncertainty and distress.

27. The SU urges the Administration to share this document - its Position on the third version of the draft GB Paper - with the GB members as part of the ongoing informal consultation process.

ANNEX

Staff Union's Position Paper on the draft GB paper (B.355/INS/7) "The ILO in a changing multilateral environment: Towards better effectiveness and efficiency"

29.08.2025

1. This document provides the position of the Staff Union (SU) on the draft GB Paper GB.355/INS/7 "The ILO in a changing multilateral environment: Towards better effectiveness and efficiency" ("The Paper"). This Paper was submitted for comments to the SU late night of 14th August 2025, with a deadline for sending comments by August 29th. The SU position paper is shared exclusively for use by the Administration to assist in revising the draft of 14 August 2025 and not to be shared further by the Administration with any party/ies.
2. Taking into account that the GB Paper contains proposals that would require in depth consultation with colleagues and would be subject to negotiations because they affect the terms and conditions of work of ILO staff, the SU decided not to focus its comments directly on the document itself and instead develop a Position Paper. A draft Position Paper had been shared by the SUC on 21 August 2025 with all the SU constituencies – in all duty stations – with a request to provide feedback on key principles in the draft Position Paper by August 28th. The SU wants to acknowledge the very high participation and commitment from the staff to contribute to this process. We note that a very large number of staff expressed strong concerns with the limited time given for consultation and feedback and many also stated they had to develop positions on issues upon which they had limited information.

In their reaction to the GB Paper and to the SU Position Paper, staff have called for more comprehensive proposals that consider the realities of the various duty stations, recalling that majority of staff in the ILO are now based outside Geneva and face a number of challenges in performing their work in their respective duty stations. Staff have also strongly questioned the fact the proposals neither reflect nor respect the commitments and long-standing priorities for reforms related to equality of treatment for all staff. Any reform that targets better efficiency and effectiveness should primarily address the challenges that staff face in performing their duties and equality in their terms and conditions of employment.

3. While it has not been possible for the SU to incorporate all the information received through these consultations in the body of its Position Paper, the information can be found in Annex III. The Administration should review the information collected when redrafting its Paper for further submission to the GB session in November 2025. It should also be noted that a number of contributions go beyond the scope of the terms and conditions of employment, reflecting on how to efficiently perform our mandate. The Staff Union calls upon the Administration to further consult through the appropriate channels on these proposals and ensure that due consideration is being given to them.
4. The SU will take into account the information received and other future feedback and retains the right to raise any other issues at a future date, through established mechanisms for social dialogue, or in any way it deems appropriate, pending future drafts of the GB Paper. The SU remains committed to engage in a constructive dialogue and expects this to be mirrored by the Administration in the changing, challenging and financial constrained environment.

Summary of the SU's Position

5. A reform that weakens our capacity, destabilizes our workforce, and undermines our credibility with constituents is not revitalization, as the title of the first draft of the Paper claimed; it is devitalization. True revitalization requires clarity of vision and genuine engagement.
6. ILO staff understand that the Organization must adapt to strengthen its foundation and to better serve our constituents within a constrained financial environment. But the proposal being circulated risks doing the opposite. As ILO staff, we are the standard bearers for labour rights and social justice across every continent, in every language, for every worker. The technical heart of our work on international labour standards, and the advancement of social justice through the promotion of the ILO's Decent Work agenda must be shielded from the shifting winds of political influence.
7. At a time when a more unified ILO is needed, when we need to work in a more integrated and efficient way, the question before us is not simply organizational—it is existential. Will the reform preserve the independence, the expertise, knowledge and experience that gives value to our work, and the capacity of the organization to deliver better on its mandate through valuing and empowering its most important resource – its dedicated staff.
8. The SU is highlighting the following aspects of the Paper:
 - I. **Unjustified, un-consulted and inconsistent reform** - While the Staff Union supports the strengthening of field capacity and the addressing of the top-heavy structure, it categorically rejects the processes outlined in document GB.355/INS/7, as unjustified by a zero nominal growth budget, not adequately consulted, and inconsistent with the ILO's core values, good governance principles, regulatory framework and its duty of care towards all staff.
 - II. **Call for GB Oversight** - The SU calls on the GB to exercise robust oversight to ensure that reform ambitions do not override operational realities, staff well-being, or the ILO's normative integrity.
 - III. **Stop and reflect** - The SU demands an immediate halt to all relocations and structural changes until the following conditions are met:
 - Genuine consultations are held with the duly elected representatives of staff and through them the staff itself.
 - A comprehensive, participatory and objective risk assessment is conducted, including cost-benefit and efficiency analyses, as well as a feasibility study.
 - Alternative, less disruptive measures are fully explored.
 - IV. **Phased Implementation** - The SU proposes that any decentralization measures be piloted and phased, with built-in evaluation checkpoints, before any organization-wide rollout.
 - V. **Constructive Alternatives** - the SU reaffirms the need to consider alternative approaches with adequate risk assessments and evidence of results, looking in particular to:
 - Reinforce HQ/field capacity by redeploying resources from agreed terminations, retirements and reduction in senior management positions, fostering mobility and career paths.
 - Engage in good-faith negotiations with SU on priorities jointly identified through the JNC.
 - Leverage any financial cushion to plan a transparent, consultative, and value-driven reform that sustains a strengthened field presence and better delivery of the Office.
 - Prioritize administrative efficiency measures including travel cost controls, and business process improvements before implementing staff relocations.
 - VI. **Insistence on Full Transparency** - The SU insists on complete transparency in all cost and efficiency analyses, including:
 - Timely provision of information requested by the SU for the purposes of effective and good-faith consultations and negotiations
 - Disclosure of one-off and hidden operational costs in a timely manner.
 - Realistic timelines for the realization of projected savings.
9. The Staff Union stands ready to work towards genuine evidence-based improvements, but not at the cost of

repeating previous mistakes of UN agencies' reforms on a grander scale.

