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**Day of General Discussion on Workplace Exploitation  
and Workplace Protection Commemorating the Tenth  
Anniversary of the Entry into Force of the Convention  
on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers  
and Members of Their Families**

7 April 2014 (3:00 to 6:00 pm)

Palais Wilson

First Floor Conference Room

**Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant  
Workers and Members of Their Families**

20th Session



**Welcoming Statement by**

**Mr. Francisco Carrion Mena, Chair  
Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant  
Workers and Members of Their Families**

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

As Chairperson of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, I would like to warmly welcome you to this day of general discussion commemorating the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on Migrant Workers. I would also like to extend a very warm welcome to Ms. Falvia Pansieri, the Deputy High Commissioner of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We are so pleased that you could join us today. I am also delighted to welcome our keynote speaker, Ms. Michelle Leighton, Chief of the Labour Migration Branch, Conditions of Work and Equality Department of the International Labour Organisation.

On behalf of the Committee, I thank you for joining us for this timely and important discussion on workplace exploitation and workplace protection.

While labour exploitation can occur in many circumstances, migrant workers are particularly vulnerable. They can be exploited through debt bondage, involuntary

servitude, and/or trafficking. Their vulnerability increases if they are unskilled, unable to speak the local language, illiterate, irregular or undocumented, and are using unsafe migration means to secure employment. People who are unaware of their rights are easy for an employer to control, for example, through threats to turn them over to migration authorities or the police if they do not comply.

Migration in the context of globalization brings opportunities but also important challenges of vulnerability and discrimination. If migrants lack access to human rights, their ability to benefit from migration is compromised, as is their potential contribution to the development of the societies in which they live or with which they are connected. Protecting human rights is important in order to promote the social inclusion and integration of migrants, thus enabling them to lead economically productive as well as culturally and socially enriching lives.

Dialogue between governments, human rights, labour and migration experts and practitioners, policy-makers and civil society is critical to the promotion of migrants' human rights. We look forward to today's Day of General Discussion to reinforce this message and the importance of a human rights-based approach to international migration in the context of workplace protection.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the **Deputy High Commissioner**. The floor is yours, Ms. Pansieri.

[Statement of Deputy High Commissioner]

Thank you very much.

I now have the great pleasure of introducing our keynote speaker, Ms. Michelle Leighton. Ms. Leighton is currently Chief of the Labour Migration Branch at the International Labour Organisation. She received her LL.M. degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and her Juris Doctor from Golden Gate University Law School. Ms. Leighton has taught on many law faculties in Asia, Europe and the United States. She has served as an advisor and consultant to international institutions, government, and non-profit organizations since 1992. She has led various research and policy projects with academics, government agencies and local experts on migration worldwide. Ms. Leighton recently co-founded the American University of Central Asia's Tian Shan Policy Center and was Professor of Law, following her service as the United States Fulbright Scholar in Kyrgyzstan. She was the Munich Re Foundation Chair on Social Vulnerability for the United Nations University-EHS

Institute from 2009 to 2012 and was Director of the Centre for Law and Global Justice Human Rights Program at the University of San Francisco School of Law.

Without further ado, Ms. Leighton, you have the floor.

[Statement of Michelle Leighton]

Thank you very much.

We have now come to the next part of our program, and I have the pleasure of handing the floor to Mr. Ibrahim Salama, Director of the Human Rights Treaties Division, OHCHR, who will be moderating the panel discussions today.

I wish you a fruitful exchange.

Mr. Salama, the floor is yours.