

SER Sint Maarten at AICESIS board meeting in The Hague, The Netherlands.

## **REPORT**

A delegation of the Sint Maarten Social Economic Council (SER) attended the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS) General Assembly board meeting in The Hague, The Netherlands, from October 29<sup>th</sup> 2015 – October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

It was the 15th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE entitled: “Promoting workplace Compliance, including Global Supply Chains: The role of Economic and Social Councils and similar social dialogue Institutions”

The SER Sint Maarten delegation consisted of:

- Chairwoman, Oldine Bryson-Pantophlet
- Staff Member, Ursela Salomon



The program of the visit:

### **Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

08:00 – 09:00

Registration of Participants

09 :00 – 09 :30

**Opening Session**

Chair:

- Ms. Veronique Timmerhuis, Secretary General of the SER of the Netherlands

Welcome/opening by:

- Ms. Mariëtte Hamer, President of the SER of the Netherlands
- Ms. Sandra Polanski, Deputy Director General/ Policy ILO )
- Mr. Agripino Antonio Núñez Collado, President of the AICESIS

09:30 – 10:30

**Key Note Address**

Promoting Workplace Compliance and Cooperation through Social Dialogue including in Global Supply Chains.

- Ms. Lilianne Ploumen, Dutch Minister of Trade and Development
- Mr Moussa Oumarou, Director, Governance and Tripartism Department, ILO Geneva

Questions and Answers

10:30 – 10:45

**Coffee Break**

10:45 – 12:00

**Working Session 1**

Presentation of the results of the ILO-AICESIS Global Survey on Workplace Compliance including Global Supply Chains.

Moderator : Mr. Kim Dae-Hwan, President of the Korean ESDC

Presentation of the results of the survey : Mr. Youcef Ghellab, Head of the Social Dialogue and Tripartism Unit, Government Department, ILO

Discussion

12 :30 – 13 :30

**Lunch Break including Group Picture**



13 :30 – 15 :00

## **Working Session 2**

Experiences and Views of International organizations /institutions on Improving Workplace practice and compliance especially in Global Supply Chains

Moderator: Ms. Alexandra van Selm, SER

Presentations by the representatives of:

- OECD: Mr. Tyler GILLARD, Head of Sector Projects, Responsible Business Conduct Unit (by video conference)
- World Bank / IFC Ms. Daria Tagliani (International Finance Cooperation)
- UN Global Compact: Mr. Ben Chin (by video conference)

Panel discussion, including participation of:

- Ms. Linda Kromjong, Secretary-General, International Organization of Employers
- Mr Jeffrey Vogt, Director Legal Unit, International Trade Union Confederation

Discussion

15:00 – 15:30

## **Coffee break**

15:30 – 17:00

## **Working Session 3**

Experiences on theme 1: How to ensure occupational safety and health? What role can social dialogue play?

Panelists are requested to present :

1. Recent, concrete experience ensuring occupational safety and health in your country and/or in the global supply chain; the role of social dialogue.
2. Lessons learned and what measures would you recommend to ensure that all stakeholders are involved?

Moderator: Mr. Agripino Antonio Núñez Collado, President of the AICESIS

Panelists:

- Mrs. Sylvie Brunet, Councillor of the Labour and Employment section, ESEC of France
- Mr. Roberto Moreno, Secretary-General, Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) of Nicaragua

- Alexandra van Selm, SER Work Program of Sustainable Supply Chains
- Mr Diaz Pena, Corporate social responsibility, INDITEX
- Mr. Isidor Boix, Global Inditex GFA Coordinator, INDITEX

Panelists give a concrete example on ensuring occupational safety and health at the workplace, e.g. through a 'supplier support program'

Questions and answers

17:00 – 18:30

#### **Working Session 4**

Presentation and Panel Discussion on Workplace compliance: International Programs, Practices and Performance

Moderator: Mr. Patrice EZATY MERIKO EDZIA, President of the ESC of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Key Presentation to be made by:

- Mr. Dan Rees (ILO Better Work Programme)
- Mr. Joris Oldenziel (Bangladesh Accord)
- Mrs. Stavroula Demetriades (Eurofound, European Company Survey)

Discussion.

18 :30 -19 :30

Drinks at the SER, social gathering

Drafting Committee to review the draft Declaration on Workplace compliance and cooperation through Social Dialogue especially in Global Supply Chain.