1. Introduction

10. At the 354th Session of the Governing Body (GB) in June 2025, the Chairperson of the SU Committee in her speech stressed how vital it is that the Office refrains from presenting the SU – and the staff the SU represents – with a fait accompli without first holding the necessary internal consultations and negotiations. The SU also listened to the discussions and the positions expressed by our Constituents during the Session of the GB discussing the “ILO in a changing multilateral environment towards greater effectiveness and efficiency” (for quotes from the discussion, see Annex I).
11. Three months later, it is of grave concern that events leading to the June 2025 GB session are now being repeated. The Paper (GB.355/INS/7), and the proposed measures in it, are not the result of consultations or a process of social dialogue with the SU. In fact, the sharing of the first draft of the Paper on the night of the 6th of August 2025 was the first time that the Administration has formally consulted the SU on this vastly consequential matter. Meetings where no concrete proposals are tabled – and as a result no feedback can be given – cannot be regarded as social dialogue.
12. While the Paper certainly outlines some measures that the SU can support based on the mandate it has received from staff (such as the ones related to the strengthening of the ILO's field capacity), it cannot be supported as a whole by the SU.
13. The Paper fails to provide a clear vision for the Organization's future and in its essence reduces effectiveness and efficiency measures to an overtly HQ centric and simplistic cost cutting exercise. It is seemingly flawed in its logic, with unsupported arguments, lacks any rigour of assessment underlying most of the proposed measures and fails to establish in a clear and transparent manner benefits to the constituents, while neglecting the possible impact on the Office's capacity to deliver as one.
14. More importantly, the alignment of the proposals with our current regulatory framework (i.e. Staff Regulation and Collective Agreements) requires verification. Proposals are also void of any acknowledgment, assessment and possible mitigation of the significant negative consequences the changes proposed will have on staff and their families.
15. Whilst the Paper refers to the need to ensure proper consultations and negotiations wherever appropriate, the SU, if recent experience is any measure of the seriousness and quality of such intention, is not filled with confidence.
16. Even though the Paper claims to present proposals for a 'more effective and efficient' ILO, the only element with real potential to enhance the Organization's functioning is the long-standing demand for field strengthening. By contrast, other proposals to shift significant numbers of HQ posts to lower-cost duty stations - without reinforcing the field - are not supported by evidence that they would enhance effectiveness or efficiency. Instead, they risk isolating technical specialists with global responsibilities from both field operations and Geneva-based constituents, directly contradicting the expressed concerns of GB members. This approach is sacrificing long-term effectiveness for short-term savings.
17. It is also difficult to ignore that an Administration that has been in charge of the Organization only since October 2022, ends up reversing much of its own initial reorganization to a model that largely existed before (i.e. aligning the Office structure with the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda). One wonders whether decisions regarding the 2022 reorganization were based on documented good practices. Any further reorganization by the Administration must be based on lessons learnt from previous reforms to ensure it will be effective, efficient and have the desired effect. Currently the SU questions the lack of evidence supporting this Paper and would advocate, if changes are to be made, to pilot proposed changes to ensure they have the desired effect before unilaterally imposing them across the Organization.

18. As the SU has repeatedly reaffirmed, the staff and the SU are not against change and the SU will continue to support measures that give us the means to be more effective in our work, while respecting our rights and social dialogue. It, however, will oppose by all appropriate means measures that negatively affect the employment and working conditions of staff, especially if these decisions are hastily made, disproportionate, without clearly identified benefits and if the risks are insufficiently considered and mitigated.
- As outlined below, the proposed reform raises serious concerns regarding process, governance, financial necessity and viability, impact on staff, and alignment with the ILO's own values and core mandate. In its current form the Paper fails to meet most of the negotiation principles the SU established (see Annex II).

2. Process of consultation

19. According to the ILO Staff Regulations, the SU is the sole recognized official statutory body entitled to represent the interests of the staff. It cannot be superseded or replaced in any way by other bodies like the ILO Review Team or the Sounding Board. Furthermore, it is important to recall this document entails important changes and decisions which will affect the ILO staff members' terms and conditions of employment, and consequently the Administration and the SU are bound by the obligation to negotiate its contents under our Collective Bargaining framework.
20. Any proposal that requires negotiation with the SU should not be submitted to the GB in a manner that would constrain the SU's bargaining position and pre-empt the process of good-faith negotiations. Should this be the case, it would be considered as bad faith negotiation.
21. The SU regrets that guidance from the GB to consult and negotiate in good faith with the SU has not been respected in that no genuine social dialogue on measures proposed has taken place. Structural reforms, delocalization proposals, and internal reorganization efforts are being unilaterally proposed without any consultation, transparency or accountability.
22. While the SU had the possibility to meet informally with the Review Team, the only opportunity to provide comments on substantive proposal until now from the beginning of May 2025 concerned a two-page document on the "Strengthening regional capacity by increasing field-based technical specialists funded by the Regular Budget". Even though the SU provided detailed comments, these comments were not responded to and do not appear to have been considered in the Paper. Apart from the ongoing negotiations regarding travel policy and space management, no other formal or informal consultations were held regarding any of the other measures proposed in the Paper.
23. It should be noted that neither proposal regarding the relocation of functions and departments to the Turin Centre premises, nor the establishment of a global service centre were discussed with the SU in any form. To the contrary, the SU was repeatedly made to believe that these matters were not justified under the zero nominal growth budget.
24. Even more concerning and unacceptable topics that have been the subject of longstanding priority negotiations, such as the contractual alignment, between the SU and the Administration are not being addressed, thereby depriving the collective bargaining process of its own meaning. However, the SU acknowledges and is pleased to note that the Paper refers to the need to continue current negotiations related to space allocation and travel to reach final agreement on these matters.
- The SU notes with particular concern the exclusion of specific staff categories from meaningful consultation. Development Cooperation (DC) staff, who represent more than half of ILO personnel and are integral to the Organization's delivery, have been largely absent from reform discussions despite facing immediate consequences from proposed relocations. Similarly, the suspension of critical HR policy discussions on contract alignment and personal promotions during this reform period deprives the collective bargaining process of essential elements that should be integrated into any comprehensive organizational change strategy.

