



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

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On behalf of the Group of Fifteen

G-15 Joint Statement

103rd Session of the International Labour Conference

Geneva, May 28 - June 12, 2014

1. Mr. President, it is a great honor for me to speak on behalf of the Group of Fifteen (G-15) at such a paramount meeting for the world. We are a Summit Level Group of 17 developing countries¹ established to foster, promote and sustain South-South cooperation and North-South dialogue for socio-economic progress, stability and sustainable development.
2. This session of the International Labour Conference finds the international community still grappling with the global economic and financial crisis, which means that its consequences will continue to hit worker's rights globally. For this reason, topics such as employment, forced labour and formalization of the economy must doubtlessly help guide ILO's debate in order for its constituents to agree on the most effective policy measures to be implemented to revert the situation.
3. The G-15 remains convinced that the eradication of forced labour is essential for the full enjoyment of human rights and human dignity. In this vein, the G-15 is committed to cooperate within the ILO and other agencies to combat this unlawful practice which accounts for the nearly 21 million souls that continue to be silent victims of this scourge.
4. The Group believes that reliable information on the extent of this illegal practice must be available to all constituents in order to accurately assess the problem and, therefore adapt existing legislation, create new regulations -

¹ Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

when necessary- and support enforcement measures. ILO reports have concluded that laws regulating forced labour are often not specific enough. Concrete and tangible efforts must be made to increase prevention, victim protection and the prosecution and conviction of forced labour. Cases involving slavery and human trafficking deserve particular attention.

5. In regards to the issue of transitioning from informal economy to formal, G-15 shares the view that combined action should focus on the design of multidisciplinary, intersectoral policies concerning legislation, social protection and worker benefits, enabling environment to foster entrepreneurship and social dialogue. Work in capacity building, education and skills development is also key and must play a complementary role. Sharing of best practices to help formalize the informal economy must play a decisive role complementing normative action.
6. Finally, the G-15 would like to highlight the measures taken by the Director-General in regards to the very complex context surrounding the ILO supervisory system, particularly after the events that took place at the Committee on the Application of Standards during the 101st International Labour Conference. For this reason, the Group is convinced that dialogue between all parties must remain at the center of all efforts and therefore reiterates its position in connection to the importance of an inclusive, tripartite and constituent-led process for overcoming the challenges ahead, including the review of the working methods.
7. Thank you, Mr. President.
