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**IOE WELCOMES GLOBAL BUSINESS & DISABILITY NETWORK CHARTER**

Several major international companies came together at the ILO in Geneva on 28 October to further formalise their commitment to promoting and including persons with disabilities throughout their operations.

All members of the Global Business & Disability Network, Accor, Adecco, AXA, Carrefour, Casino, Dow, L’Oréal, Michelin, Orange, Sodexo and Standard Bank were among the first signatories to the new ILO Global Business & Disability Charter and several more companies have expressed their intention to join them.

The network was created in 2010 by the ILO Bureau for Employers’ Activities (ACT/EMP) and the ILO Disability Team, with the goal of conducting international, regional and national level meetings and initiatives to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in businesses and to disseminate best practices. It has produced a tool for companies to self-assess their performance in a number of disability-related areas.

The Charter signed last week covers key areas such as non-discrimination, providing equal treatment and opportunities, job retention, accessibility and confidentiality. It also focuses on the importance of giving proper attention to all types of disabilities.

As a next step, the Charter will be provided to national employers’ federations and national business and disability networks as a channel for promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in their own workforces and within member companies, large and small.
IOE Secretary-General, Linda Kromjong, said, “Employers know from experience that inclusive and diverse workforces create a win-win situation for businesses and employees. Companies are encouraged to assess if signing this Charter will complement their overall strategy. The 11 companies signing today have already made this assessment.”

The IOE’s Vice-President for North America, Ms Ronnie Goldberg, is a member of the Global Business & Disability Network’s steering committee.