20 :00 – 21 :30

Dinner hosted by the SER

**Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

08:45 – 09:15

#### **Wrap up Session of the first day:**

Presentation: Ms. Githa Roelans, Head, Multinational Enterprises and Enterprise Engagement Unit, Enterprises Department, ILO

Questions and answers

09:15 – 10:45

#### **Working Session 5**

How to enforce work place compliance (e.g. by labor inspectorates, industrial relations or audits)? What role can social dialogue play?

Panelists are requested to present:

1. Recent, concrete experience on enforcing work place compliance in your

- country and/or in the global supply chain; the role of social dialogue.
2. Lessons learned and what measures would you recommend to ensure that all stakeholders are involved?

Moderator: Mr Claude AKPOKAVIE, ACTRAV Senior Advisor, ILO

Panelists:

- Mr. Dick Bartelse, Director Procurement, Akzo Nobel Specialty Coatings on Akzo's supplier support program
- Ms. Maria José Polocarpo, Chief of Cabinet, CES President, Economic and Social Council of Portugal
- Dr. Samuel M. Nyantahe, Chairman of the Labor, Economic and Social Council (LESCO) of Tanzania
- Mr S. M. Gotabhaya Jayaratne, Secretary to the Ministry of Labour and Trade Union Relations, Sri Lanka

Questions and Answers

10:45 -11 :00

**Coffee Break**

11 :00 – 12 :30

**Working Session 6**

How to enhance Fundamental Labor Rights? What role can social dialogue play?

Panelists are requested to present:

1. Recent, concrete experience on enhancing fundamental labor rights in your country and/or in the global supply chain; the role of social dialogue.
2. Lessons learned and what measures would you recommend to ensure that all stakeholders are involved?

Moderator: Mr. Francisco Javier Gonzalez Lena, Director of the Cabinet of the President of the Spanish ESC

Panelists:

- Ms. Alexandra van Selm, SER of the Netherlands
- Mr. Andres Mauricio Ramirez Pulido, Technical Secretariat of the permanent advisory Commission of wages and labor policy – Ministry of Labor of Colombia
- Mr. Kim Dae-hwan, President of the ESDC, Korea
- Ms. Doha Abdelkhaleq, ICT expert & legal counsel, Member of the ESC of Jordan
- Ms. Lieneke Wieringa, advocacy Manager, Fairfood International on occupational safety & health and social dialogue in Costa Rica and Honduras

Questions and answers

12:30 – 14:00

**Lunch Break**

14 :00 – 15 :30

**Working Session 7**

How to strengthen the roles of social dialogue, social partners and ESCs/SIs to elaborate, implement, monitor and evaluation the strategy to improve workplace compliance?

How to improve Workplace compliance in Global Supply Chains?

Moderator: Mrs. Alette van Leur, Director Sectoral Policies Department (ILO)

Panel discussion with representatives of:

- Mr. Jeffrey Vogt, Director Legal Unit, International Trade Union Confederation
- Ms. Catelene Passchier, Vice president Netherlands Trade Union Confederation FNV
- Ms. Linda Kromjong, Secretary-General, International Organization of Employers
- Mr. Ton Shoenmaeckers, Director Social Affairs Department, Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers VNO-NCW

15:30 -16 :30

**Coffee Break**

Bilateral meetings and networking time between participants

Drafting Committee to finalize the The Hague Declaration on workplace compliance and social dialogue.

16:30 – 17:45

**Closing Session**

Presentation of the Declaration by Dr. Iraima Capriles, Executive Director AICESIS

Closing:

- SER: Ms. Mariëtte Hamer, President
- ILO: Mr. Moussa Oumarou, Director, GOVERNANCE Department
- AICESIS: Mr. Agripino Antonio Núñez Collado, President

## **Executive Summary**

This board meeting was hosted on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of October 2015, in the Netherlands and has been jointly organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS) and the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER Compliance with national law and respect for internationally agreed international Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, principles of international labour standards and applicable collective agreements at the workplace is a key condition for decent work. Workplace compliance is achieved when employers follow these regulations and standards. Although governments have an important role to play in protecting rights of workers and ensuring compliance, many other actors are needed as well, preferably in cooperation with each other. Tripartite collaboration at the national level, in the form of ESC-SIs bringing employers' organizations, workers' organizations and governments together, is crucial for achieving workplace compliance.

