THE IOE IS THE LARGEST NETWORK OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE WORLD, WITH 152 MEMBERS IN 143 COUNTRIES.
IT IS THE GLOBAL VOICE OF BUSINESS FOR LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICY MATTERS AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.
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Negotiating outcomes that are favourable to business is at the heart of our work.

It is never possible to capture every activity undertaken by our Organisation over a year-long period. However, we hope you will see from these highlights that our diplomacy on behalf of the global business and employer community in more than 140 countries continues to bear fruit. In organisations and intergovernmental processes, from the International Labour Organization, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Council, G20/B20, ECOSOC, the Council of Europe and more, negotiating outcomes that are favourable to business is at the heart of our work as the most representative private sector body in the world.

We have also built and consolidated alliances for a united global voice of business. In partnerships with BIAC, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Bar Association (IBA), World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), BUSINESSEUROPE, Business Africa, CEATAL and ACE, we have informed discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, regional integration, business and human rights, international labour regulation and skills mobility across borders.

For my own part, I have been especially active in the G20 employment processes in Australia and Turkey. As co-chair of the B20 Employment Task Force, I have delivered pro-enterprise priorities to world leaders and ministers of labour. In a spirit of cooperation, I have held the G20 to account over their commitments, with the aim of addressing the challenges we all share - soaring youth unemployment, skills deficits and over-rigid labour markets. In doing so, I have highlighted how business is playing its part, including through the Global Apprenticeships Network (GAN). HE Ali Babacan, Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, has invited me to support the advocacy efforts of the B20 Taskforces as a member of the International Business Advisory Council (IBAC) to the B20.

In my interventions, I have consistently underlined that enterprises need an enabling environment to grow, to compete, and to hire workers for the benefit of society as a whole.

I would like to thank the Management Board for their support and guidance: Jørgen Rønnest for leading the employer voice in the ILO during turbulent times in the standards supervisory system; the Regional Vice-Presidents: Mthunzi Mdwaba (Africa); Kamran Rahman (Asia); Renate Hornung-Draus (Europe); Ronnie Goldberg (North America) and Alexandre Furlan (Latin America) for their diverse perspectives and advice. My thanks also go to our Treasurer, José Maria Lacasa, for ensuring that the financial management of the IOE meets the highest standards.

None of the IOE’s work would be possible without our members and partner companies, and our thanks therefore go to you for your support and loyalty.

This Annual Report takes you on a journey and we hope you will enjoy the highlights of our year. Brent Wilton was at the helm for much of the period and my message would
not be complete without sending Brent on his way with our thanks and best wishes, and extending a warm welcome to Linda Kromjong who joined the IOE as the new Secretary-General on 1 May.
You have my strong commitment to continue to grow the culture of dedication to members and partner companies.

The President referred in his foreword to journeys. As I embark on my own IOE journey, I would first like to thank the organisation for the confidence placed in me to lead the Secretariat. You have my strong commitment to continue to grow the culture of dedication to members and partner companies to which this report testifies.

Brent has handed over an established Secretariat, in newly refurbished offices, with an experienced team of fully engaged professionals. My role is to support, guide, motivate and manage this cohesive team, with my Deputy Secretary-General Roberto Suárez, and to ensure optimal service delivery.

We undertake regular communications and consultations with members, via various means, to ensure that IOE priorities and outcomes meet stakeholders' needs and expectations. Our aim is always to add value as we advocate on your behalf as the representative voice of business at the global level. This requires us to be able to count on your support, feedback and input.

While this report sets out an impressive catalogue of meetings, missions, engagements, negotiations and more, we all know that the IOE can continue to enhance its output with the assurance of more sustainable resources.

This requires the Secretariat to continue to streamline internal processes, by upgrading IT and communications tools, for example, in order to achieve further efficiencies and improvements. It also needs you, the members, to settle subscriptions in a timely manner and to assist in generating new income streams, including through the Partner Company initiative.

I hope to meet with as many of you as possible at the IOE General Council, during the International Labour Conference, at the Leaders’ Forum on 10 June and the Global Employers’ Summit to take place in Bahrain on 6 – 7 October. Over time, I also look forward to joining you at your offices around the world.

Please, in the meantime, do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, concerns or comments on the work of the IOE Secretariat.
June

IOE activity during the month of June is dominated by the annual International Labour Conference. In 2014, this involved supporting Employers in the various Committees: Application of Standards, Supplementing the Forced Labour Convention, Facilitating the Transitions from the Informal to the Formal Economy, and in the Recurrent Discussion on Employment. We report fully on this work later.

June 2014 also saw the first IOE Leaders’ Forum. Chaired by newly-installed President, Daniel Funes de Rioja, the event attracted more than 100 participants from member federations, international organisations and companies to address key barriers to business sustainability.

Thirteen panellists explored challenges and responses in different national contexts, and audience contributions enriched the discussion. We learned about employer experiences from around the world, including Samsung’s work-readiness programs for skills building, Saudi Arabia’s Nitaqat initiative to encourage young people into private sector employment, USCID’s analysis of the twin implications of innovation - the potential of new technologies and the need for skills development to keep pace.

In late June, Deputy Secretary-General, Roberto Suárez Santos, contributed his legal expertise to panel discussions in St Petersburg and Tokyo.

Meanwhile, IOE activities to foster women’s entrepreneurship were presented at a BIAC workshop in Paris.
And in Costa Rica we contributed to a training programme to encourage the participation of employer organisations in the ILO’s mechanisms for supervising international labour standards, among other areas.

July

July saw IOE Secretary-General Brent Wilton and Senior Adviser Matthias Thorns “down under” for the B20 Summit in Australia. As Co-Chair of the B20 Human Capital Task Force, Brent Wilton called on the G20 governments to honour their commitments on longstanding structural problems in their labour markets, as well as “walking the talk” when it came to embracing multiple forms of work.

In one of his first missions as IOE Vice-President for the ILO, Jørgen Rønnest, accompanied by Roberto Suárez, presented IOE strategies to stimulate the economy and to achieve better regulation of working conditions at the II International Forum on Public Employment Policies held in Madrid.

August

The IOE’s campaign to encourage wider member engagement in the ILO’s work on labour standards continued in Montevideo, with IOE Senior Adviser María Paz Anzorreguy making the case that more involvement resulted in heightened impact to the benefit of employers.
Frankfurt was the location for the XX World Congress on Safety & Health at Work and the IOE and member federation BDA ran a symposium on the links between OSH and CSR, which attracted 150 OSH professionals and heightened the visibility of the employers’ organisations in the process.

