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MEDIA UPDATE

ILO's Tripartite Partners commit to improving labour standards and promotion of decent work in Punjab Province

Monday, September 22, 2015: Tripartite partners from Punjab acknowledged ILO's assistance towards Punjab's efforts to improve compliance with International Labour Standards and promoting Decent Work in formal and informal economy.

This message was conveyed during a tripartite stakeholder's consultative meeting organized by the Department of Labour (DoL) Punjab. The consultation was organized as part of the ILO Director for Pakistan, Mr Francesco d'Ovidio's final round of missions to the provinces.

Punjab Government's representative reaffirmed Government's commitment to accelerate the existing labour inspection reform process and engage with all the stake holders to advance the existing employment and labour projects. The current labour policy and legislation in Punjab will be the focus of implementation by the Government. Workers and Employers highlighted ILO's role in expanding the coverage of labour legislation to the informal economy including domestic workers, home based workers as well as agriculture workers. This is a step forward to extend the coverage of the labour legislation to the most marginalized.

Mr d'Ovidio lauded government and social partners for their achievements in the area of labour legislation. He specifically highlighted government's efforts to address child labour and bonded labour through government's own funded Integrated Project. The South Asia Labour Conference (SALC) was recalled as one of leading trend setting example in the context of devolution. Mr. d'Ovidio urged partners to focus on implementation of the existing legislation as well as SALC recommendations.

While speaking at the consultation, Brother Nasim Iqbal, President of Pakistan Workers Federation, Punjab, highlighted the Government of Punjab's efforts towards advancing labour rights, especially through legislative reviews and enacting laws pertaining to industrial relations. He stressed on the implementation of existing laws as well as dialogue on sensitive issues such as Workers Welfare Fund and Employees Old Age Benefits Institution (EOBI).

Mr. Muhammad Akram, Employers' representative assured employers commitment towards minimum wage and highlighted the importance of employers and workers continued dialogue, which is essential for the growth of business in the province.

Mr Francesco d'Ovidio also apprised the participants on the process of developing next 'Decent Work Programme (DWCP: 2016-2020) and highlighted the three emerging prioritized



areas for ILO's technical support in next five years. These include decent work in rural economy, job creation with a focus on youth and women and international labour standards through social dialogue. He assured that the feedback and inputs provided by the stakeholders during the consultative process will be taken into account during steps leading to the development of the country's next DWCP.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes the global Decent Work Agenda through its tripartite structure i.e. Government, Employers and Workers Organizations. The ILO has adopted 189 Conventions since 1919 out of which Pakistan has ratified 36 Conventions – including the eight fundamental conventions on elimination of child labour, prohibition of Forced Labour, reducing discrimination at work; and promoting freedom of association and collective bargaining. ILO is providing technical support to the Federal and Provincial Governments for the effective implementation and reporting on ratified Conventions.

Government representatives including Mr. Ahmad Tariq, Deputy Secretary Department of Labour Punjab, thanked the participants for their candid inputs and feedback which shall be taken into account during implementation of the existing legislation and labour policy in the province.

For further information please contact:

Syed Saghir Bukhari, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Country Office for Pakistan,

[Email Bukhari@ilo.org](mailto:EmailBukhari@ilo.org)

Tel: +92 51 2276456-8
