

Respecting Children's Rights – Tools and Approaches to Fight Child Labour – Brief Summary Report

Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights 18 November 2015, 8.20 – 9.40 am

Organizers: ILO, UNICEF, UN Global Compact, Save the Children and Terre des Hommes

Co-hosted by the UN Global Compact, ILO, UNICEF, Save the Children and Terre des Hommes, this session aimed at presenting tools and approaches that companies and other stakeholders have adopted to respect children's rights and contribute to the elimination of child labour, and to further their commitment to support children's rights.

The welcoming remarks, presented by UNICEF, Save the Children and ILO, provided an overview of the two relevant initiatives in this area, the [Child Labour Platform](#) and the [Children's Rights and Business Principles](#), as well as of the international regulatory framework on child labour. The panel featured a combination of stakeholders, including representatives from the private sector, such as H&M and Primark, trade union organizations (UNI Global Union), government (Colombian Ministry of Labor) and NGOs (Terre des Hommes).

During the panelist discussion, speakers highlighted the important role of companies in strengthening Governments' response to child labour and the role of voluntary initiatives, such as the abovementioned Child Labour Platform and the Children's Rights and Business Principles, in bringing more clarity to the specific actions businesses can take to address the issue. Panelists also laid emphasis on gaining a broader understanding of the root causes of child labor, especially in marginalized communities. While corporate zero tolerance policies can greatly reduce the incidence of child labour, it is important to recognize the core issues that lead to child labour in the first place, such as poverty, lack of access to education, income equality etc. to effectively tackle the issue. Businesses, especially SMEs, need to find the relevant expertise, to collaborate, and to build capacity with the specific context of their supply chains in mind. The mechanisms and processes discussed during the sessions to tackle child labour include the adoption of strong internal policies, risk assessments, due diligence and remediation practices. Closing remarks were provided by UNI Global Union and the IOE (represented by TISK) as co-chairs of the Child Labour Platform.