With missions to members an IOE priority, August saw Brent Wilton travel to Algeria to support the General Confederation of Algerian Enterprises (CGEA) in discussions with the government on the central role of the private sector in national development and employment creation.

**September**

September bore testament to the IOE’s far reaching international engagement, with the global voice of business being heard in no fewer than 14 locations on four continents. Business and human rights featured frequently on the agenda, with forums also taking place to address regional aspects of this important issue.

The G20 advanced towards its Leaders’ Summit and, as part of the IOE’s commitment to bringing the business message to the employment process, Daniel Funes travelled to Melbourne, Australia, where he contributed to B20 Employment Task Force recommendations to the “group of twenty” leaders.

This required underscoring the employment potential of private sector-led growth and the IOE President urged the governments to pursue an agenda of “smarter regulation, simpler administrative requirements, and short-term incentives” to support business in kick-starting urgent job creation.

Later in the month, the IOE was the guest of G20-Y in Montreux where IOE Senior Adviser Frederick Mulia presented the work of the IOE in responding to the global youth employment crisis, highlighting the creation and expansion of the IOE-BIAC initiated Global Apprenticeships Network (GAN).

September was characterised by regional meetings, with IOE Members from Europe and Central Asia in Warsaw for their annual meeting which was graciously hosted by the Employers of Poland. A rare opportunity for networking and sharing experiences at a regional level, the meeting encompassed discussions on industrial relations, and business and human rights, as well as exploring how the IOE can meet the varied needs of members across the region.

Addis Ababa was the location for African members to participate in a multi-stakeholder business and human rights forum on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The creation of state National Action Plans (NAPs) was cited as a fundamental pre-requisite, a recurring employer theme during the period. While reaffirming the commitment of business to focus on human rights, IOE Board Member Jacqueline Mugo underscored that “better governance lies at the heart of any progress on human rights in Africa.”
The IOE also maintained its longstanding engagement at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva, and at a Council of Europe Steering Committee meeting in Strasbourg, France, ensuring that the perspective of the private sector informed the work of OHCHR on access to remedy, and of the Council of Europe in the creation of a non-binding standard to address what it perceives as gaps in the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles.

Atlanta, Georgia, saw the IOE, together with the US Council for International Business (USCIB) and the US Chamber of Commerce, join with The Coca-Cola Company for a Conference on Integrating Respect for Human Rights in Business. The Conference welcomed leading US companies, who were informed of latest developments and trends, and enjoyed the opportunity to network and exchange experiences and best practice.

In Paris, IOE Board Member Garance Pineau of MEDEF (France), together with Erol Kiresepi of TISK (Turkey), contributed to an ILO-OECD Round Table on responsible Supply Chains in the Textile and Garment Sector. Ms Pineau was clear that business efforts to build responsible supply chains needed support from national government initiatives and emphasised the potential of National Action Plans (NAPs) for framing the implementation of human rights principles.

Meanwhile, in Vilnius, Lithuania, at an international conference on How to make formal Work more Attractive, Frederick Mula was presenting to European governments the employer position on informality recently expounded at the International Labour Conference. He argued for policy that created the right ecosystem for enterprise creation and for incentives to encourage the transition of undeclared work to formal sector employment.

Geneva was the location for an ILO Sectoral meeting – with IOE Adviser Jean Dejardin organising and supporting the employer participation in an ILO Tripartite Global Dialogue Forum on Wages and Working in the Textiles, Clothing, Leather and Footwear Sectors. An important outcome was the recognition that fluctuations in demand as well as short lead times in this sector require employment flexibility.

In the context of involvement in the CSR for All project being undertaken by TISK, the IOE travelled to Brussels for a ceremony to mark the end of phase one of the project. The IOE also informed the evaluation of how the EU’s technical assistance for civil society organisations enabled projects such as CSR for All with a view to promoting its extension across the Balkan region.

In parallel, María Paz Anzorreguy, as coordinator of CEATAL, participated in the labour ministers’
conference in Bridgetown, Barbados, where a workshop Towards Fairer Labour Conditions: promoting Labour Inclusion with Equity, also took place.

Further south, the IOE participated in the launch of the ILO’s SCORE Programme in Lima, and welcomed the programme’s rollout in Peru, Bolivia and Colombia. Matthias Thorns reaffirmed the IOE’s support for SCORE, which promotes productivity, sustainability and job quality in SMEs in the region.

Ensuring the business contribution to the post-2015 development goals and their implementation, IOE Adviser Pierre Vincensini attended the UNDP-ILO Post-2015 Dialogue on Implementation Meeting in Vienna, which identified strengthening capacities and building effective institutions as key to success.

Mr Vincensini also supported the successful occupational safety and health network (GOSH) meeting in Amsterdam, with 30 professionals again enjoying the opportunity to discuss OSH trends and developments and to network with peers around areas of common interest.

October

October saw the leadership and advisers of the IOE Secretariat take their support and contributions to members in no fewer than 20 countries, covering all continents.

Missions to Asia began with Brent Wilton’s keynote speech at the Sri Lankan Employers’ symposium in Colombo, followed by a tour of Iran to support member organisation ICEA in consultations with the highest levels of government on private sector development.

G20 activity came to the fore with meetings of the B20 in Melbourne to feed into the G20 Labour Ministerial. Again, Daniel Funes contributed to the business recommendations which were taken up by the labour ministers in their proposals to the G20 heads of state and government, including the need for measures to address long-term and structural unemployment, to promote social dialogue and to lift the integration of disadvantaged groups into the workforce.

Roberto Suárez was also in Asia this month, in Tokyo, to bring Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) up to date on trends and developments in the global human rights and business debate, as well as providing insights into industrial relations challenges. Mr Suárez went on to make a presentation to the International Bar Association’s annual conference held in Tokyo on the implications for business of referencing ILO conventions in International Framework Agreements (IFAs) and company codes of conduct.
His Asia mission took him next to Dhaka, Bangladesh to meet with the Bangladesh Employers’ Federation and to witness improvements in factory safety resulting from ongoing efforts to address the challenges in workplace conditions in the garment sector.

Latin American members also had direct support from the IOE in October. The Deputy Secretary-General joined the leadership of the Bolivian Employers’ Federation (CEPB) in consultations with the government and contributed his global perspective on the need for policies that foster the capacity of business to start up, grow and hire, especially during periods of decline in foreign and domestic private investment.

A special mission to Brazil was undertaken by Brent Wilton for talks with CNI and to participate as a keynote speaker in the FDC International Conference on the role of business in society. This followed an FDC training day for GIRN members prior to their New York meeting on labour challenges and trends in emerging economies.

