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NEWS RELEASE

IOM AND IOE JOIN FORCES TO PROMOTE ETHICAL RECRUITMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS

IOM and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) have agreed to join forces to promote ethical recruitment of migrant workers by recruitment agencies. The agreement follows the meeting in Geneva between IOM Director-General Ambassador William Lacy Swing and IOE Secretary-General Brent Wilton.

Overseas workers often arrive in destination countries saddled with huge debts after paying extortionate fees to unscrupulous intermediaries in order to secure jobs abroad.

With more people than ever migrating for work, the potential for recruitment exploitation and abuse is rising. Recent exposés concerning working conditions of migrant workers have highlighted these dangers.

IOM and IOE recognize that the absence of a fair and transparent process also creates serious problems for employers, who often have no way of knowing what kind of recruitment practices are taking place overseas and what workers have been subjected to or promised by intermediaries.

Ensuring that international recruitment is ethical and fair requires innovative approaches and broad partnerships. IOM and IOE are committed to working together with governments, employers, like-minded intermediaries and civil society to develop practical solutions to this global problem.

This includes a voluntary certification process for international recruiters to help protect migrant workers and their employers from abusive practices.

“The situation at present is very unfair to migrant workers. Crippling recruitment fees make them vulnerable to abuse and trafficking and we have to change that. Most employers agree and want to ensure that the workers they hire are recruited ethically,” said IOM Director-General Ambassador Swing.

Migration plays a vital role in today’s globalized labour markets. But high fees charged by intermediaries can increase the cost of doing business and distort the labour market, creating a “race to the bottom” for both local and foreign workers. Companies, corporate reputations
and brands can also be seriously damaged by allegations of exploitation and abuse of workers.

“International labour migration is increasingly important in all countries, whether as countries of origin, transit or destination. The IOE supports cooperation amongst countries, with the private sector playing an important role in order to ensure that migration policies and practices are win-win for all. This process starts with joining efforts to ensure the promotion of ethical recruitment practices and principles. This joint effort between the IOE and IOM will serve the common goals of our organisations and is good for business,” said IOE Secretary-General Brent Wilton.

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