

EFP vows socially responsible labour practices

LAHORE: Employers in the country are committed to promote socially responsible labour practices through social dialogue, while being fully determined to eliminate child labour with sustainable efforts, an industry official said on Tuesday.

“The global competitiveness reminds enterprises to adopt socially responsible labour practices and demands them to take concrete measures to sustain the efforts already made in the soccer ball industry and other sectors to eliminate child labour and forced labour,” said Ismail Suttar, President Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) addressing a tripartite plus meeting.

The meeting, aimed to promote social dialogue on socially responsible labour practices, was organised by EFP in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO). Suttar also said the most important challenge was to replicate these efforts in the lower tiers of the supply chain.

Earlier, Zahoor Awan, General Secretary PWF, in his remarks emphasised the compliance with national and international standards was a national necessity for the growth of industry and business in Pakistan.

“The joint efforts made by the employers and workers to eliminate child labour from the soccer ball industry are the result of intensive efforts of more than a decade,” Awan said. Khawaja Javed Akhtar, MD Forward Gear Sialkot, said the initiatives taken by the soccer ball industry can be replicated in the lower tiers of the supply chain. He added that it was necessary now to take measures to sustain them and to strive hard to ensure that the lower tiers of the supply chain are also declared labour free.

Muzammil Habib Shaikh, Project Coordinator ILO, said the ILO was committed to work with tripartite stakeholders to address the issues of child labour and forced labour on a sustainable basis.

Shaikh emphasised that the brands, multinational and national enterprises, employers and worker’s organisations and the government would have to work together closely to continue the social dialogue and find long-term solutions, which could sustain the positive results achieved in eliminating child labour.