As part of their responsibility to respect human rights, including labour rights, companies have increasingly accepted responsibility for compliance, including in their supply chain. This has led to private monitoring initiatives in order to ensure that their global business partners are in compliance with their commitments. Private compliance initiatives are particularly used in countries with weak workplace compliance and labour intensive production. The effectiveness of these initiatives is questioned, particularly for the fundamental labour rights, which may also be the case for public enforcement. Social dialogue hardly plays a role in these private compliance initiatives. ESCs-SIs have an important role to play in bringing together relevant social actors in order to reach consensus and cooperate in dealing with the challenges of workplaces that are part of global supply chains. This report shows that:

- ESC-SIs involvement in workplace compliance in relation to global supply chains and multinational enterprises (MNEs) is still limited. Only one third of the participating ESCs-SIs currently have a tripartite dialogue about global supply chains and the role of MNEs. However, another third thought it should become part of their mandate in the future.



- Apparently MNEs are not always affiliated to the national employers' organization (only in 67 per cent of the countries), which means the dialogue with MNEs cannot take place via their representative organizations in those cases and individual relationships might be needed to establish such dialogue.

- ESC-SIs are exploring their role with regard to Corporate Social



Responsibility (CSR) and global supply chains. In some home countries of MNEs, ESCs take a pro-active role in reaching consensus on the role of the government and MNEs. In

Promoting workplace compliance presents enormous challenges for public agencies as well as private initiatives. When addressing these challenges, collaboration between all stakeholders, whether public or private is important at all levels. Social dialogue should play a key role in these processes, at the national level as well as at workplace level. ESC-SIs are well placed to promote this.

The ILO and AICESIS can build the capacity of ESC-SIs in compliance related issues, enhance the role of social dialogue in public and private workplace compliance initiatives, encourage the complementary role of the latter and the collaboration between both, as is currently done in the Better Work program.

- About 57 per cent of ESC-SIs indicated that the ILO currently plays a role to facilitate and support the consultation process in general and there is a high level of awareness of ILO instruments on inspection and safety and health, also where they are not yet ratified.
- More support by the ILO and AICESIS is welcomed, especially in the form of capacity building, training from the ILO and the exchange of best practices by AICESIS

## **Written account of the board meeting**

The board meeting was hosted by the ILO (International Labor Organization) in collaboration with AICESIS and SER NL. The host country was The Netherlands and the meetings were held in The Hague at the SER NL main offices.

The theme of the meetings was: “Promoting workplace Compliance, including Global Supply Chains: The role of Economic and Social Councils and similar social dialogue Institutions”. Various AICESIS members and Institutions were given the opportunity to present on the topic and give their insight into the various operational and implementation processes in their perspective countries.

At the beginning of the sessions there was a call for volunteers of the AICESIS members to participate in a “Drafting Committee” to comprise a declaration on Workplace Compliance and Cooperation through Social Dialogue especially in Global Supply Chains, which would be presented on the last day of the meetings.

Other entities such as: OECD, World Bank and Akzo Nobel were given the opportunity to elaborate how this process is being implemented in their company structure and gave examples on how this could be replicated in different countries. One example that was given is the development of a program for the sustainability of new supply chains with its goal to enforce workplace compliance. Suppliers have to invest in their own future. At the end of the various sessions the opportunity was granted for dialogue and questions and answers.

The general consensus of the various AICESIS members that attended the meetings was that many discussions have taken place with regard to the subject matter and much information has been dispensed over the course of time but the actual implementation of what was brought forward was lacking. There was a call to the ILO and the AICESIS to assist in implementation of the various topics brought forward in the countries represented by the members of AICESIS.

The ILO and AICESIS representatives on the panel indicated that strategies were being devised and progress is being made in collaborating with The World Bank and the ILO.

Sectors are being developed to identify key factors such as various supply chains and government institutions and incentives are being given by providing information that will in turn change the behavior and mentality to facilitate change. Risk analysis is being utilized in various sectors of government and society (civil society & private sector) to ascertain the risk factor in the supply chains.

In conclusion, at the end of the meetings the Declaration that was comprised by the drafting committee was read and dispensed to every member present at the meeting.

**End**