



Media Update

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ILO

PRESS RELEASE

Soccer Ball Industry Model replicable for Child Labour Elimination in GSP+ Business Environment

29 June, Lahore: Over 50 representatives from Government, Workers, Employers and economic sectors endorsed the Sialkot Soccer Ball Industry Model as a way forward for other industries to do business in GSP+ environment. Participants to the meeting also endorsed the application of International Labour Standards (ILS) in sectoral supply chains for enhanced productivity and better competitiveness in global markets. This was during a High level Round Table meeting on the elimination of Child Labour as part of the World Day Against Child Labour Commemorative events convened by the Employers Federation of Pakistan.

Pakistan's Soccer Ball Industry's exports crossed US\$196 million in 2014 and includes the locally produced Brazuca Ball which featured prominently at the 2014 Brazil World Cup. The resurgence of Pakistan's soccer football on the international market has been made possible by the proactive approach of the industry to eliminate Child Labour from its supply chain and observance of International Labour Standards with the technical assistance of the ILO. This follows massive international pressure to ensure ethical production of soccer balls in the late 90's.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Khawaja Nauman-President, Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP), urged business leaders from various sectors to emulate the success of Soccer Ball Industry in eliminating child labour from its supply chain by respecting International Labour Standards. He said that this would convey a robust message to the European Union and other





international markets that the Pakistani business community is capable of implementing International Labour Standards.

Mr. Chaudhry Nasim-President of Pakistan Workers Federation (PWF), emphasised the need to strengthen tripartite dialogue to help to seize the opportunity offered by GSP+. He said that the observance of ILS would ensure a quantum leap in Pakistani exports.

In his remarks, Mr. Mubasshir Hussain-Additional Secretary, Department of Labour & HR, Government of Punjab said it was the duty of every citizen to send children to school and eliminate all forms of child labour. He shared that the Chief Minister of Punjab's intention on 1 May 2015, to initiate actions to eliminate child labour from all Brick Kilns in Punjab over a period of six months. He said that Punjab Government had also launched an Integrated Project on the elimination of child and bonded labour and promotes decent work. He said that the Government of Punjab was committed to provide full support to businesses in complying with International Labour Standards.

During the inaugural session of the event, Ms. Belinda Chanda-Officer in Charge, ILO Pakistan Office said "The private sector was a key actor in facilitating the elimination of child labour. She said this had been proven in business processes as a response to the global human rights and business agenda. Pakistan had also witnessed threats and opportunities in its business operating environment in various value chains largely driven by consumer consciousness for ethically produced goods. Thus, adherence to ILS and the progressive elimination of child labour made good business sense".

Dr. Saifullah Chaudhry- the key resource person, presented the "Social Compliance in Supply Chain: Elimination of Child Labour - the Case of Sialkot". He shared ILO's interventions that helped the Soccer ball industry sustain its existence through the elimination of child labour from its supply chain.

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