

Parallel session organized by:



International Organisation of Employers
Organisation Internationale des Employeurs
Organización Internacional de Empleadores
The Global Voice of Business



Sandwich lunch sponsored by:

Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN | Geneva



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



Tuesday 17 November

13:30 – 14:30

Room XX

Sandwich lunch served outside Room XX at 13:00

SMEs, informality and human rights: challenges and solutions

Taking note of *ILO Recommendation 204 concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy (2014)*, the panel will explore the implications of the transition both for the ability of governments to protect, promote and fulfill human rights and the ability of businesses to respect human rights in their operations. These challenges are particularly severe for the approximately 400 million SMEs which comprise the vast majority of businesses globally and are the main source of job creation in both developed and developing countries.

The transition will depend primarily on enhanced government capacity to provide enabling environments for businesses of all sizes to expand and provide job growth, as well as its ability to regulate and enforce labor and other laws. But support for the transition and improving working conditions is being further enhanced by many market-based approaches that can be facilitated by governments and other actors. These approaches include the inexpensive provision of working capital to SMEs for investment in working conditions and other business practices, as well as training on occupational health and safety standards and how to conduct mature labor relations. Cutting-edge research on working conditions and productivity as well as experiences with innovative market-based solutions will help contextualize the global scale of these challenges and the potential for progress.

Moderator:

Dr. Ariel Meyerstein, Vice President, Labor, Corporate Responsibility & Governance, United States Council for International Business (USCIB)

Panel:

- *Laura Chapman Rubbo, Director, International Labor Standards, The Walt Disney Company*
- *Egidio Germanetti, International Finance Corporation*
- *Erol Kiresepi, CEO, Santa Farma Pharmaceuticals*
- *Dan Rees, Program Director, ILO-IFC Better Work Programme*
- *Makbule Sahan, International Trade Union Confederation*
- *Puvan Selvanathan, UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights*
- *Rona Starr, Director, Supplier Workplace Accountability, McDonald's Corporation*