25. The SU, as noted above, acknowledges that the Paper, albeit insufficiently refers to “engagement with the Staff Union as appropriate on the proposed matters”; including the ‘risk assessment strategy’, the SU nonetheless must condemn that the ‘Cost, benefits and risk mitigation’ section of the Paper was added only in the last minute, through a rushed revision, indicating an apparent lack of honest consideration and commitment to any of these processes. The SU must also condemn that the risk assessment needed does not appear to have been carried out before the development of any of the proposals in the Paper but came only as an afterthought, upon the SU’s strong criticism and listing some of the concerns the Administration should have thought about.
26. The SU must also call the attention of the DG that according to Article 8(1) of the ILO Constitution, the Director-General of the ILO, while responsible for the efficient conduct of the ILO, is subject to the instructions of the GB. The SU also wishes to recall that the discretionary decision-making power of the DG is not only determined by the rules and regulations in force, but that such power is not limitless. According to the rulings of the ILO Administrative Tribunal, the discretionary power of the Director General is subject to the following limitations:
- A decision must be based on correct facts
 - Essential facts must properly be considered
 - A decision must clearly not be based on mistaken conclusions
 - A decision cannot involve misuse (or abuse) of authority.
27. The SU wishes to point out that the Paper does not contain a section that describes the working methods of the Review Team (with a detailed description of the number of discussions it had) and the outcome of the review process. Nor does the paper offer any clarity on the degree to which feedback received from the Sounding Board or the staff contributions posted on the ILO’s staff ideas portal were reviewed and/or taken into consideration. The lack of transparency regarding the development of the content of the Paper is rather concerning particularly in view of the contradictions and inconsistencies across the Paper.
28. Finally, the SU deplores the lack of structured information and empathetic communication from the Administration, creating division amongst staff and leading to increased risk of stress and mental health issues.

3. Financial assumptions and savings projections

29. The SU observes that the Paper lacks proper and transparent costing, cost-benefit/cost-efficiency analyses and seemingly appears to overestimate savings while underestimating the costs associated with the measures. The claim that US\$48 million in initial investments (i.e. costs) will yield US\$59 million in biennial savings does not seem to be supported by evidence and does not present the related assumptions. The SU wishes to note that contrary to the first draft of the Paper, the revised version of the Paper no longer includes Annex III (‘Decisions, Costs, Savings and Timeline’) making it even more impossible to verify the accuracy of the projected costs (US\$48 million) - especially in view of the magnitude of the proposed measures.
30. The Paper notes that the 113th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted the 2026- 27 Budget at a zero nominal growth level which, considering annual inflation across all types of expenditure categories, would represent a decline of 0,4 % in real terms in the resources available to the Office for the next biennium. It also notes that at the global level, recent developments indicate that Official Development Assistance (ODA) is set for a significant decrease. Finally, the paper states that it has been prepared under the assumption that the membership of the ILO will remain stable, and that all Member States will disburse their contributions as prescribed in the Constitution. Any measures that address specific demands of constituents should be clearly identified as such so that their pertinence is adequately assessed.
31. In view of the above statements, it is of serious concern that the Paper lacks transparency and clarity on the actual amount of savings that is required for the ILO to deliver on its core mandate in the current context, and whether they exceed amounts put forward to constituents during the 354th Session of the ILO Governing Body discussing the GB document 354/INS/5 on “The ILO in a changing multilateral environment: Towards greater effectiveness and efficiency”.

32. The claimed US\$59 million biennial saving is neither necessitated nor justified by the 0.4 % decline per biennium in the resources available to the Office. The SU must stress that the referred 0.4 % decline represents US\$3.77 million in real value, as documented in the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026-2027 and other questions (ILC.113/II) under Table 1. While the revised paper in its Conclusion refers to the precariousness of the regular budget and the risk the amount of currently uncollected income represents (35.5 per cent), it ostensibly misuses an apparent 'financial exigency' based on a hypothetical scenario ("Should further payments not be received") and no full comparison to previous years.

The SU emphasizes that the Administration has failed to provide evidence-based analysis of alternative cost-saving measures that could achieve similar financial objectives without the massive disruption proposed. Internal analysis shows that the current top-heavy structure, where senior management (6.3% of staff) accounts for 10.8% of staff expenses (~\$35 million annually), with ADG positions increasing from 6 to 11 since 2021, represents a significant untapped area for immediate savings. Each ADG office costs \$811,000 annually in basic expenses alone, totalling \$8.9 million per year. The Administration's prioritization of staff relocations over addressing administrative inefficiencies, reducing senior management travel, or implementing other non-staff cost measures demonstrates a fundamental misallocation of reform priorities. To ensure full transparency and proportionality of the proposed measures the SU requests the Administration to provide detailed overview of the Organization's actual cash flow situation and liquidity projections until 2028.

4. Impact on staff

33. The SU is profoundly shocked by the Administration's apparent violation of its duty of care towards its staff and the utter lack of the human-centred approach for the proposed reform.
34. The SU acknowledges that contrary to the first draft of the GB paper, this version at least includes reference to the impact on staff but, only as an afterthought, without any meaningful or thorough contents and without establishing the necessary mechanisms for the proposed measures to truly serve and benefit staff. The impact of the proposed measures on staff should not be addressed through the quick insertion of an additional paragraph in a paper (which appears to be the case). It should have been a central and integral part of good-faith social dialogue before the development of any of the proposed measures. The SU must also note that the Paper is gender and diversity blind and lacks any consideration of the impact that the proposed measures will have on female staff, colleagues with disabilities, vulnerable individuals and colleagues on precarious contracts. Any proposed organizational restructuring should be grounded in a thorough assessment from the perspective of gender equality and diversity.
35. The Paper entails important changes and decisions which will affect the ILO staff terms and conditions of employment. The following are reminders of the legal framework in which the Director General and ILO administration must respect at all times: articles nos. 0.1, 10.1, 14.1, 14.6; 14.7 of the Staff Regulation; the 2000 Recognition and Procedural Agreement between the Office and the Union further and in particular article 2, article 6, 7; Judgment No. 4808 under which the ILO Administrative Tribunal recalled "that a collective agreement becomes part of the law of the international civil service and should be applied in accordance with its terms and the intention of its authors." (consideration 9).
36. While the ILO Declaration of Philadelphia clearly states and reaffirms that labour is not a commodity, the Administration treats its employees exactly as such with complete disrespect to the technical expertise and skills its staff brings. It treats staff either with the cynical presumption of staff not having any other option but to accept proposed changes or that any loss of expertise can easily and quickly be replaced – thereby wilfully undermining the technical capacity of the Organization to deliver on its mandate.
37. The reform process that affects staff must be based on objective criteria, respect ILO Staff regulations, IGDS's, ILO JNC Guidelines on Managing Change and Restructuring Processes and any other applicable rules and should be done in continuous consultation and/or negotiation with the Staff Union. The whole implementation should focus on providing every chance to all affected staff members to not only maintain their employment but also provides opportunities for career progression and mitigates to the extent possible the impact incurred from

non-extensions of contracts or voluntary terminations due to personal circumstances. The reform should consider as a priority in-house expertise already available amongst NO, GS, P staff willing and able to change duty station or functions (e.g. GS staff members qualified for P staff positions or DC colleagues).

