

Media Update

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PRESS RELEASE

Employers committed to more and better jobs through socially responsible labour practices in Pakistan

Islamabad Tuesday 1st September 2015: Employers pledged their commitment to create more and better jobs through socially responsible labour practices in the Sialkot sports goods industry during a seminar organised by the Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Almost 50 representatives from business, workers and the government attended the awareness raising seminar held on 27 August under ILO's project "More and Better Jobs through Socially Responsible Labour practices in Pakistan". The seminar allowed for an active exchange of views on experience concerning their respective roles and responsibilities in promoting socially responsible labour practices as well as the lessons learned in other export oriented sectors. This project will contribute towards encouraging MNEs operating in Sialkot to contribute positively to economic and social development through socially responsible labour practices. Promoting compliance will also constitute an important element of this work, building on the ILO's experience in supporting the effort to eliminate child labour in the Sialkot soccer ball industry.

Through their globalised production systems, multinational enterprises (MNEs), their subsidiaries and extended value chains, represent an important share of the private sector in many developing and industrialised economies. Asia is home and host of many MNEs. With total FDI inflows of \$426 billion in 2013, developing Asia accounted for nearly 30 per cent of the global total and remained the world's number one recipient region. The potential contribution



of MNEs to the creation of more and better jobs is enormous including in Pakistan. Significant progress has been made in increasing awareness of the importance of responsible business. However, collective action can contribute to changing how supply chains operate and to maximize the contributions that MNEs could make to decent work and inclusive and sustainable development.

Ms. Yukiko Arai, Senior Specialist of the Multinational Enterprises and Enterprises Engagement Unit and Ms. Eva Majurin, Enterprise Specialist of the Decent Work Team for South Asia – both from ILO introduced the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) and shared global experiences in applying the principles of the MNE Declaration. Mr. Khawaja Nauman, President of EFP welcomed the new ILO project and affirmed full cooperation of the business sector? in undertaking the study which will help identify the areas of improvement necessary in building the brand image for the sports goods exporting industry in Sialkot?. He noted the importance of social compliance and added that this new initiative in Sialkot would help build the capacity of business in responding to the socio-economic challenges. Noting that MNEs are key drivers and economic force behind globalization, Mr. Zahoor Awan, General Secretary of Pakistan Workers' Federation, pointed out that workers were still earning a poverty wage and called on the participants to work together in addressing this issue. He welcomed the new Sialkot initiative and looked forward to good collaboration with EFP in its implementation.

The representative of the ILO office in Islamabad, Mr. Saghir Bukhari, affirmed the central role of sustainable enterprises in achieving decent work for all and sustainable development. He stressed the importance of win-win outcomes of inclusive growth for the MNEs' home countries and for the countries where they invest or do business, and reconfirmed the ILO support in bringing the MNE Declaration to life and implementing it to full advantage.

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