Additional support to the region was provided at the 18th ILO American Regional Meeting in Lima. Several members of the IOE Secretariat and Management Board, including IOE Vice-President for the ILO, Jørgen Rannest, joined political, economic and social actors from Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada and the US to deliberate on the role of employment and social protection policies in boosting productivity and formal employment with a view to ensuring labour rights.

Business and human rights work in October saw Matthias Thorns contribute to the BDA’s CSR Working Group meeting, as well as training employers’ organisations at a CSR IOE-ITCilo workshop in Turin.

Collaboration continued with other organisations as Frederick Muia presented a paper to the EU in Brussels to promote and formalise structured dialogue with the private sector in achieving development objectives.

Meanwhile, Pierre Vincensini participated in an OECD-BIAC workshop in Paris on Challenges for SME Growth, providing perspectives from the business sector and seeking solutions to the diverse challenges faced by SMEs.

Regional Vice-President for Europe, Ms Renate Hornung-Draus, supported by IOE Adviser Alessandra Assenza, represented the IOE at a meeting in Turin of policymakers from the member States and institutions of the Council of
Europe and EU to discuss the re-launch of the normative system based on the European Social Charter.

Supporting members in Africa also featured in October’s programme of work, with IOE advisers participating in the Maghreb Social Partners Forum: Social Dialogue for Decent Work and Regional Integration in the Sub-region, proposing recommendations for employment creation and regional economic integration.

**November**

November started with the heavy engagement of the IOE in the work of the ILO Governing Body, which will be covered later, as will the outcomes of IOE Policy Working Group meetings which took place alongside, but it also saw the IOE represent the global voice of business in other forums.

Monitoring developments in the multilateral system that can impact the doing of business, Pierre Vincensini attended UNIDO’s Second Forum on Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development in Vienna to determine the level of IOE involvement needed going forward. Meanwhile, Adviser Amelia Espejo was at the United Nations in Geneva to reinforce the business case for the economic and social empowerment of women.

In preparation for the December handover of the G20 presidency to Turkey, the Employment Task Force met in Geneva. Daniel Funes and Erol Kiresepi ensured the business voice in a session for the social partners, articulating their expectations for the outcomes of the employment work stream of the Australian G20.

Among the talking points was the need for a multi-year agenda that provided flexibility for G20 host countries. Mr Funes emphasised that reforming G20 labour markets and bridging the skills gap were fundamental to getting people back to work, whilst Mr Kiresepi urged the G20 to dismantle regulatory barriers to offering non-standard forms of employment. A specific B20 meeting anticipated priorities for the upcoming Turkish presidency.

Addressing the global youth employment challenge remains a key area of engagement for the IOE. November saw IOE Adviser, Thannaletchimy Thanagopal attend an EU youth employment event in Rome on Building a Sustainable Future where she led a workshop on active and passive labour market policies to promote youth employment. She subsequently travelled to Paris for an OECD-BIAC ELSA committee meeting to discuss joint activities on women’s economic empowerment.

In parallel, Brent Wilton was delivering a presentation in Geneva to the European Labour and Employee Relations Network on IOE objectives and strategies with regard to global unions and global social dialogue, as well as recommendations to MNEs.

With the Australian G20 presidency approaching its conclusion, Matthias Thorns was in Brisbane...
for the B20 Leaders’ Meeting to assess progress and participate in the launch of the G20 Leaders’ Declaration and Brisbane Action Plan, which reflected many of the B20 Employment Task Force recommendations highlighted above.

Amelia Espejo’s work on the business case for the empowerment of women continued at a BPW International Research Conference in Istanbul dedicated to promoting the engagement of business in the UN Global Compact’s Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs). Ms Espejo was a panellist on expanding business relationships with women-owned enterprises.

This activity was further supported by participation in an ILO ACT/EMP meeting in Turin to take stock of regional and inter-regional workshops and to discuss practical approaches and challenges to reaching out to women entrepreneurs.

The momentum continued in our work on business and human rights, with the joint organisation by the Fédération des Entreprises Romandes (Employers’ Organisation of Western Switzerland) and IOE of a high-level event in Geneva. Around 80 participants from the world of business and international organisations came together in this successful meeting to discuss the latest initiatives at international level.


Meanwhile, at an AICESIS-ILO International Conference on the Role of Economic and Social Councils and Social Dialogue in Promoting the Social Protection Floor held in Seoul, Korea, Roberto Suárez reaffirmed the support of employers for the 2012 ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, particularly for its focus and flexibility. With industrial relations an ongoing priority, he then travelled to Cambodia to support the Cambodian Federation of Employers’ and Business Associations (CAMFEDA) in consultations with government ministries on key industrial relations developments affecting the country.

Some 15,000 km away, in Aruba, Brent Wilton was the guest of our member federation to address an ILO/ATIA Workshop on the Role and Functioning of an Effective Employers’ Organisation for the Dutch-speaking Caribbean. He focused on the attraction and retention of members through effective marketing and communications campaigns.

Industrial relations were again the theme of a Eurofound Experts’ Meeting in Brussels on mapping future developments in industrial relations and collective bargaining, where IOE Adviser Alessandra Assenza provided the business view on industrial relations dynamics.
At the end of November, Jørgen Rønnest travelled to Warsaw to participate as a guest speaker in an international conference. From Transformation to Globalization, organised by the Employers of Poland on the occasion of their 25th Anniversary.

At the same time, Mr Rønnest accepted the prestigious Super Vector Award on behalf of the IOE. Bestowed by the Employers of Poland only once in its 25-year history to an organisation, the award was in recognition of the IOE’s support, particularly during 1989-1990, in raising the awareness of the country’s leadership of the importance of employers’ organisations in promoting business and entrepreneurship.

**December**

December was in many ways business and human rights month. The first week saw the 3rd Annual UN Forum on Business and Human Rights take place at the UN in Geneva. The IOE supported members’ and partner companies’ participation in the main Forum, as well as in side events.

One parallel event highlighted the commitment of the Central American private sector to respecting human rights through their integration into business practices and engaging in dialogue on the barriers and facilitators to achieving mass human rights compliance. Here, IOE member CACIF (Guatemala) showcased its institutional policy on human rights and business in the presence of the President of the Republic of Guatemala, Mr Otto Pérez Molina.

The world marked human rights day on 10 December and the IOE issued a statement urging all businesses, regardless of size or location, to consider their business operations through a human rights lens to ensure their activities do not infringe the rights of others. The IOE also took advantage of the opportunity to commend the UN Guiding Principles for providing clear direction to companies in making a positive human rights impact in the markets, communities and countries where they do business.

