

ASIA-PACIFIC BUSINESS FORUM 2011
BANGKOK, 25-26 JULY 2011

REPORT

....EXTRACT

D. SIDE EVENT:

ENDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS SMART BUSINESS

ORGANIZED BY ESCAP IN COLLABORATION WITH END HUMAN TRAFFICKING NOW

Objective:

End Human Trafficking Now (EHTN) is the first worldwide initiative to engage the private sector in anti-trafficking efforts. Whilst striving to put an end to human trafficking altogether, the organization puts business companies in the forefront of anti-trafficking efforts. The purpose of the meeting is to share experiences; showcase existing tools, developed in partnership with Microsoft and UNGIFT, for the use of companies to identify and prevent trafficking in their workplace; and inform them of the first of its kind business leader's prize developed by UN Global Compact and UNGIFT that will be bestowed in 2012. This award recognizes the tireless work of business executives engaged in combating human trafficking.

Moderator:

Mr. David Arkless, *President, EHTN Board and President Corporate Affairs & Government, Manpower Group.*

Speakers:

- Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, *Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP* (opening and closing statements);
- Mr. David Arkless, *President EHTN Board and President Corporate Affairs & Government, Manpower Group;*
- Mr. Desarack Teso, *Director, Corporate Affairs, South East Asia Emerging Markets, Microsoft (Thailand) Limited;*
- Dr. Aleya Hammad, *EHTN Executive Vice-President and Chair of the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Trafficking in Persons;*
- Mr. Martin Reeve, *Regional Advisor (Human Trafficking), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).*

Main conclusions, recommendations and outcomes:

- (1) The market value of human trafficking is estimated at US\$32 billion a year, with profit margins around 35-40%, making it one of the most profitable global illicit trades today.
- (2) The root causes of human trafficking are economic, i.e. unemployment and poverty.
- (3) Human trafficking is a business problem and therefore ending it requires cooperation and action from business.
- (4) Companies can create employment opportunities for disadvantaged social groups through special programmes, in particular for young people.
- (5) In order to take appropriate action, companies need to be aware of human trafficking issues which may exist but is hidden in every link of their supply chain.
- (6) Companies can commit to the Athens Ethical Principles, which have the support of the Secretary General, and start developing a sound anti-trafficking strategy within their framework of their daily activities. Companies which do sign up to the Athens Ethical Principles will get immediate publicity by EHTN.

Signing up can be done at the following website:

www.endhumantraffickingnow.com/sign_athens_ethical_principles.php

- (7) Certification was proposed as a way to advance the issue further. However, care should be taken that an excess of certifications does not become an obstacle to doing business and conducting trade.
- (8) Applications that scan barcodes can be a way to reduce the confusion of multiple consumer ethical branding labels.
- (9) Bureaucracy and corruption associated with issuance of visa is being exploited and can lead to human trafficking. For that purpose, this issue needs to be addressed including through liberalization of trade in services under GATS mode 4 (presence of natural persons).
- (10) EHTN and UN.GIFT have jointly developed an e-Learning training program on human trafficking for business leaders, managers and employees of business companies. The tool was technically developed and sponsored by Microsoft.
- (11) Companies are invited to provide contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, which is managed by UNODC (www.unodc.org/humantraffickingfund). “Contributing companies will be acknowledged by the United Nations Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNODC”
- (12) Companies and others can also nominate business leaders as candidates for receiving the Business Leader’s Award to Fight Human Trafficking at www.businessleaderaward.org

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