

## **Item 172 – Observer Status in the GA for the International Organisation of Employers**

Mr. President,

First of all let me congratulate you on your election and assure you of Germany's support for you as well as the Bureau in leading the work of the Sixth Committee.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Germany, Turkey and France in presenting the resolution to grant observer status for the International Organization of Employers in the General Assembly. This petition is put forward together with the request to grant observer status to the International Trade Union Confederation in the General Assembly that will be presented by France.

The resolution to grant observer status to the International Organization for Employers, IOE, is co-sponsored by:

- Germany
- France
- Turkey
- Denmark
- Gabon
- Luxembourg
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sweden
- Belgium
- Colombia
- Croatia
- Estonia
- Finland
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Mexico
- Norway
- Poland
- Romania
- Sri Lanka

Mr. President,

For nearly 100 years, the IOE plays an outstanding role in creating a sustainable economic environment, in collaboration with its members, that promotes free enterprise and is fair and beneficial to both business and society. It has played a crucial role in the cooperation between the private sector and government on national and international level and would bring a significant added value to the work of the General Assembly in this respect. The IOE is already strongly engaged in supporting the aims of the United Nations. As observer to the General Assembly, the IOE could

ensure that the view of employers and of the private sector is taken into account on important subjects and discussions such as the Agenda 2030, sustainable development and economic growth, climate and environmental questions, gender aspects in the working sphere, migration and the role of youth.

Also, the United Nations is seeking to widen partnerships and deepening the dialogue with civil society of which employers are an important part. The IOE is one of the largest networks of the private sector globally representing 50 million businesses through its business and employer organization members in 150 countries. For almost 100 years, the IOE is representing business in social and employment policy debates on national and international level and across the UN G20 and other emerging forums.

Mr. President,

In its decision 49/426 of 9 December 1994, the GA has decided that observer status shall be limited to States and intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly.

It's unquestionable that activities of the IOE are of interest to the GA, but it's true that the IOE is not an intergovernmental organization. However, the GA has since 1994 made exceptions to these criteria when the importance and the history of the organization justified it.

In our view, the IOE is an organization that absolutely qualifies for such an exception given the value that it could bring to the debates in the GA as an observer.

The IOE, is one of the three constituents of the International Labour Organization, one of the oldest specialized UN agencies that is bringing together government, employer and worker representatives to set labor standards, develop policies and devise programs aimed at promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all as well as Sustainable Development Goal 8. In our view, it is time that the status of the IOE is also reflected in the global governance system of the UN.

Mr. President,

In March 2019, during its 335<sup>th</sup> session, the ILO Governing Body has supported the request of the IOE and the ITUC to be granted observer status in the General Assembly.

And in its resolution 73/342 on the future of work, adopted on 16 September 2018, the GA has encouraged "a dialogue and a productive cooperation between the different organs, funds, programs and specialized institutions of the UN including the representatives of the organization of employers and workers (...) with the aim to strengthen the coherence of policies".

In granting the observer status to the IOE we would collectively provide the institutional means for this mutually beneficial dialogue.

Thank you.