

The ILO is pleased to announce that it will hold its Labour Sector Meeting tomorrow, **Wednesday, 2 October 2019 from 1:00 – 2:30 pm in Meeting Room H**. For this Intersessional Process, ILO has engaged and supported the participation of numerous stakeholders from the world of work, representing ministries of labour, workers and employers and we look forward to discussing various aspects of labour sector engagement in the Beyond 2020 process.

The labour sector cuts across all economic activities and includes all industry and also takes into account concerns with the informal economy, diverse work arrangements and workers in vulnerable situations.

Therefore the sound management of chemicals and waste is directly linked to the world of work. Workers are exposed to hazardous chemicals throughout **global supply chains**: from production, to handling, to storage, to transport, and to disposal of waste. But also the activities and emissions of workplaces directly affect the public and the environments around them.

Every year, **around 1 million workers die** from exposure to hazardous substances, including dusts, vapours and fumes. This is not counting those living with chronic diseases. The global production increase of chemicals will mean even more exposures for workers in the future. Employers and industry not only have a responsibility towards workers but also towards the environment and communities in which they operate.

The ILO was founded on the concept of guaranteeing adequate protection for the safety and health of workers in all occupations which was reaffirmed in its centenary declaration on the future of work this year. In the last 100 years, the ILO has adopted **more than 50 legal instruments** on the protection of workers, but also the protection of the public and the environment, from chemical hazards.

These legal instruments also call on governments and industry to take responsibility in the manufacturing, distribution, handling and disposal of chemicals. The ILO is also active in greening workplaces and has projects in the textile and garment industry, agriculture, construction, mining, high tech industry and other sectors most directly affected by chemical exposures and emissions.

The work of the ILO to promote decent work and safe and healthy working environments represent integral elements of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, and the area of safe chemical management at the workplace **links directly with SDG target 8 on decent work and economic growth**.

Finally, it is essential to recognize that workers' rights to life and to health are human rights, and human rights are workers' rights, and that these rights are indeed universal. These human rights directly depend upon preventing exposures from hazardous substances and protecting the safety and health in working environments. This right is deeply inter-related with **other fundamental rights at work** that the ILO promotes around the world, such as freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced and child labour, as well as the elimination of discrimination.

We invite participants to consult the ILO Info note submitted to this meeting which maps proposed indicators across the beyond 2020 targets and points to the role of our legally binding instruments which provide a strong legal framework for this process.

We look forward to welcoming stakeholders **from all sectors** to the Labour Meeting tomorrow, and to working together to ensure a safer and healthier population of workers, their families and communities worldwide.