Friday, 30 October, item 4 “**Articles from 16 to 24**”: IOE (ECOSOC Status), Speaker is Mr Matthias

Thorns in person delivery

Dear Chair

As expressed already Premature to discuss Institutional arrangements in view of the fact that there is no agreement about the basics of the content of draft treaty, such as definitons, scope, jurisdiction, and so on. What we have seen in the last days is that states are far apart on crucial issues. And that the draft text in fronts of us is far away from having the support of a critical mass of governments.

Let me nevertheless comment on art 16, para 4: If you have a list of vulnerable people there is always the danger that some groups are not mentioned. I appreciate that the list starts with the words “such as”, which shows that these are only examples. Still, one group which for sure should be mentioned is the LGTBI Community. Homosexuality is criminalized in more than 70 countries around the world. This is far more than one third of all countries. This shows how vulnerable this community is.

However, this leads me to the wider question how a company can ensure diversity and non-discrimination in an environment where the state`s law are not respecting basic human rights. And I would like to quote again from the report of the UN Working Group to the Human Rights Council:

I quote: “*A lack of government leadership in addressing governance gaps remains the biggest challenge. A fundamental issue is that host Governments are not fulfilling their duty to protect human rights, either failing to pass legislation that meets international human rights and labour standards, passing legislation that is inconsistent, or failing to enforce legislation that would protect workers and affected communities*.”

This is the biggest problem we need to address. We need to strengthen accountability by governments to implement and enforce human rights in their country. The IOE, its members in 150 countries and the more than 50 million companies they represent are committed to move the human rights agenda forward.

As we have stressed in the first session on Monday: What is needed now is leadership to reverse direction. A full reboot has the chance to bring relevant countries into the room which have been outside so far and to turn the discussions into real global and inclusive discourse. Business is committed to help in this regard.

Thank you