38. The SU categorically rejects any provision in the proposals that could result in the forced termination of General Service (GS) contracts, considering such actions as deeply unjust, harmful to staff morale, contrary to the principles of fair and respectful workforce management, and a direct violation of staff rights and job security. The SU notes that the Paper speaks to “avoiding, to the extent possible, any unilateral termination...” and that the “Office will also consider as much as possible redeployment of affected GS Staff to available vacant positions”. However, the Administration fails to put forward concrete measures as to how it seeks to achieve that. The SU remains committed to working with the Administration on these measures and hopes that the commitment made in the Paper will materialize in the safeguarding of GS positions especially in view of the crucial work they provide for the day-to-day operations of the Office. In this regard, the SU calls for clarification on the proposed modalities and the consequences of any possible transfer of GS staff to other duty stations on their status and what ‘non-locally recruited GS staff category’ entails. The SU also requests clarification on how the note of “general service (GS) category...must not normally be transferred to other duty station” complies with paras. 14-20 (‘job swaps’) of IGDS 689 on career development and para. 9 (functional mobility) of IGDS 688 on mobility.
39. Regarding the agreed termination, the Paper provides information on the total number of applications submitted (141 so far) without addressing how many of those will be accepted - a consideration that should matter gravely for financial projections and the structure of the organization especially in view of the renewed call for applications in the DG’s staff communication published on ILO intranet on the 15th of August 2025; how exactly capacity lost will be mitigated so that the Office’s capacity and expertise to deliver on its mandate does not suffer gravely; how many of these positions will be transferred to the field and on the basis of what criteria. The SU also notes that the Paper, omits to disaggregate data on the profiles of the current applicants.
40. As for the matter of relocations, the SU is extremely alarmed by the number of staff impacted by the proposed measures, a number that is dramatically higher than the already questionably high number presented in the GB document in June 2025. This paper does not include detailed data on relocations from other duty stations than Geneva. It speaks to approximately 390 staff being relocated from Geneva. This is equivalent to 33% of HQ staff (based on the staff data as of 31 December 2024), noting that this number does not include any staff based at HQ who may have applied for an agreed termination whose positions as stated in this paper “made vacant through this procedure will either be abolished, or reprofiled, and/or downgraded. Some vacant headquarters positions will be transferred to the field ...” .
41. The SU notes that, contrary to the first draft that included concrete figures, the revised Paper offers only a redacted summary of the relocations and does not list how many and which professional staff positions are planned to be relocated to DWTs and similarly with regards to DCOMM, how many and which positions will be relocated to Turin, nor does it account for the number of associated GS staff impacted by the relocations.
42. The Paper is also silent on short term staff and staff on precarious employment conditions whose contracts are ending in December 2025 and has no information as to whether they will be offered contracts in 2026.
43. As noted above, in spite of the scale of staff impacted, the Paper does not acknowledge or put forward any assessment of the risks associated with the proposed changes and omits any proper strategy to mitigate associated risks and losses. Nor does the Paper speak to how affected staff and families will be supported and what will be the conditions of their redeployment (including the exact legal process through which such redeployment will be carried out, implications on IGDS on mobility, and the associated HQ processes, cost, policies and upskilling etc.).
44. The Paper outlines four relocation strategies but - without any proper justification - treats each in different

ways leading to inconsistencies both in terms of the justification for the proposed measures, treatment of staff and the mitigation of the potential impact.

45. While the Paper presents some reasoning and longer term thinking regarding the redeployment of technical specialists to the field, there is no justification, in substantive terms, presented for the relocation of the organizational units - all of which are integral and crucial parts of the Organization's core technical and oversight capacities - to ITC Turin or other locations. Contrary to a vague reference to 'significant financial and strategic advantages', the only argument that is in essence there for such a relocation is cost saving (using empty space in Turin without providing any analysis or data for it being the case or any costing for what moving 150 staff to Turin would entail in institutional accommodation).
46. The Paper provides no evidenced assessment on the viability of Turin or other proposed locations to accommodate transferred staff in such a short period of time. Nor does it take into account the availability of the required expertise at local level and its actual availability to ensure the right level of support from an administrative and financial point of view. This analysis should not only include feasibility and cost implication of refurbishing and redesigning facilities present in Turin but also provide more comprehensive assessment of the accommodation offered by Turin as a city to arriving colleagues (including the potential legal requirements for residence of staff and their families from various countries).
47. The Paper also omits addressing the fact that staff at ITC/Turin fall under different staff regulations and provides no clarity regarding the implications of this for ITC and ILO staff only noting that the units transferred will remain an integral part of headquarters. The SU calls for clarification on the proposed status of staff who may be transferred.
48. Regarding DC staff, the SU must raise with surprise that the Administration seemingly deemed it acceptable to deal with the proposed relocation of a 130 DC-funded staff (out of the 216) through the mentioning of this in a single short paragraph without offering any justification or details for the proposal. The SU questions how such a consequential decision, that is not solely for the Administration to make, on such a complex issue ended up being proposed with so little understanding of why and how it can be done and what the risks and consequences would be in terms of project effectiveness and access to further resources. The Paper provides no solution, for example, on how to deal with: staff who are funded by multiple projects covering a range of countries pertaining to different regions, projects of multiple funds; the guaranteeing of adequate office space elsewhere that would require budget revisions under each donor agreement; the disruption of such relocations on delivery of project outcomes that are already up to short deadlines.
49. The SU also deeply regrets that all commitments from the DG upon the harmonization of the contractual situation of DC staff with RB staff as well as their recognition has stalled. This should have been a key consideration in improving effectiveness and efficiency in the whole organization, especially considering the large number of DC staff in the ILO staff structure, where they represent more than half of ILO staff.
50. Cost saving at this scale is simply not required under the zero nominal growth budget scenario – as presented above. It will nonetheless lead to extreme consequences both in terms of technical expertise, delivery and personal lives – risks that are not at all addressed or mitigated in the Paper.
51. The SU notes that the Paper states "All these initiatives will be managed ensuring proper consultations -and negotiation whenever appropriate- with the Staff Union, in line with the ILO Joint Negotiation Committee Guidelines on Managing Change and Restructuring Processes. Budgeting for staff and non-staff costs will be ensured through the regular programme and budget process." and welcomes the statement and awaits the commencement of these consultations and negotiations.
52. The SU raises with utmost concern the implications of the above measures on the Office's technical capacity and role of centralized/global policy work and the de facto establishment of dual headquarters with one in

