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SIDE EVENT TO THE 7th SESSION ON THE UN TREATY

How can self-regulatory corporate approaches and a binding UN treaty on business and human rights lead to a fairer global economy?

October 28, 2021 / 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. CEST / Online

A variety of approaches exists so far that attempt to ensure multinational enterprises' compliance with human rights in all their business relationships. Workers' representatives and their trade unions have agreed on more than 300 Global Framework Agreements with transnational corporations to strengthen workers' rights along global supply chains. Also, other corporate approaches such as CSR, social auditing and sector-specific approaches at national level have contributed to improved working conditions in particular in countries where there is only weak employee representation and inadequate legal regulations.

Even if the Global Framework Agreements and other approaches have contributed to improving the global culture of co-determination in companies, there are clear limits to the agreements unions and corporate management have freely entered into, among others, as they are based on voluntary commitments. In the course of globalization, drastic violations of human and labour rights and environmental destruction in global value chains have steadily increased.

Binding regulations at national level, such as the German Supply Chain Act, and the discussions on corresponding regulations at European level are a valuable first step. Nevertheless, they require a global framework that could provide an important binding and connecting element to existing agreements between trade unions and corporate management.

For this reason, many trade unions now support a UN treaty on business and human rights that would require companies worldwide to human rights and environmental due diligence along their supply chain and that would improve access to remedy for people affected by human rights violations. From October 25 to 29, 2021, the seventh round of negotiations on such a UN treaty will take place at the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council.

In light of the negotiations, we would like to invite you to an online event with German and international trade union representatives and political decision-makers. We want to shed light on the experiences and achievements, as well as the challenges of ensuring human rights in the supply chain and discuss how a legally binding instrument could complement existing self-regulatory approaches.

Please register [here](#) by 27 October 2021. You will receive the Zoom access link via email one day before the event.

Co-organizers: IG Metall / IndustriALL Global Union / Global Policy Forum / Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung



PROGRAMME

English-German simultaneous translation provided

I. Welcome and Introduction

Jan Leidecker Director Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Office Geneva

Facilitation: **Horst Mund** Transnational Trade Union Policy, German Metal Workers (IG Metall)

II. Companies' experience with improving working conditions along supply chains

Kerstin Mai Chairwoman, Bosch Group and European Works Council

Kalpona Akter Founder and Director of the Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity and President of the Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWF)

III. Contextualization

Christina Hajagos-Clausen Director Textile and Garment Industry, IndustriAll Global Union

Verena Schmidt Specialist at the International Labour Organization (ILO)

IV. Discussion on the different perspectives regarding compliance with Human Rights in supply chains

Helmut Scholz Member of the European Parliament, GUE/NGL

Dr. Carsten Stender Director-General for European and International Employment & Social Policy, ESF of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany

Wolfgang Lemb Full-time Member of the Executive Committee, German Metal Workers (IG Metall)