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GEA PARTICIPATES IN IOE GREEN ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE IN CONAKRY, GUINEA

Introduction

The International Organization of Employers (IOE), in collaboration with the Federation of Employers' Organizations of West Africa (FOPAO), National Council of Employers of Guinea (CNP-Guinée) and the European Commission (EU), organized a Green Economy and Sustainable Development Conference from 12-13th December, 2018 in Conakry, Guinea. The aim of the conference was to bring West and Central African Employers Organizations together to review the work done so far in their respective economies on green economy, sustainable development as well as job creation. Participants were therefore drawn from Mali, Ghana, Togo, Chad, Zambia, Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Cameroon, Senegal, Congo, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Guinea.

Also present at the conference were the Minister of Security and Civil Protection of the Republic of Guinea, Mr. Alpha Ibrahima Keira, Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister, Ms. Gnalen Conde' Bangour, Secretary-General of FOPAO, Mr. Ousseine Diallo, Director of Stakeholder Engagement at IOE, Mr. Mathias Thorns, President of the National Employers' Council of Guinea, Mr. Ansoumane Kaba, Former Executive Director of GEA, Mrs. Rose Karikari Anang and ILO ACT/EMP Employers' Specialist from Dakar, Ms. Julie Kazagui.

Topics/areas discussed

Representatives of the participating Employers Organizations made presentations on the following topics:

- Integrating existing environmental frameworks into national policies in West and Central Africa
- National and business experiences in promoting a Green Economy
- Updates related to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Green Transition

- Tools, instruments and frameworks-what support is available to fully unleash the potential of the economy
- Sustainable Development-what new services can employers' organizations offer to their members?
- National and International approaches promoting sustainable development in Africa.

Summary and recommendations of the Conference

1. Information from the various presentations and discussions indicated that employers' organizations and their members as well as their national governments were conscious of the impact of economic activities on the environment and the need to mainstream environmental concerns in all aspect of development planning.
2. Presentations of the ILO indicated that movement towards a Green Economy requires implementation of policies and strategies that would not make economic actors, especially employers and workers worse off, a concept they referred to as Just Transition. To ensure Just Transition, the ILO recommended that "green policies" be implemented gradually.
3. The Conference also suggested that national governments be encouraged to issue green bonds/climate bonds to finance environmental related issues in their countries to drive sustainable development. For instance, Ghana could issue green bonds to address the "Galamsey" activities on our environment and create environmentally related firms and jobs (Green Jobs); Nigeria is performing well on this.
4. The presentations further revealed that environmental laws or "green laws" have been enacted by most of the participating countries. Ghana presented its Green Laws and policies, which include the:

Environmental Protection Agency 1994 (Act 490), Renewable Energy Act, 2011 (832), Energy Commission Act, 1997 (Act 541), National environmental policy, National climate change policy, Environmental fiscal reform policy, National Sanitation Policy and Renewable Energy Masterplan (REMP). The availability of these laws and policy presents an opportunity for employers interested in, say renewable energy, to invest for wealth creation.

5. It also emerged that increasing green jobs is imperative for sustainable development. Therefore, employers should advocate for more national green initiatives to avoid harmful environmental effects, such as climate change, that negatively impact economic and business activities. It is estimated that 1 percent increase in global temperature reduces economic activities (Gross Domestic Products) by 1.5 percent.



Mr. Ansoumane Kaba, President of National Employers' Council of Guinea delivering his speech. Seated from right are Mr. Mathias Thorn, Mr. Alpha Ibrahima Keira and Mr. Ousseine Diallo

GEA JOINS STAKEHOLDERS TO VALIDATE THE DRAFT NATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY OF GHANA

1.0 Introduction

The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) organized a stakeholders' workshop from 17-18th December, 2018 at the Volta Hotel in Akosombo, of which the Ghana Employers' Association participated. The ultimate objective of the workshop was to build policy coherence in the area of labour migration by providing a platform for relevant stakeholders to discuss and validate the draft national labour migration policy. More specifically, the workshop aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Discuss and validate the draft national labour migration policy
- Discuss key issues and steps for finalizing the national labour migration policy
- Discuss the policy implementation plan and the roles of different stakeholders in policy implementation.

2.0 Participation

The workshop was attended by about twenty-five (25) participants representing Heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies, and organizations involved in the drafting of the National Labour Migration Policy. Other participants include representatives of International Organization of Migration (IOM), Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) and International Labour Organization (ILO).

3.0 Conclusion

The workshop was successful as various issues of concern relating to employers, the institutional arrangement and implementation framework, maximization of the development impacts of labour migration, systems for the protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families, as well as mechanisms to promote good governance of labour migration were discussed for consideration before the policy document is presented to parliament for approval.

4.0 Background to the Policy Design

In recognition of the developmental impacts of migration and the challenges associated with its governance, the government of Ghana launched and adopted a National Migration Policy in April 2016 to provide a framework for migration governance in the country. While the National migration policy provides broad policy strategies for managing migration, it also recommended the formulation of sectoral policies to deal with specific migration-related issues. In line with this recommendation, as well as increased reportage on the abuse of the rights of Ghanaian migrants in some countries of destination, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) is spearheading the development of the National Labour Migration Policy to guide the management of Labour migration in, to and from Ghana.

In order to ensure policy coherence and ownership, the development of Ghana National Labour Migration Policy involved a systematic collaborative and consultative process. The policy development began with the appointment of a labour migration consultant to work with an inter-ministerial Technical Working Group, as well as Development Partners to draft the policy.

The Technical Working Group was composed of different stakeholders, selected from various ministries, departments, agencies, and civil society groups. The policy drafting process began with a situational analysis, which was conducted by the labour migration consultant to provide useful information on the socio-economic context of labour migration in Ghana.

GEA Wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous 2019!!!