Geneva and another in Turin. Not only is this contrary to the concept of 'One ILO' but will also move significant parts of technical expertise to Turin – being cut off from constituents, permanent missions and other departments. Without due consideration of the consequences of possible attrition of staff with a highly unique and specialized knowledge that is of critical importance to the ILO and constituents, relocation measures presented in the Paper may likely result in a significant dilution of technical capacity and operational fragmentation risking the Organization's delivery on its core mandate. It will also likely damage UN coordination, One UN Activities and the overall UN community in Geneva servicing constituents that will retain their residency in Geneva.

53. The SU requests confirmation that relocating a significant portion of HQ staff to Turin does not change the seat of the Organization which, according to Article 6 of the ILO Constitution, "... shall be decided by the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the delegates present".
54. When it comes to the possible future establishment of a global service centre and the "transfer" of initially 50 professional staff from Geneva and increasing in the long term to 90 positions, the SU notes with concern the reference to 'a location offering substantial cost reductions due to salary differentials'. The SU must again reiterate, that any proposal should take a human-centred approach beyond financial considerations - the insertion of half a sentence of "...considering other specific relocation criteria (security, quality of health support etc.)" in the revised version of the Paper does not meet the very basic criteria of what human-centred approach means, and the duty of care that the Office should adhere to.
- The SU notes the Administration's failure to provide adequate details on the proposed Global Service Center's operational modalities, including whether it will require 24/7 operations across multiple time zones and the impact on field HR, Administrative and Finance colleagues who may face job losses or forced relocations. The lack of clarity on service delivery models and the relationship between the Center and existing field service sections has created heightened anxiety among staff. The Administration must clarify how the dismantling of integrated service departments (such as HRD's oversight of the entire employment lifecycle) will affect service quality, continuity, and accountability, and provide evidence that centralized services will maintain effectiveness while achieving projected savings.
55. While the SU supports the proposal of field strengthening, it must note with regret that the Paper remains disproportionately HQ centric and leaves many questions unaddressed, potentially compromising the direction and potential positive outcome of the initiative. The SU wishes to highlight some key considerations shared already with the Administration in that respect that were neither adequately addressed nor taken into account.
56. In general, the SU is of the view that the current proposal insufficiently addresses the strategic depth required for such organizational change. While the document refers to an assessment carried out with the five Regional Offices with preliminary inputs from the field, the Paper:
- does not clarify how it arrived at the proposal of 72 specialists to be redeployed to the field;
 - fails to establish in concrete terms how the decentralization of RB technical positions will be embedded within a coherent talent development strategy;
 - does not identify what are the objective criteria for the geographical and thematic allocation of new positions;
 - does not describe how risks associated with such redeployment will be addressed (e.g. tension across contract types and duty stations);
 - does not show the evidence linking the reinforcement of Decent Work Teams with more effective delivery;
 - does not explain how the needs generated by the redeployment of additional professional staff will be addressed (e.g. through increased need for general service staff).
57. The proposed measures should be designed with in depth consultations within global technical teams to ensure continuity and further improvement in the way we deliver on our global mandate and the potential impact on workload and working conditions.

58. The SU is ready to work with the Administration on the proper development and implementation of an adequate strategy for field strengthening. However, it questions how the implementation of the proposed reform is viable in the context of zero nominal growth budget, especially in view of the considerable cost implications of the other proposed measures (agreed terminations, relocations, transfers).
59. The SU is also concerned by the apparent discretion left with Departments in identifying which of the proposed staff under various technical areas will be redeployed from HQ posing significant risk to fairness, transparency and accountability. While the document outlines various steps to be followed upon the GB's endorsement of the underlying principles of the proposal, the SU questions the proposed timeline as being unrealistic and is also of the view that a more consultative and phased approach with a pilot phase would be better suited to inform future adjustments and ensure sustainable implementation. This should include negotiation on clear criteria to determine any possible relocation of positions and staff.
60. Regarding the Regional Offices, the SU must strongly recall the important consideration, also raised by the constituents themselves, of the record of potential host countries in terms of ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions, especially the fundamental ones. The SU recalls as well that any relocation of Regional Offices such as Europe to Budapest and Arab States to Doha need to respect proper consultation processes, take into account the risk of losing talents (including national staff in Beirut), increasing stress level for colleagues, the duty of care of the Office to its staff, true cost effectiveness, the need for alternative and phased approaches, and the specific considerations related to diverse national contexts. Furthermore, the SU is strongly concerned with the proposal regarding branch offices in terms of the change in the branch office's funding and cost sharing arrangements, and the potential deterioration of these colleagues' working conditions.

5. Contradictions, inconsistencies and technical observations

In addition to the information below, extensive valuable information from the consultations with the SU constituencies can be found in Annex III.

61. While the SU will continue to firmly adhere to its role and position in defending the rights and working conditions of staff it represents, in view of the scale and possible consequences of the proposed measures, it must highlight some of the key contradictions, inconsistencies and misconceptions presented by the Paper. This list is not exhaustive.
62. The SU is of the view that this is critical in view of the lack of transparency and accountability through which the Paper was developed, including lack of meaningful engagement with heads of Departments affected severely by the proposed changes.
 - From the outset the SU must express its disappointment and dissatisfaction with the Paper as it fails to establish what effectiveness and efficiency mean for the ILO, on which assumptions they rely in the current context, and how these concepts are planned to be operationalized and measured.
 - Proposals of this magnitude should only be based on carefully considered data (e.g. number of technical specialists that could be redeployed from HQ appears inaccurate) and adequate understanding of roles/needs regionally and globally (e.g. mapping of technical specialists by area of expertise and location) that must be verified by respective Heads of Departments before being submitted to the GB.
 - The Paper also fails to address in detail key efficiency and effectiveness measures falling under the business processes – an issue that has been called upon by both staff and constituents. The Paper simply leaves a paragraph indicating that an assessment will be carried out with results reported to the GB in March 2026. The SU strongly condemns that yet again, Administration prioritized cost saving through staff cost as opposed to non-staff cost related measures.
 - While the SU welcomes the inclusion of proposals under “Structure and organization of the Office”, in line with requests made by constituents, it must note the lack of adequate reasoning put forward to any of those changes and the need for consultation with the SU on the reprofiling of the positions.

