

# C154 - Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)

**Convention concerning the Promotion of Collective Bargaining  
(Entry into force: 11 Aug 1983)**

**Adoption: Geneva, 67th ILC session (03 Jun 1981)**

**Status: Up-to-date instrument (Technical Convention).**

**Convention may be denounced: 11 Aug 2023 - 11 Aug 2024**

## **Preamble**

**T**he General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Sixty-seventh Session on 3 June 1981, and

Reaffirming the provision of the Declaration of Philadelphia recognising "the solemn obligation of the International Labour

Organisation to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve ... the effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining", and noting that this principle is "fully applicable to all people everywhere", and

Having regard to the key importance of existing international standards contained in the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948, the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949, the Collective Agreements Recommendation, 1951, the Voluntary Conciliation and Arbitration Recommendation, 1951, the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention and Recommendation, 1978, and the Labour Administration Convention and Recommendation, 1978, and

Considering that it is desirable to make greater efforts to achieve the objectives of these standards and, particularly, the general principles set out in Article 4 of the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949, and in Paragraph 1 of the Collective Agreements Recommendation, 1951, and

Considering accordingly that these standards should be complemented by appropriate measures based on them and aimed at promoting free and voluntary collective bargaining, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to the promotion of collective bargaining, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of an international Convention,

adopts this nineteenth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and eighty-one the following Convention, which may be cited as the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981:

# PART I. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

## Article 1

1. This Convention applies to all branches of economic activity.
2. The extent to which the guarantees provided for in this Convention apply to the armed forces and the police may be determined by national laws or regulations or national practice.
3. As regards the public service, special modalities of application of this Convention may be fixed by national laws or regulations or national practice.

## Article 2

For the purpose of this Convention the term **collective bargaining** extends to all negotiations which take place between an employer, a group of employers or one or more employers' organisations, on the one hand, and one or more workers' organisations, on the other, for--

- (a) determining working conditions and terms of employment; and/or
- (b) regulating relations between employers and workers; and/or
- (c) regulating relations between employers or their organisations and a workers' organisation or workers' organisations.

## Article 3

1. Where national law or practice recognises the existence of workers' representatives as defined in Article 3, subparagraph (b), of the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971, national law or practice may determine the extent to which the term **collective bargaining** shall

also extend, for the purpose of this Convention, to negotiations with these representatives.

2. 2. Where, in pursuance of paragraph 1 of this Article, the term ***collective bargaining*** also includes negotiations with the workers' representatives referred to in that paragraph, appropriate measures shall be taken, wherever necessary, to ensure that the existence of these representatives is not used to undermine the position of the workers' organisations concerned.

## **PART II. METHODS OF APPLICATION**

### **Article 4**

The provisions of this Convention shall, in so far as they are not otherwise made effective by means of collective agreements, arbitration awards or in such other manner as may be consistent with national practice, be given effect by national laws or regulations.

## **PART III. PROMOTION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

### **Article 5**

1. 1. Measures adapted to national conditions shall be taken to promote collective bargaining.
2. 2. The aims of the measures referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be the following:
  - (a) collective bargaining should be made possible for all employers and all groups of workers in the branches of activity covered by this Convention;
  - (b) collective bargaining should be progressively extended to all matters covered by subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) of Article 2 of this Convention;

- (c) the establishment of rules of procedure agreed between employers' and workers' organisations should be encouraged;
- (d) collective bargaining should not be hampered by the absence of rules governing the procedure to be used or by the inadequacy or inappropriateness of such rules;
- (e) bodies and procedures for the settlement of labour disputes should be so conceived as to contribute to the promotion of collective bargaining.

**Article 6**

The provisions of this Convention do not preclude the operation of industrial relations systems in which collective bargaining takes place within the framework of conciliation and/or arbitration machinery or institutions, in which machinery or institutions the parties to the collective bargaining process voluntarily participate.

**Article 7**

Measures taken by public authorities to encourage and promote the development of collective bargaining shall be the subject of prior consultation and, whenever possible, agreement between public authorities and employers' and workers' organisations.

**Article 8**

The measures taken with a view to promoting collective bargaining shall not be so conceived or applied as to hamper the freedom of collective bargaining.

## **PART IV. FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 9**

This Convention does not revise any existing Convention or Recommendation.

### **Article 10**

The formal ratifications of this Convention shall be communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration.

### **Article 11**

1. 1. This Convention shall be binding only upon those Members of the International Labour Organisation whose ratifications have been registered with the Director-General.
2. 2. It shall come into force twelve months after the date on which the ratifications of two Members have been registered with the Director-General.
3. 3. Thereafter, this Convention shall come into force for any Member twelve months after the date on which its ratification has been registered.

### **Article 12**

1. 1. A Member which has ratified this Convention may denounce it after the expiration of ten years from the date on which the Convention first comes into force, by an act communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration. Such denunciation shall not take effect until one year after the date on which it is registered.
2. 2. Each Member which has ratified this Convention and which does not, within the year following the expiration of the period of ten years mentioned in the preceding paragraph, exercise the right of denunciation provided for

in this Article, will be bound for another period of ten years and, thereafter, may denounce this Convention at the expiration of each period of ten years under the terms provided for in this Article.

**Article 13**

1. 1. The Director-General of the International Labour Office shall notify all Members of the International Labour Organisation of the registration of all ratifications and denunciations communicated to him by the Members of the Organisation.
2. 2. When notifying the Members of the Organisation of the registration of the second ratification communicated to him, the Director-General shall draw the attention of the Members of the Organisation to the date upon which the Convention will come into force.

**Article 14**

The Director-General of the International Labour Office shall communicate to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for registration in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations full particulars of all ratifications and acts of denunciation registered by him in accordance with the provisions of the preceding Articles.

**Article 15**

At such times as it may consider necessary the Governing Body of the International Labour Office shall present to the General Conference a report on the working of this Convention and shall examine the desirability of placing on the agenda of the Conference the question of its revision in whole or in part.

**Article 16**

1. 1. Should the Conference adopt a new Convention revising this Convention in whole or in part, then, unless the new Convention otherwise provides:
  - (a) the ratification by a Member of the new revising Convention shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of this Convention, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 12 above, if and when the new revising Convention shall have come into force;
  - (b) as from the date when the new revising Convention comes into force this Convention shall cease to be open to ratification by the Members.
  
2. 2. This Convention shall in any case remain in force in its actual form and content for those Members which have ratified it but have not ratified the revising Convention.

**Article 17**

The English and French versions of the text of this Convention are equally authoritative.

