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13 October 2015

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The IOE’s Vice-President for the ILO, Jørgen Rønnest; Secretary-General, Linda Kromjong; and Deputy Secretary-General Roberto Suárez Santos were the guests of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI) on 8 October for an exchange of updates involving the country’s labour minister, Mr Abdulla L. Al Khulaifi; QCCI President, H.E Sheikh Khalifa Bin Jassem Bin Mohammed Al Thani and several local companies.

Jørgen Rønnest set out how Qatari employers, in the same way as their worker counterparts, have a key role to play in working with government in contributing to the ILO’s standards supervisory system.

Roberto Suárez underlined the contribution of industrial relations models, labour regulation and social dialogue in creating an enabling environment for business development and sustainability.

An overview of recent developments and trends in the business and human rights landscape was presented by Linda Kromjong, who highlighted the practical guidance provided for companies by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in implementing their
duty to respect human rights within a national legal and policy framework that ensured the protection of human rights.

Several Qatari companies joined the meeting, including HBK, Zublin, QAPCO and QDVC who presented their human resources policies, as well as their approaches to establishing standards for working conditions in the context of a highly diverse migrant workforce.

The IOE team was able to witness the facilities on the ground of construction company HBK, as well as accommodation quarters of HBK and Zublin, which painted a positive picture of living conditions, working time, and health and safety established by these companies who were, noted Linda Kromjong, "leading the way in providing good working conditions".

The meeting with Qatari Labour Minister, Mr Abdulla L. Al Khulaifi provided the occasion to discuss the Government’s progress in addressing challenges around force labour, freedom of association and migration as well as a looking ahead to the work that still needs to be done.

For further information, please contact IOE Deputy Secretary-General, Roberto Suárez Santos