- The SU must note with concern that the Paper takes a rather narrow, and seemingly discretionary, selection on what constitutes the ILO's normative work (STANDARDS, GOVERNANCE and Sectoral Policies) and overlooks the important normative functions other technical Departments (Statistics, Employment, Enterprises, Research, Work Quality and Social Protection, OSH) proposed to be relocated to Turin, play. In particular, it fails to reflect on the primary standard setting and normative role of Statistics, serving as the secretariat for the ICLS and to address the consequences of removing Statistics from servicing the ICLS in Geneva. Relocating technical departments with normative functions to Turin poses a direct risk to the Organization's ability to deliver high-quality technical services to constituents during the ILC and GB and other technical meetings of experts.
- There is a cherry-picking reference to some departments or branches, and silence on some others, such as DEVINVEST, GEDI, Social Finance adding to the anxiety of staff working in these departments/branches
- The SU notes with concern that the proposed relocation of oversight departments (EVAL and IAO), if carried out, may compromise essential accountability and transparency functions.
- The SU notes the possible inconsistency in the relocation of RO for Europe and Central Asia while maintaining the Regional Director and one professional staff member in Geneva.
- The SU also observes that the Paper proposes an expansion of the number of National Coordinators, but there is no evidence that lessons learnt from the current national coordinator system and its limitations and unresolved issues have been taken into account.
- The real potential of Artificial Intelligence to improve efficiency deserves more attention and forward-looking vision on how this would contribute to empower staff while providing adequate safeguards, learning from ILO research and responding to the new ways of working and the specific calls from the GB members.
- The SU also has questions in terms of the level of coordination with the current processes under the UN80 reform agenda and how these would affect ILO workstreams and ways of working.

6. Lessons learnt from reforms in other UN Agencies

63. The SU notes with grave concern that this planned reform seemingly mirrors, in both method and substance, failed reforms implemented in other UN Agencies.
64. Reports of previous reforms in IFAD¹ identified serious shortcomings:
- Over-ambitious scope and scale without an adequate feasibility study.
 - Highly compressed timelines for both planning and implementation without feasibility study and impact assessment.
 - Top-down and unilateral decision-making with non-existent staff and stakeholder consultation.
 - Lack of evidence-based rationale for relocation and restructuring decisions.
 - Inadequate human resources and budget planning, leading to operational disruption.
 - Weakened board oversight through lack of transparent and holistic assessment and reporting.
65. The SU also recalls with concern lessons from other UN system experiences, where relocations or reorganizations undertaken without sufficient preparation resulted in operational and financial difficulties. For example, the relocation of FAO corporate services to Budapest, which involved the transfer of 95 positions, was later reviewed by the Joint Inspection Unit. The report to the FAO Finance Committee² highlighted:
- Inadequate preparation of the host city, which lacked the infrastructure and administrative support to absorb a large-scale relocation.
 - Implementation delays that undermined continuity of core services and created operational bottlenecks.
 - Unforeseen additional costs for re-establishing functions and supporting staff, with overlapping costs during the transition outweighing projected savings.

¹ See <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/138/docs/EB-2023-138-R-5.pdf>; □

² See <https://www.fao.org/4/ma526e/ma526e.pdf>

- A failure to fully anticipate the institutional and logistical challenges of moving specialized functions, leading to disruption rather than efficiency.
66. Similarly, the relocation of OCHA headquarters functions to Istanbul and The Hague illustrates the risks of insufficiently justified or poorly planned moves. Audit³ findings noted:
- Relocation decisions made without clear justification, with arbitrary selection of posts.
 - The splitting of established teams across multiple duty stations, undermining collaboration and staff morale.
 - Staff frequently required to travel back to Geneva to engage with main partners, generating substantial additional costs.
 - The absence of a detailed analysis of short- and long-term costs, resulting in unforeseen expenditures for storage, logistics, and travel.
67. The above documented weaknesses caused long-lasting damage to delivery, staff morale, and institutional memory.
68. The proposed ILO reform is larger in scale, shorter in timeframe, and comes with an even shorter planning phase, potentially amplifying risks documented in relation to the above reforms. Lessons that should have been learnt have been disregarded. It is vital that these mistakes are not replicated nor amplified.

7. Conclusion and what the SU demands

69. The SU believes that the ILO's tripartite mandate and normative functions depend on stability, deep institutional knowledge, and constituent trust while at the same time recognizing the importance to innovate and improve.
70. The proposed reform threatens these foundations because of the following potential risks:
- Loss in credibility of the Office and undermining of labour standards implementation if the ILO disregards its own core values during restructuring;
 - Loss of the confidence of staff in the leadership to foster inclusive, relevant and effective change;
 - Fragmentation of expertise: relocating functions to multiple hubs risks breaking the integrated policy and programming approach the ILO is known for;
 - Relocation without reprofiling: relocating technical activity to field locations without reprofiling it, increasing travel costs without improving ground delivery;
 - Dilution of the importance of field strengthening
 - Risk of chaos because lack of consideration of administrative and work processes in the new proposed settings
 - Loss of institutional memory through loss of technical and administrative expertise;
 - Disrupting service to constituents: transition periods, recruitment lags, and broken reporting lines will impair technical cooperation and standard-setting support;
 - Erosion of Geneva as a strategic centre: the net effect of mass relocation is a weakening of the headquarters' capacity to act as the unified political and technical anchor.
71. The reform process, as currently designed, stands in tension with the ILO's own principles:
- Social justice and decent work start with our own workplace practices, these changes risk undermining job security, fair treatment, and meaningful consultation for ILO staff.
 - Tripartism is built on dialogue, but internally, this reform follows a unilateral restructuring approach rather than a consensus-building process.
 - Evidence-based policy is a core ILO strength, yet the reform relies on projected savings rather than robust operational gains.
 - Social dialogue is part of the DNA of the Organization. Any reform needs to be conducted in genuine

³ See <https://oios.un.org/zh/file/10091/download?token=KLwhMrUP>

dialogue and collective bargaining. Staff need to be part of any reform process and be considered as an engine for change.