The Forum was also the occasion for the IOE to join forces with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development to strengthen the business voice and align actions. Brent Wilton and Matthias Thorns led a discussion on the potential significance for business of the Ecuador initiative for an international legally-binding treaty on business and human rights.
Also during this week, María Paz Anzorreguy was at the Vatican to participate in a brainstorming session organised by the Global Freedom Network on how governments, business and civil society can collaborate in the fight against slavery. The IOE Senior Adviser presented the different initiatives undertaken by the IOE in tackling slavery in the supply chain before delivering the IOE’s commitment in support of the World Faith Leaders’ Universal Declaration against Slavery.

Back in Geneva, the IOE was supporting and guiding the employer participation in an ILO Global Dialogue Forum on the Adaptability of Companies to deal with Fluctuating Demands and the Incidence of Temporary and other Forms of Employment in Electronics. Jean Dejardin and Thannaletchimy Thanagopalam coordinated the selection and participation of employers and contributed to the work towards the points of consensus on recommendations for ILO action.

With the presidency of the G20 now firmly in the hands of Turkey, IOE missions for 2014 concluded with Daniel Funes travelling to Istanbul to address the inaugural B20 meeting. His remarks drew attention to the main areas in which business expected the process to deliver in 2015.

Meanwhile, in Kathmandu, Nepal, IOE Vice-President for Asia, Mr Kamran Rahman joined the discussion on labour flows between Asia and the Arab States at an ILO Experts’ Meeting on Realising Fair Migration.

Veracruz, Mexico, was the location for this year’s meeting of Ibero-American Presidents of Employers’ Organisations, organised jointly by the IOE, CEOE (Spain) and the country’s business organisations CONCAMIN and COPARMEX.

Daniel Funes participated alongside senior figures from employers’ organisations, as well as IOE Management Board member Alberto Echavarria, and Roberto Suárez and María Paz Anzorreguy from the Secretariat. Following tradition, a declaration was elaborated and delivered to the Presidents at the Ibero-American Summit being held in Veracruz at the same time.

While acknowledging some progress to date on job creation and human capital development, his overall assessment was that the G20 had not yet become “an engine for the sweeping reforms necessary to make a significant impact on global unemployment rates”. He expressed disappointment at the lack of concerted G20 action to address skills mismatches and noted the absence of overall commitment to embrace flexible forms of employment, despite agreement to do so by the G20 leaders in 2013.

Mr Funes cautiously welcomed the launch of national employment plans as a “very positive development”, as long as they included “concrete commitment to structural reforms” and were “innovative, ambitious and simple to execute”.

**January**

Videoconferencing has more recently provided the IOE with the opportunity to follow relevant
discussions regardless of the location. Meetings in January 2015 started with remote participation in the International Recovery Platform Steering Committee Meeting in Kobe, Japan and allowed the IOE to contribute to the preparation of a forthcoming guidance note for the private sector on disaster recovery, as well as to the preparation for a business session during the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan in March.

On the same day, Thannaletchimy Thanagopal was a panellist on creating employment in fragile states and outlined the role of enterprise in peacebuilding efforts. The event was organised by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, the ILO and the Geneva Graduate Institute’s Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding.

Later in January, Roberto Suárez participated in an ILO meeting in Paris on opportunities and challenges for the world of work resulting from new modes of production at the global level. Mr Suárez’s core message was that “global supply chains create jobs, lift skills and foster innovation and competitiveness”.

Continuing this theme, Matthias Thorns shared his CSR expertise at an informal EU stakeholder meeting in Brussels on responsible management of the supply chain in the garment sector.

The IOE was also present at a two-day thought-leadership conference organised by Baker & McKenzie in Munich to discuss pressing workplace issues and the changing landscape of the world of work.

**February**

In line with the commitment to support members on their home ground whenever possible, Brent Wilton travelled to Dublin to meet with IBEC, to set out the IOE’s added value, as well as some of the upcoming opportunities for visibility and networking, such as the Leaders’ Forum in June and the Global Employers’ Summit to take place in Bahrain in October.

The IOE contributed to two CSR events during February. With partnership status in the EU-funded project on Transnational Companies and CSR, Matthias Thorns contributed to the planning of activities at the first meeting of the Steering Group. He also travelled to Belgrade as part of the ongoing CSR for All initiative, sharing his perspectives on “CSR past and future”.

Two ILO tripartite meetings of experts took place during this month, with the IOE preparing and supporting the employer participation.

The first looked at non-standard forms of employment, which aimed to promote a better understanding of the incidence and trends of flexible forms of employment in different countries, the reasons for its use, and its effects on the labour market, firms and workers. The outcomes provide guidance to the ILO on this topic.

The second was the highly anticipated meeting on the ILO standards initiative, with a strong focus on the right to strike. This paved the way for discussions at the March Governing Body. The IOE coordinated and prepared the participation of the 16 employer representatives, who were joined by 32 governments and 16 workers. The outcomes are discussed later in this report.

Meanwhile, in Paris, African and French heads of state and government joined forces with business representatives from both geographies to discuss opportunities and challenges.
Back in Geneva, Pierre Vincensini followed the UN Climate Change Meeting which delivered a basis for negotiations towards an agreement to be reached at the Paris Climate Change Conference scheduled to take place in Paris in December.

As a key contributor to the post-2015 development agenda on behalf of business, the IOE was represented by the Employers of Poland at a meeting of experts jointly organised in Chisinau by UNDP, ILO, the Republic of Moldova and the Federal Republic of Germany on Strengthening Capacities and Building Effective Institutions. The meeting aimed to support the design of the post-2015 UN development agenda.

With the work of the Turkish G20/B20 underway, high-level IOE participation in the process was again ensured in Antalya by Daniel Funes, together with the IOE Vice-President for North America, Ronnie Goldberg, and Management Board member Yogendra K. Modi.

The IOE President reaffirmed the commitment of business to the success of the Turkish presidency, whilst Mr Modi urged the G20 employment process to be the engine for reform – a pre-requisite for growth and employment. Ms Goldberg turned the spotlight on the youth unemployment crisis, calling for the closer involvement of business in the design of VET systems and for employers to be “in the driver’s seat” when it comes to apprenticeships. The meeting also marked the launch of the IOE-BIAC initiated national GAN network in Turkey.

March

Maintaining the focus on women’s economic empowerment, and to mark International Women’s Day, the IOE participated in the ILO Women and the Future of Work event in
Geneva on 6 March. A follow up to the 1995 World Conference on Women for governments, business and labour, the occasion assessed progress, and discussed the delivery of decent work and next steps. María Victoria Giuliani of UIA (Argentina) took part on behalf of the IOE in an interactive panel discussion.

