

Mr. Guy Ryder CBE

Director-General of the International
Labour Organization (ILO)

Mr. Roberto Suárez Santos

Secretary-General of the
International Organisation of
Employers (IOE)

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY: A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT FOR SUPPLY CHAIN WORKERS

On behalf of members of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), representing global companies with thousands of suppliers, international trade union bodies, specialised labour rights organisations and development charities, we urge the ILO governing body to put into effect the proposals for including safe and healthy working conditions in the ILOs framework of fundamental principles and rights at work. Ideally, to be actioned at the June 2021 International Labour Conference.

The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) declared that “safe and healthy working conditions are fundamental to decent work”. The conference resolution subsequently adopted requested the Governing Body “to consider, as soon as possible, proposals for including safe and healthy working conditions in the framework of fundamental principles and rights at work” in the same way as the eight fundamental ILO Conventions do. These rights form the basis of the labour protection floor supply chain workers deserve.

ETI Base Code Clause 3 (working conditions are safe and hygienic) maps out the expectation that members will address occupational health and safety (OHS) and take adequate steps to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in the course of work, by minimizing, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment.

The UN Guiding Principles for Business & Human Rights provide the framework to identify and address risks to workers. OHS has been critical to the operation of supply chains both prior to and during the pandemic, and has therefore attracted commitment, investment and resources ensuring workers are safe.

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Members contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals through their business practices also recognize that safe and healthy work is the foundation of sustainable development and is intrinsically linked to SDG 3 (Good health & wellbeing) and SDG 8 (Decent work).

We therefore urge governments, the International Organisation of Employers, and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to implement the above declaration and action the road map of implementation as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

Peter McAllister
Executive Director

CC: Tony Danker, Director-General, Confederation of British Industry

ENDORSED BY:



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