1 September 2015

CONTRIBUTE TO THE IOE’S COMMENTS ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE’S DRAFT BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENT

Dear Members, Partners and Colleagues,

Previous IOE communications have kept you informed of the development in the Council of Europe (CoE) of a non-binding instrument on business and human rights.

By way of a quick recap, the CoE is not the European Union; its membership comprises 47 States in Europe and Central Asia, and includes Mexico, Japan and the US. Many other countries have observer status.

The CoE drafting group, of which the IOE is a non-voting member, will next meet on 23-25 September in Strasbourg. The aim is to finalize the text of the standard at this session. In a further meeting at the beginning of November, an explanatory memorandum will be finalized. It is anticipated that the instrument itself will be adopted in Spring 2016.

The standard - although non-binding - will influence the national debate on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Moreover, governments will have to report back to the Council of Europe on national implementation of the standard in three years.

To date, the discussions in the drafting group have been extremely difficult, with NGOs making up the vast majority of participants and government representatives assuming a rather passive role. After the September session, the IOE will have to decide whether it will publically endorse the standard or not.

The draft standard, the draft explanatory memorandum, as well as the draft IOE comments for your input may be accessed via the links in the side panel.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. I would be grateful to receive your comments on the draft IOE submission by 14 September 2015.

Yours sincerely

Matthias Thorns
Senior Adviser

LINKS TO REFERENCED DOCUMENTS
- Draft Council of Europe business and human rights instrument
- Draft Council of Europe memorandum
- Draft IOE submission to the Council of Europe on its draft business and human rights instrument

IOE CONTACT
- For more information, please contact Matthias Thorns, IOE Senior Adviser

CONNECT WITH US!
Get the latest updates from the IOE on Twitter (@ioebusiness) and Facebook (facebook.com/internationalorganisationofemployers)