Building on his October 2014 meeting, Frederick Mula travelled to Brussels for the second EU Workshop designed to gather the perspectives of the private sector to inform EU development policy. Several IOE figures participated in the panel discussions and as moderators. Ronnie Goldberg called on the EU to direct funds to support private sector development, including towards infrastructure projects, reinforcing property rights and the rule of law, and SME financing.

With Germany holding the G7 presidency in 2015, Renate Hornung-Draus spoke for business at the G7 Conference in Berlin on promoting decent work through sustainable supply chains. One of the aims of the meeting was to discuss a “Vision Zero” fund to support OSH in the supply chain and Ms Hornung-Draus gave perspectives on the design, implementation and eventual rollout of the initiative. She underscored the need to differentiate the respective roles of business and government in this area, as well as calling for the involvement from the outset of the social partners in all countries, not just the G7.

Back in Geneva, the 323rd Session of the ILO Governing Body was underway, with the IOE Secretariat supporting the Employers’ Group in the various debates. Continuing efforts to promote greater member involvement in the ILO supervisory system, María Paz Anzorreguy and Alessandra Assenza organised an event to elucidate the procedures of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA) and to demonstrate how higher employer impact could be achieved. The Head of the ILO Standards department was a keynote speaker.

The last days of March saw IOE President Daniel Funes contribute to the ECOSOC Integration Segment in New York, where he addressed the ‘Big Think’ on jobs and growth session. His remarks centred on the need for governments to dismantle structural barriers to job creation, such as regulation inhibiting diverse forms of employment.

With CSR and business and human rights always high on the agenda, Matthias Thorns participated in a conference in Switzerland, hosted by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation for Dialogue on Globalisation, on the legal accountability of business for human rights impacts.

While noting that the full enjoyment of human rights could only be assured with access to remedy firmly in place, Mr Thorns highlighted the complexities of undertaking due diligence and called on more countries to develop National Action Plans (NAPs) to frame the efforts of business. He went on to participate in an OECD Advisory Group Meeting to define activities for a project on responsible supply chains in the apparel and footwear sector.
Both Roberto Suárez and Matthias Thorns contributed to the IOE-WBCSD webinar on 30 March with a status report on business and human rights developments at international level. More than 30 participants joined the event.

**April**

Adviser Ms Thannaletchimy Thanagopal travelled to the Asia region in April.

She contributed to a technical meeting on forced labour for ASEAN employers organised by ILO ACT/EMP and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) within the framework of the ASEAN Triangle Project. Ms Thanagopal joined other regional and global experts to increase business understanding of forced labour by presenting the realities of migrant workers. She provided information on the multiple forms forced labour can take in the globalised economy, the ways in which it can be identified and how remedial action can be taken by business in the event of the incidence of forced labour in operations. Ms Thanagopal also moderated a panel on the risks of forced labour in the supply chain.

He also identified the development of labour market-oriented apprenticeship systems in conjunction with business as essential to addressing high levels of youth unemployment.

Additional meetings in the region included at the Singapore National Employers’ Federation (SNEF), and at the Malaysian Employers’ Federation (MEF) to conduct an industrial relations training session. Ms Thanagopal also discussed the upcoming ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the role of employers’ organisations in assisting members to gain maximum benefit from regional integration. She attended a meeting of the ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) during her time in Kuala Lumpur, where the impact of the AEC on business was again on the agenda.

Meanwhile, Matthias Thorns was a guest of the Federation of Employers of Ukraine, where he gave a presentation on the right to strike and lockouts within the context of the Council of Europe and the European Social Charter.
Towards the end of April, María Paz Anzorreguy was in Cartagena, Colombia, for the 2nd Working Group Meeting of the XVII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour, as well as a preparatory meeting for the next Conference. The Working Group meeting was a follow up to the Medellín plan of action to promote the exchange of experience on integrated strategies for improving labour market entry, social dialogue and fundamental principles and rights at work.

As part of ongoing sectoral activities, IOE Advisers Jean Dejardin and Thannaetchimy Thanagop coordinated the participation of eight employer delegates at an ILO Global Dialogue Forum on Employment Relationships in Retail Commerce and their diversification on the impact on employment and the competitiveness of enterprises. With government and worker peers, the Employers emphasised the added value of flexible forms of work provide for businesses in terms of enhancing their competitiveness and capacity to respond to changing market demands, whilst recognising the need to protect fundamental principles and rights at work. Participants also agreed to invite governments and social partners to better understand the notion of “atypical” work and to adapt national regulation to the realities of the modern world of work.

May

On 1 May, the IOE welcomed its new Secretary-General, Linda Kromjong. Activity was focused on final preparations for the 104th Session of the International Labour Conference. This included guidance for Employers participating in the work of the Committee on the Application of Standards, in this year’s Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection (Labour Protection), in the Committee on Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Decent and Productive Employment Creation, and in the second part of a double discussion on Facilitating Transitions from the Informal to the Formal Economy.

As last year, the Secretariat organised a micro-site for the Conference as well as a mobile app to simplify access to key documents, guidance material, and information on meetings.

Work also progressed towards the 2015 General Council and the IOE Leaders’ Forum, which will explore the Role of SMEs, Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Sustaining Growth, Jobs and Productivity with a cast of panellists from around the world.
The IOE’s Strategic Framework rests on three pillars, with our first objective being to inform and influence labour and social policy debate at international level so that the business and employer position is taken into account in discussion and decision making processes.

As you can see from the extensive Year in Review chapter, advocacy work and business diplomacy take the IOE to the four corners of the world, but begin here in Geneva at the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The original mission of the IOE was focused on providing guidance and support to the employer constituency in this unique tripartite UN agency, and a high proportion of IOE resources remain earmarked for ILO activities; for the three sessions per year of the Governing Body, the International Labour Conference (ILC), Sectoral and Experts’ meetings, and for work with specific ILO departments, such as Labour Standards and Employment Policy, as well as for daily contact with the ILO Bureau for Employers’ Services, ACT/EMP, and the coordination of employer participation in ILO meetings in the regions.
Two of the discussion items on the agenda of the 103rd Session of the ILC, transitioning from the informal to the formal economy, and forced labour, had been proposed by the Employers’ Group.

Difficulties experienced at the outset of the informality discussion were largely due to the ILO preparatory document not providing a useful starting point for a practical foundation towards a Recommendation in 2015.

However, under the leadership of Mr Alex Frimpong (Ghana), the Employers’ Group argued that the proposed conclusions erroneously implied that informality was solely about workers. This implication had resulted in the misconception that all efforts at transition to formality should be aimed at formalising employment in order to guarantee and protect workers’ rights.