72. **In conclusion**, a reform that weakens our capacity, destabilizes our workforce, and undermines our credibility with constituents is not revitalization, as the title of the first draft of the GB paper claimed; it is devitalization. True revitalization requires clarity of vision and genuine engagement.
73. ILO staff understand that the organization must adapt to strengthen its foundation and to better serve our constituents in a constrained financial environment. The proposal being circulated risks doing the opposite. As ILO staff, we are the standard bearers for labour rights and social justice across every continent, in every language, for every worker. The technical heart of our work on international labour standards, on the protection of workers' rights—must be shielded from the shifting winds of political influence.
74. In this hour when a more unified ILO is needed, when we need to work in a more integrated and efficient way, the question before us is not simply organizational—it is existential. Will the reform preserve the independence, the effectiveness the efficiency, that gives value to our work, and the capacity of the organization to deliver better on its mandate through valuing and empowerment of its most important resource – its dedicated staff?
75. The SU is highlighting the following aspects of the Paper:
- I. **Unjustified, un-consulted and inconsistent reform** - While the Staff Union supports the strengthening of field capacity and the addressing of top-heavy structure, it categorically rejects the processes outlined in document GB.355/INS/7, as unjustified by a zero nominal growth budget, not adequately consulted, and inconsistent with the ILO's core values, good governance principles, regulatory framework and its duty of care towards all staff.
 - II. **Call for GB Oversight** - The SU calls on the GB to exercise robust oversight to ensure that reform ambitions do not override operational realities, staff well-being, or the ILO's normative integrity.
 - III. **Stop and reflect** - The SU demands an immediate halt to all relocations and structural changes until the following conditions are met:
 - Genuine consultations are held with the duly elected representatives of staff and through them the staff itself.
 - A comprehensive, participatory and objective risk assessment is conducted, including cost-benefit and efficiency analyses, as well as a feasibility study.
 - Alternative, less disruptive measures are fully explored.
 - IV. **Phased Implementation** - The SU proposes that any decentralization measures be **piloted and phased**, with built-in evaluation checkpoints, before any organization-wide rollout.
 - V. **Constructive Alternatives** - the SU reaffirms the need to consider alternative approaches with adequate risk assessments and evidence of results, looking in particular to:
 - Reinforce HQ/field capacity by redeploying resources from agreed terminations, retirements and reduction in senior management positions, fostering mobility and career paths.
 - Engage in good-faith negotiations with SU on priorities jointly identified through the JNC.
 - Leverage any financial cushion to plan a transparent, consultative, and value- driven reform that sustains a strengthened field presence and better delivery of the Office.
 - Prioritize administrative efficiency measures including travel cost controls, and business process improvements before implementing staff relocations.
 - VI. **Insistence on Full Transparency** - The SU insists on complete transparency in all cost and efficiency analyses, including:
 - Timely provision of information requested by the SU for the purposes of effective and good-faith consultations and negotiations
 - Disclosure of one-off and hidden operational costs in a timely manner.
 - Realistic timelines for the realization of projected savings.
76. The Staff Union stands ready to work towards genuine evidence-based improvements, but not at the cost of repeating a known, documented failure on a grander scale.

Annex I

Interventions from the 354th Session of the ILO Governing Body discussing the GB document 354/INS/5 on “The ILO in a changing multilateral environment: Towards greater effectiveness and efficiency”.

- ✓ *“We expect full consultation and negotiation with the staff union and a clear commitment to preserve the core mandate of the ILO and prevent fragmentation of multilateralism.” (Workers Group)*
- ✓ *“We are not in favor of a delocalization of departments to different locations because we understand the ILO as one ILO” (Workers Group)*
- ✓ *“Moving departments out of Geneva will not strengthen technical cooperation but make collaboration between departments more challenging. The policy work must remain in Geneva.” (Employers Group)*
- ✓ *“...the employers could call for much stronger and more visible enterprise agenda supporting particularly small and medium enterprises within the ILO strategic framework.” (Employers Group)*
- ✓ *“GRULAC is aware of the fact that the quality of human resources is essential to comply with the mandates of the office and that’s why we agree that it’s important to keep our focus human-centered in this backdrop of so much change.” (GRULAC)*
- ✓ *“... although we think that relocating staff from Geneva to the regions will be a fundamental step to bring the office closer to the needs of the constituents, nevertheless we need to do this carefully with the idea of balance in mind to safeguard the working conditions of the officials and keep the office efficient” (GRULAC)*
- ✓ *“We also expect the office to consider the impact of ILO staff as a key consideration when deciding on any specific measure. (...) the ILO staff with their deep expertise are the ILO’s most important resource” (IMEC)*
- ✓ *“The reform of the ILO cannot proceed as a technocratic process detached from the human consequences” (Africa Group)*
- ✓ *“We underline the importance of social dialogue, the involvement of ILO staff in the process and the human-centered approach.” (EU)*
- ✓ *“ILO more than any other agency in the UN has the fundamental obligation to lead by example and to practice what it preaches: Meaningful consultation and negotiating change through social dialogue and collective bargaining.” (Workers Group)*
- ✓ *“(...) very often collective bargaining leads to better results for the workers involved because they collectively fight for improvement in their workplace, in their sector, and yes, that leads then to better outcomes, which basically is one argument why to organize in a trade union, because it gives you better results.” (Workers Group)*
- ✓ *We recommended the ILO to lead by example, also when it comes to social dialogue and collective bargaining, and we will really keep an eye on how this further develops between the two groups.(Workers Group)*

Annex II:

Aspirational SU Principles for the ILO Review Process

1. Core Principles

Cost saving and efficiency measures must be balanced against the following key principles:

Equity and fairness

- Ensure fair application across staff categories (G, NO and P), contract types (TC and RB) and duty stations;
- Prevent discrimination and uphold diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Protect and respect acquired rights, and
- Contribute to overall improved conditions of work.

