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Joint IOE-ITUC Statement on the Systematic Review of ISO 26000:2010 “Social Responsibility”

The Systematic Review of ISO 26000:2010 “Social Responsibility” is currently taking place. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) together with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) publicly call upon its members to **“confirm”** the current version of ISO 26000:2010 and therefore not to start new work to revise this standard.

Social responsibility is of high importance to the IOE and ITUC. Employers and Workers were among the founding constituents of the International Labour Organization (ILO) more than 100 years ago, committing to the values of social justice and decent work. Our commitment to fundamental principles and rights at work, the ILO Social Justice Declaration, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other instruments for responsible business conduct and human rights remains firm and guides our work.

However, both our organisations, representing tens of millions of companies and hundreds of millions of workers, see no value in revising ISO 26000:2010 as:

- A revision of ISO 26000:2010 risks having a broader impact than intended, including deviating from universally-accepted and carefully-negotiated international labour standards and policies. Such a risk is particularly high given that the memorandum of understanding between the ILO and ISO was recently terminated.
- A revision is expected to follow the regular ISO Committee model which does not allow for effective participation of relevant stakeholders. ISO membership is not appropriate for addressing larger social issues, including human rights, which require truly representative processes that can balance the competing interests of the different stakeholders.
- A revision may undermine the character of ISO 26000:2010 as a guidance document by turning it into a management standard despite a clear consensus to not certify companies' human rights performance.

Instead of revising ISO 26000:2010, priority should be given to making ISO 26000:2010 a public good which can be obtained free of charge. This would certainly have an important impact on the uptake of ISO 26000:2010 and would help, especially smaller organizations, in implementing social responsibility.

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