Mr Frimpong made a strong case for the conclusions to recognise that the informal economy comprised enterprises and entrepreneurs. He called for a gradual transition to formality that was enabled by an environment that supported viable businesses.

The conclusions acknowledged enterprises and entrepreneurs, and the need for the promotion of property and land rights to provide collateral for accessing formal financing. A further gain for Employers was that the preamble to the proposed instrument made reference to job creation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as to the 2007 ILO Sustainable Enterprises Resolution. There was also clear direction for governments to formulate and implement an integrated policy framework for the generation of quality jobs in the formal economy.

During the 2015 ILC discussion on this topic, the Employers will argue along similar lines.

The Forced Labour debate proceeded well under the guidance of lead Employer Spokesperson Ed Potter (USA) and the outcome provided a clear bridge between the issues of human trafficking and the realities of forced labour today.

Central to the Employers’ aim was shifting the focus from compensation to remedy. And,
whilst ILO member states were called to exercise and support due diligence by both the public and private sector to prevent and respond to the risks of forced or compulsory labour, there was no inclusion of supply chain provisions or further obligations on companies. The adoption of the Protocol, which supplements core ILO Convention 29, was unanimously supported by the Employers’ Group and will guide the follow-up to the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Whilst the recurrent discussions at the ILC do not always entirely meet Employer expectations as set out in the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation, the 2014 discussion on Employment benefited from a generally positive and constructive atmosphere.

Despite the Workers arguing for a link to be recognised in the conclusions between job insecurity and temporary and part time work, the Employers maintained that it was not helpful to condemn forms of work that enabled flexibility, especially given their growing popularity and prevalence.

With Alberto Echavarría (Colombia) leading the Employer team for this discussion, conclusions were successfully negotiated that reflected the fundamental proposition that in order to create jobs, there needed to be sustainable enterprises. The Employers viewed the action-oriented conclusions as providing impetus to ILO work for an enabling environment for business, as well as supporting the allocation of adequate funding for this core activity.

As in recent years, the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) proved contentious, with the crux of the problem in 2014 lying in the Workers’ refusal to accept conclusions other than those of the “double-footnoted” cases (those involving the most serious violations of labour standards). In a vote-face towards the end of the Conference, the Workers objected to the insertion of wording in the conclusions, which they had accepted in 2013, to the effect that the Employers did not agree that a right to strike was recognised in Convention 87. This resulted in the conclusions of 19 out of 25 cases being blocked by the Workers, some concerning major violations of fundamental ILO Conventions including child labour.

Despite constructive Employer proposals for a solution, the impasse persisted and the Experts compounded the difficulty by stating that the ILO constituent Groups could not be permitted to disagree. The Employers nevertheless remained consistent and united, in an attitude that was maintained in further work in this area throughout the year.
At stake here was not only the credibility of the CAS, but of the whole ILO standards supervisory system, adding weight to the Employers’ argument for the need to address the entire topic with a multi-stranded approach to resolve the deficiencies across the supervisory system and to make it fit for purpose. This in effect meant a broad reform package.

Following the ILC, a great deal of work was undertaken within GB sessions and informal consultations to resolve the impasse. The IOE also made representations to government missions in Geneva to inform them of the Employers’ approach.

For much of the year, there was talk of referring the question of the existence of a right to strike in Convention 87 to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), but statements were issued during the tripartite meeting of Experts in February, involving 32 Government representatives (including 16 advisers), 16 Employers and 16 Workers, that marked a sea change.

A joint statement of the Employers and Workers recognised the right to industrial action as a means to resolve industrial disputes - but not a right to strike within the scope of ILO Convention 87; a Government statement recognised the link between Freedom of Association and the Right to Strike, but NOT an absolute right to strike and with the basic condition that industrial disputes be addressed at national level in line with national circumstances and regulation.

This work paved the way for a document mapping a way forward at the March 2015 GB.

THE ILO GOVERNING BODY (GB)

The Standards Initiative was one of many important topics that demanded a strong Employer voice in the ILO. Following the February consultations, the March GB took a number of key decisions, including not to pursue for the time being any referral to the ICJ to address the interpretation of Convention 87 in relation to the right to strike. Further progress was made towards taking the necessary steps to ensuring the effective functioning of the CAS at the upcoming ILC, in particular a new approach to establishing the list of cases for examination, and the adoption of conclusions. It was also agreed that a tripartite working group of 16 Government, eight Employer and eight Worker representatives would be created to advance the implementation of the ILO Standards Review Mechanism (SRM).

Over the three sessions, the Employers participated in the debate on the ILO’s strategic policy framework (SPF) for 2016 - 2017, noteworthy for influencing the allocation of resources and the policy orientation of the ILO in the coming years. The ILO’s system for measuring outcomes had been questioned by the Employers in November and the GB returned in March with an amended SPF which was supported by the Group. This included additional funds for the Sustainable Enterprises Outcome, as well as for skills and youth within the More and Better Jobs Outcome.
Objections were made in November and March to the way in which the Office described concepts such as “unacceptable forms of work”, which had not been duly discussed and defined in tripartite settings. Further areas attracting the Employers’ attention were the focus on supply chains, where our Group argued for outcomes to improve conditions for both workers and employers operating within and outside global value chains. This work will pave the way for the supply chain discussion to take place at the 2016 ILC.

Outcomes of the February consultations also impacted positively on the work of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA), which in March began a year-long review of its working methods, including admissibility criteria for CFA complaints; geographical balance in cases for examination and CFA agenda setting. Internal reflections will also take place, inter alia, on the CFA’s mandate and definition of freedom of association.

In March, the CFA once again examined the case of Venezuela following renewed government hostility towards FEDECAMARAS. The IOE made swift representation to the ILO for urgent action, and called on the global employer community to unite in condemnation of the treatment being experienced by the private sector in Venezuela. The gravity of the situation was subsequently widely reported in the media.

The IOE continued to advocate in the GB for an effective Development Cooperation Strategy (formerly Technical Cooperation Strategy) based on the real needs of ILO constituents and centred on core priorities such as capacity building in the area of social dialogue.

With the ILO Sectoral Activities programme providing the ILO with a wider window on the real world of work, the IOE organised and supported the Employer participation in the meetings outlined under the Year in Review chapter.

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**WORKING WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

The IOE enjoys a long-established reputation on the global stage and formal consultative status across the UN system and elsewhere. Thanks to its worldwide membership, it also has the legitimacy to speak for the employer community as a whole in international forums.