Proportionality

- Prioritize staff retention by focusing on reduction of non-staff costs;
- To the extent possible, be temporary and strictly proportionate to the immediate needs of the Organization;
- Avoid placing a disproportionate burden on any one group of staff, and
- Rely on transparent and objective criteria.

Transparency

- Be based on clear evidence (data, evaluations), supported by detailed cost-benefit, risk and efficiency analyses;
- Distinguish between short-term and more structural or permanent measures;
- Ensure that information (including the evidence used for cost-benefit and efficiency analyses, as has been requested by the SU throughout) is shared in a timely, accessible, and comprehensible manner;
- Lead to decisions based on objective, pre-defined criteria;
- Decisions on the use of savings should be traceable.

Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability

- Monitoring mechanisms and periodic reviews (with the involvement of the Staff Union) must evaluate the outcomes, and make any needed adjustments.
- Mitigation of adverse impacts must be ensured.
- Train managers to support implementation and ensure full accountability;
- Limit political appointments to promote the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity.

2. ILO Staff Union Vision

- The ILO must lead by example in its commitment to collective bargaining, social dialogue and decent work.
- Staff are considered and treated as an asset as opposed to a cost or commodity.
- All staff contribute to the ILO's mandate and must be equally valued – we must continue working toward “One ILO”.
- Employment security must be ensured for all staff, and effective worker protections put in place, to ensure the independence and long-term sustainability of the Organization, and the international civil service.
- The ILO's tripartite structure should be protected and valued;

3. Commitment to good faith negotiation

- The process adheres to the Recognition and Procedural Agreement and relevant international standards on collective bargaining and social dialogue.
- Parties should commit to good faith negotiations and the pursuit of consensus.
- Process should be based on trust, mutual commitment and transparency.
- Information must be provided in a timely manner (with due regard for confidentiality).
- Representatives must have the mandate to negotiate on behalf of their party.

Annex III

Constituencies Resolutions

See below the list of Resolutions and contributions received from the SU constituencies, by 29/08/2025. The texts are in the attached folder.

List of constituencies (alphabetical order)	Resolutions and specific contributions
Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)	Abidjan Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Abuja (Nigeria)	Abuja Resolution in Support of the Staff Union
ACTRAV	ACTRAV Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Ankara (Turkey)	<i>Ankara specific contribution</i>
Antananarivo (Madagascar)	Antananarivo Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Arab States duty stations : (Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Doha, Erbil, Jerusalem, Kuwait, Sanaa)	Arab States duty stations Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Bangkok (Thailand)	Bangkok Resolution in support of the Staff Union <i>Bangkok additional contribution</i>
Beijing (China)	Beijing Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Budapest (Hungary)	<i>Budapest specific contribution</i>
Buenos Aires (Argentina)	Buenos Aires Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Cairo (Egypt)	Cairo Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Colombo (Sri Lanka)	Colombo Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Dakar (Senegal)	Dakar Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Dar es Salam (Tanzania, United Republic of)	Dar es Salam Resolution in support of the Staff Union
DCOMM (INTERNALCOM – NEWS – STRATCOM)	DCOMM Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Dhaka (Bangladesh)	Dhaka Resolution in support in the Staff Union
EMPLOYMENT (SKILLS – EMPLAB – EMPINVEST)	EMPLOYMENT Resolution in support of the Staff Union
ENTERPRISES (MSME – SOCIAL FINANCE – MULTI/RBC – COOP/SSE)	ENTERPRISES Resolution in support of the Staff Union
FINANCE (TREASURY – BUDFIN – FIN/SAR)	FINANCE Resolution support of the Staff Union
GOVERNANCE (BETTERWORK – FUNDAMENTALS)	BETTERWORK – FUNDAMENTALS Resolution in support of the Staff Union
GOVERNANCE (LABGOV)	LABGOV Resolution in support of the Staff Union
GOVERNANCE (OSHE)	OSHE Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Hanoi (Viet Nam)	Hanoi Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Harare (Zimbabwe)	Harare Resolution in support of the Staff Union
HRD (HR/OPS – HR/STR – HR/TALENT – SWO)	HRD Resolution in support of the Staff Union
HRD (MEDSERV)	MEDSERV Resolution in support of the Staff Union
IAO, EVAL	EVAL Resolution in support of the Staff Union
IAO, EVAL	IAO Resolution in support of the Staff Union
INFOTEC	INFOTEC Resolution in support of the Staff Union
INTSERV	INTSERV Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Islamabad (Pakistan)	Islamabad Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Kathmandu (Nepal)	Kathmandu Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Kinshasa (Congo, Dem. Rep. of)	Kinshasa Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Lima (Peru)	Lima Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Lusaka (Zambia)	Lusaka Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Mexico (Mexico)	Mexico Resolution in support of the Staff Union
PARTNERSHIPS (UNIFICS – DCSU – ESPU – DPRU)	<i>PARTNERSHIPS specific contribution</i>
Phnom Penh (Cambodia)	Phnom Penh Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Port-of-Spain (Trinidad and Tobago)	Port-of-Spain Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Pretoria (South Africa)	Pretoria Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Priority Action Programmes and MSU (DDG)	Priority Action Programmes and MSU Resolution in support of the Staff Union
RELMEETINGS (OFFCONF – OFFDOC)	RELMEETINGS Resolution in support of the Staff Union
RESEARCH (REVUE)	RESEARCH Resolution in support of the Staff Union <i>RESEARCH additional contribution</i> <i>RESEARCH additional contribution_2</i>
San José (Costa Rica)	San José Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Santiago (Chile)	Santiago Resolution in support of the Staff Union
SECTOR (FACT – EEM – SERVICES – MARITIME)	SECTOR Resolution in support of the Staff Union
STATISTICS (SSM – DPA – RMSS – KMS)	STATISTICS Resolution in support of the Staff Union
TR/CF / Procurement	TR CF Procurement Resolution in support of the Staff Union
USP (POLICY – PPKS -PFACTS – ASU)	USP Resolution in support of the Staff Union
WORKQUALITY (MIGRANT – GEDI – INWORK)	WORKQUALITY Resolution in support of the Staff Union <i>WORKQUALITY additional contribution</i>
Yangon (Myanmar)	Yangon Resolution in support of the Staff Union
Yaounde (Cameroon)	Yaounde Resolution in support of the Staff Union