



committee
on workers'
capital

press release

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Committee on Workers' Capital launches Investor Briefing on Forced Labour

Forced labour is as much an issue of investment risk, as it is a matter of social responsibility.

The Global Unions Committee on Workers' Capital (CWC) announces the publication of its latest briefing paper: Investing in Decent Work: The case for investor action on forced labour.

Investments in companies that employ forced labour present diverse sources of risk - political, legal, regulatory, and reputational threats - that could ultimately affect a company's share price, operational performance and long-term financial viability.

The research finds that investors are responding to these risks and examines four separate investor initiatives on forced labour. The cases included the pig iron supply chain in Brazil, cotton picking in Uzbekistan, cocoa farming in West Africa and state-sanctioned forced labour in Burma.

Ken Georgetti, Chair of the CWC and President of the Canadian Labour Congress said: "Forced labour is one of the worst forms of oppression workers face. Investors have a key role to play in the global fight against this exploitative practice. They must actively use their power as shareholders to ensure the companies they invest in have banned the use of forced labour and are equipped to take pro-worker measures when forced labour is found in their supply chains."

"Despite promising efforts, comprehensive and sector-wide commitments to ban the use of forced labour are still lacking. This publication strengthens the case for those who are seeking to influence investors to behave more responsibly", said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

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Closing with a call to action, the briefing paper provides clear guidance for investors wishing to engage companies on forced labour. It stresses that institutional investors, and trade union trustees in particular, can build on existing policy frameworks such as the UN Principles for Responsible Investment and the ILO Core Labour Standards, and work with organisations such as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) at the global level to mitigate the observed barriers.

Download the paper at: www.workerscapital.org

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about the CWC

The CWC brings together representatives of the international labour movement to share information and develop strategies for joint action in the field of workers' capital. CWC works on shareholder activism, corporate and financial market governance, pension trustee education and economically targetted investments.