For these reasons, the IOE is regularly invited to speak as the global voice of business in the growing number of organisations that recognise the value of engagement with the private sector.
Often a common goal is shared, in which case we are not arguing the opposite point of view, but rather building relationships, complementing and enriching the approach of partner organisations such as BIAC, ICC, BUSINESSEUROPE, Business Africa, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and more.

We also give other organisations a platform at IOE events. At the first IOE Leaders’ Forum in 2014, IOM Director-General Ambassador William Lacy Swing noted, “We look on businesses as a great ally in the question of how to manage all this human mobility in a manner that comes out well for everyone.” The IOE and IOM have joined forces in promoting ethical recruitment across borders in a mutually beneficial initiative for workers and businesses.

Advancing the business agenda internationally on behalf of members and partner companies requires informed technical expertise and solid policy recommendations. These are forged in the IOE’s five policy working groups.

The outcomes of the work of these groups are fundamental to the three strategic objectives of engaging in effective advocacy, of supporting and strengthening member organisations and equipping global companies for success in a global environment.

These include the OHCHR, the Human Rights Council, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the International Bar Association (IBA), the World Bank, the Council of Europe, the EU, ECOSOC, ISO, G20, G7, WHO, UN Global Compact, UNCTAD, UNDP, and UNIDO.
IOE POLICY WORKING GROUPS

With a view to creating added value, to harnessing the rich knowledge and experience of IOE members and partner companies, to providing policy orientation and products, and to strengthening the ownership and use of the IOE policy material, the 2013 IOE General Council endorsed the creation of IOE Policy Working Groups for five core areas of engagement: CSR and Business & Human Rights; Industrial Relations; Employment; International Labour Migration, and Sustainable Development.

CSR AND BUSINESS & HUMAN RIGHTS

As we have seen, there is a great deal of activity in this area at all levels. The members of this policy working group met in June and November 2014 in Geneva to exchange updates and experiences of a range of issues. In addition to policy group meetings, the IOE was actively involved in some 20 further business and human rights-related events over the period. These are highlighted in the Year under Review and include the high-level event in cooperation with the Business Federation of Western Switzerland (FER) in November, and the 3rd UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in December.

Discussion items for this Working Group included strategy for involvement in the intergovernmental working group to take forward the Ecuador initiative for a binding international treaty on business and human rights. The Group also explored the work of OHCHR and others on access to remedy; the latest developments in the Council of Europe’s work on a non-binding instrument on business and human rights; progress on the content and structure of National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles; outcomes from the African Human Rights Forum in September; a look ahead to the annual UN Business and Human Rights Forum in Geneva; the state of play in the Shift-Mazars initiative on a certifiable standard for human rights reporting, as well as a report on the September ILO-OECD Roundtable on supply chain management in the textile and garment sector.
Output from the Group and associated business and human rights activity during the year included three CSR Newsletters, an infographic mapping current initiatives and an IOE Position Paper on “Making Access to Remedy a Reality for All”.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

This policy working group also enjoyed a high level of participation and output. With meetings on 3 June, 6 November and 24 March, agenda topics included wage policy, the diversity of frameworks for industrial action, including strike action, labour dispute prevention, mediation and resolution, and the impact on business of the work of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association.
The range of outcomes documents included an IOE Global Study on Strike Action, based on a member survey conducted by IOE Adviser Alessandra Assenza, and a publication entitled Do ILO Conventions 87 and 98 recognise a right to strike?

**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION**

With the private sector increasingly being called upon to contribute to the global migration debate, the IOE Policy Working Group on International Labour Migration was launched in June 2014. A focal point to bring members up-to-date with activity in this area and to craft the business message for the debates, the meeting heard of the IOE’s collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration on its ethical recruitment framework (IRIS), as well as of the work of Senior Adviser Frederick Muia with the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the Global Migration Group.

The policy group launched the IOE position paper on International Labour Migration in December 2014.

**EMPLOYMENT**

This policy working group held meetings at the end of May 2014 and in February 2015. Topics explored included income inequality, creating an enabling environment for business, and the ILO Global Employment Trends report, followed by growth and jobs, and productivity. Participation is growing, with the Group under the responsibility of Adviser Ms Thannaetchimy Thanagopal.

Outcome documents included publications on Understanding Income Inequality, Productivity, and Jobs and Growth.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Launched at the 2013 ILC on the occasion of the discussion on Green Jobs, this policy working group collaborated virtually and contributed to publications including The IOE update – Pathway to Sustainable Development Goals post-2015, as well as the Fact Sheet on Global Development Goals (MDGs and SDGs).
IOE NETWORKS

With a strategic focus on equipping global companies to navigate international regulations, expectations and environments, the IOE continued to develop its networks.

GLOBAL INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS NETWORK (GIRN)

The Global Industrial Relations Network (GIRN) went from strength to strength, and now has a membership of some 40 companies operating internationally.

A new GIRN website was launched as a confidential space for members to come together around areas of common interest, and to benefit from insights and exchanges on global international relations topics. With the launch in February of the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework, experiences of the new framework in supporting human rights performance reporting were shared.

Two physical meetings took place, in New York (October 2014) and The Hague (April 2015).

GLOBAL OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH NETWORK GOSH

The Global Occupational Safety and Health Network (GOSH) also continued to be a valued network. As with the GIRN, member-oriented agendas ensured that topics remained relevant and timely. Members explored communications and marketing techniques to enhance OSH awareness and performance; resilience across global operations; OSH issues raised by an ageing workforce, and global OSH strategies in the mining industry.
The GOSH network held two meetings during the period, in Amsterdam (September 2014) and in Paris (March 2015).

GLOBAL APPRENTICESHIPS NETWORK

The IOE-BIAC initiated Global Apprenticeships Network (GAN) was established as an independent association. The IOE continued to promote membership of the GAN as a key means to ensure skills for business, and to address the youth unemployment crisis. The GAN continues to grow, with board members including the CEOs of leading companies Telefónica, UBS, Adecco Group, Hilton Worldwide, Huawei Technologies and Samsung Electronics, as well as representatives of IOE member federations ANDI (Colombia), APINDO (Indonesia), CGEM (Morocco) and MEDEF (France). February saw the launch of a national GAN network in Turkey, hosted by TISK.

COMMUNICATIONS

With more than 300 items published during the year, comprising news, information, guidance, reports and advice, there is close collaboration between the IOE communications, translation, and policy teams to provide timely and relevant material in the most appropriate and accessible formats. We strive to make the majority of our material available in English, French and Spanish to meet the needs of our global membership.

