



MAKING TRADE BENEFIT WORKERS

27 September 2017, 14:00 – 15:30, World Trade Organization, Room S3

To ensure that the benefits of trade are more equally shared, special attention needs to be given to decent work in global supply or value chains (GVC). The asymmetric power relationship in GVCs leads to downward pressure on wages and working conditions as suppliers in developing countries have little control over price-setting. Research from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan, and Vietnam shows that the labour cost in garments and footwear production is only a tiny fraction of the retail price yet workers are in many cases not paid the minimum wage let alone a living wage. Moreover, social clauses in trade agreements have so far had little impact on the enforcement of the ILO core labour standards, let alone other legally binding ILO conventions. More robust clauses for enforcing labour provisions, including economic sanctions as an enforcement tool, as well as improved monitoring of their implementation could perhaps change this. This Working Session aims to discuss how to address these challenges in order to create a virtuous circle generating benefits for all, including workers in the developing world.

WELCOME REMARKS

Adrienne Woltersdorf, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office for Regional Cooperation in Asia

SPEAKERS

Do Quynh Chi, Director of the Research Centre for Employment Relations, Vietnam

Henner Gött, Research Fellow and PhD Candidate, University of Göttingen

Paolo Garzotti, Deputy Head of Mission, EU Mission to the WTO

Georgios Altintzis, Trade Policy Officer, International Trade Union Confederation

MODERATOR

Hubert René Schillinger, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Geneva Office