With this range of material, we aim to equip stakeholders to participate in labour and social policy debate at national and international level. Our website is the focus of ongoing development in terms of layout and functionality, with improvements planned to enhance more direct engagement. We frequently refresh our news posts, and, for those who prefer a round-up, our Newsletter recaps the highlights with more
than 15 issues reaching our members annually in three languages.

With more and more of us increasingly on the move, our mobile application to support member participation in the 2015 International Labour Conference was launched mid-May in English, French and Spanish. As last year, this was accompanied by a micro-site dedicated to providing near real time updates on developments and outcomes in ILC discussions, as well as background material and key points of interest to ensure our delegates are fully equipped to negotiate the best outcomes for employers.

For members who are not able to travel to Geneva, these resources allow them to feel part of the Conference activity and to be updated on trends in international labour standards and debate impacting their national membership.

Aware of the growing importance of social media in reaching out to existing and wider audiences, the IOE’s Twitter and Facebook presence continued to grow. Last year, we reported some 300 Twitter followers, a number that has risen to almost 600. We amplify our members’ tweets, thus more widely diffusing the voice of business for greater impact. Visits to our Facebook page have also increased, with more than 700 Facebook users enjoying global employer solidarity and worldwide engagement on topics of shared interest via our page.

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**@iobebusiness** 4 at
Have you seen the latest @iobebusiness Fact Sheet on Productivity bit.ly/Tx0YNe8

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**@iobebusiness** 3 at
Cost-benefit analysis of risk prevention for business travellers now available thanks to @WHO bit.ly/IUcE4r

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**@iobebusiness** 2 at
MT @kassidyj: job creation that brings women & youth into labour force, use apprenticeship; top priority 4 businesses says IOE

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**@iobebusiness** 2 at
MT @KarinFerro: #500Mjobs event, IOE Press urges making labour/re immigration a win-win situation thru flexible needs-based policies

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The General Council is the IOE’s principal governance body. Meeting once a year, and chaired by the President, the Council brings together the members to take decisions proposed by the Management Board and to exchange views and experiences. It takes decisions on the budget and accounts, formally adopts IOE policy positions and the annual work plan, as well as undertaking the election of its Officers in line with the Statutes.

The General Council also endorses the affiliation of new members and officially welcomed the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry at its 2014 session.

At the 2014 General Council, the presidency of the IOE was handed from Tan Sri Dato’ Azman Shah Haron (Malaysia), who had ably steered the organisation since 2011, to Daniel Funes de Rioja (Argentina) for a three-year mandate.

In his farewell remarks, Tan Sri Azman thanked the Management Board, the Regional Vice-Presidents and the Malaysian Employers’ Federation for their contributions and perspectives, which had supported him in carrying out the important role of President.
He congratulated the organisation on growing as the global voice of business during his presidency and expressed confidence that the organisation was in an excellent position to grow further in this role.

In his inaugural address as President, Daniel Funes reflected on the evolution of the organisation during his twenty years of engagement, from an organisation with a sole focus on the ILO, and international labour standards, to one that contributed to a range of labour and social policy debates and forums on behalf of business. This was as a result of other UN organisations, governmental processes and civil society organisations realising the added value of engaging with the private sector and that the IOE offered a representative, authoritative and global reference in this regard.

At the March 2014 session of the ILO Governing Body, there had been unanimous confirmation of the candidature of Mr Jørgen Rønnest of the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) for the post of IOE Vice-President for the ILO. Mr Rønnest began his three-year term on 28 May 2014.

2014 was an election year for the Regional Vice-Presidents and Ms Ronnie Goldberg retained the position for the North American Region; Mr Alexandre Furlan for Latin America; Ms Renate Hornung-Draus continued in the role for Europe, and Mr Kamran Rahman for Asia. Mr Mthunzi Mdwaba was warmly welcomed as the new Regional Vice-President for Africa.

**MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The IOE Management Board includes elected and co-opted officers drawn from the IOE’s membership, with due regard for a geographical balance that reflects the global nature of the organisation.

**Members of the IOE Management Board at 1 May 2015**

- Mr Daniel Funes de Rioja
- Mr Jørgen Rønnest
- Mr Alexandre Furlan
- Ms Ronnie Goldberg
- Ms Renate Hornung-Draus
- Mr Mthunzi Mdwaba
- Mr Kamran Rahman
- Mr José Maria Lacasa
- Mr Alberto Echavarria
- Ms Liu Hansong
- Ms Lidija Horvatić
- Mr Hiroyuki Matsui
- Mr Khalifa Mattar
- Mr Blaise Matthey
- Mr El-Mafoudi Megateli
- Mr Yegendra K. Modi
- Ms Marina Moskvina
- Ms Jacqueline Mugo
- Ms Garance Pineau
- Mr Bülent Pirier
- Mr Jorge de Reggi
- Mr Christopher Syder
- President (Argentina)
- Vice-President for the ILO (Denmark)
- Regional Vice-President (Latin America)
- Regional Vice-President (North America)
- Regional Vice-President (Europe)
- Regional Vice-President (Africa)
- Regional Vice-President (Asia)
- Treasurer (Spain)
- Member (Colombia)
- Member (China)
- Member (Croatia)
- Member (Japan)
- Member (United Arab Emirates)
- Member (Switzerland)
- Member (Algeria)
- Member (India)
- Member (Russian Federation)
- Member (Kenya)
- Member (France)
- Member (Turkey)
- Member (Mexico)
- Member (United Kingdom)
Based in Geneva, the IOE Secretariat, under the direction of the Secretary-General, is responsible, inter alia, for implementing the annual work plan within the strategic framework adopted by the General Council. It is also responsible for the day-to-day administration and financial management of the organisation under the supervision of the Treasurer.

In November 2014, IOE Secretary-General Brent Wilton announced his decision to step down at the end of March 2015 to pursue new opportunities. After 15 years with the IOE, Brent will be greatly missed by members and staff alike, and we wish him all the very best in his new career.

In line with the Statutes, the Management Board immediately began a process to select a new Secretary-General for appointment at its March 2015 session. The Board was delighted on that occasion to welcome Ms Linda Kromjong whose experience and expertise in the areas of human capital development, international industrial relations and business and human rights will enrich the work of the organisation. The members were informed on 23 March of the successful outcome of the process.
The IOE would like to thank the following companies for their support, as well as for sharing their experiences and expertise to the benefit of the global business community in the range of meetings in which they have participated alongside the IOE:

- The Coca-Cola Company
- Deutsche Post DHL
- Fasken Martineau
- Fragomen
- Littler
- Royal Dutch Shell
- Vale
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