



Attendees:

Anna Walker (Levi Strauss)  
Anita Househam (Secretariat)  
Judith Hoyles on behalf of Joanna Walgrave (ILO)  
Lynda Yanz (MSN)  
Maggie Burns (Secretariat)  
Neil Kearney (ITGWLF)  
Paul Dearman (Tesco)  
Sasha Radovich (Secretariat)  
Simon Zadek (Chair)  
Susan Hayter (ILO)

Apologies:

Fiona Sadler (Marks & Spencer)  
Meriel Hoban (Next)

## 1. Update Working Groups

### Americas

The MFA Forum would like to establish collaboration with the BSR responsible competitiveness program in Central America to be launched soon. The Chair reported that the dialogue on this issue is currently open for discussion.

### Bangladesh

Chair of the BD group, Paul Dearman, informed the ExCo of last week's meeting of the Multistakeholder Forum Bangladesh (MFB). The relevant outcomes of this meeting will be fed to the Bangladesh Buyers Group and ExCo.

### Lesotho

The group is currently working on getting a MFA Forum delegation of Buyers to Lesotho, following indications that orders will be dropping in the new year with dramatic effect on the country's employment. The proposed time is mid February to correspond with the ILO Better Work Programme launch. However, ExCo was informed that Better Work Lesotho was still in resource mobilization phase and it was therefore unlikely that the project launch would take place by February.

Additional Buyers have been approached to join the visit.

Action:

- The Secretariat will put a short note around to ExCo, highlighting what we are aiming to achieve from this Lesotho initiative, and to request suggestions on its methodology.
- Simon Zadek and Joanna Walgrave (ILO) will meet on the 12<sup>th</sup> December.

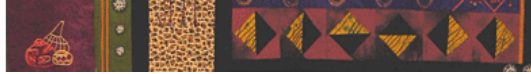
### Romania

The planned visit to Bucharest on the 7<sup>th</sup> December has been postponed until the new year.

Action:

- The Secretariat/ILO will set the new date for the visit as soon as possible.
- The Secretariat will compile a list of potential buyers to join the delegation

# The MFA Forum



## Morocco

The Forum and the ILO are on track with the development in Morocco.

### Responsible Closure

As part of its ongoing fundraising efforts, the Secretariat was invited to a meeting at the German development agency, GTZ with the Social Standards Team and the head of the Partnerships team, and there may be an opportunity to co-finance some piloting work on the Responsible Closures Guidelines. ILO raised a question regarding the status of the guidelines. The document would not have normative status but is a living text for the purposes of piloting. It is not a consensual text and does not necessarily represent the views of the ExCo or MFA Forum more broadly.

Action:

- The Secretariat will prepare a text for consideration by the ILO before any decision is taken to release the document.

### Purchasing Practices

The Secretariat is in the final stages of getting sign-off from the Brands involved in the Purchasing Practices survey before the report goes online. The Secretariat has also reached out to NGOs to explore the potentiality of action against companies based on this research, but has received feedback from NGOs that this is not likely, as it shows a positive step on the part of the MFAF.

Action:

- The Report will be released to the public domain by the end of this month.
- The Secretariat will meet with the Chair on the 10<sup>th</sup> December to discuss next steps before scheduling a Group teleconference.
- The Secretariat will reach out to the whole Forum requesting RSVP for the first Purchasing Practices WG teleconference. The Terms of Reference will be attached.

## 2. MFA Forum Secretariat

### Recruitment of Senior Manager

The Secretariat has interviewed 5 candidates for the position, and was pleased with the high quality of applicants. Three finalists will be put through to the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of interview by a panel of participants and Simon Zadek. It is anticipated that a decision is made by the New Year.

## 3. Finance & Fundraising

### Financial Update

The financial report included confirmed business contributions starting in January 2008.

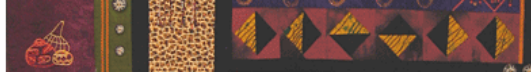
### Fundraising, update and next steps

The Secretariat is confident that we can secure approx. \$250,000-300,000 for the 2008 calendar year through business contributions. Most brands have committed to some level of contribution, and the downside risk has been almost non-existent.

There is still no clarification from the public sector on their decisions, although a proposal is sitting with DFID, and we are in the process of finalizing a proposal to SIDA, who have already received a first draft. USAID has indicated they are open to consider a 2<sup>nd</sup> phase funding after our 2 year grant expires in September 2008. A result of this discussion has led to a conference to be held in Washington DC 14<sup>th</sup> January in order to broaden the Forum's exposure.

Action:

- Levi Strauss will send the Secretariat additional contacts this week for the Washington conference



## 4. International Convening

The Secretariat proposes that the next international convening is held in June 2008 New York as it keeps up with the original decision of rotating between North Americas and Europe. There have been suggestions to host it in Maseru or Dhaka. It is noted that for many nationalities, it is difficult to get US visas. Some ExCo members raise the question of whether the Forum is ready to host another international convening, before significant progress has been reached in some of the Working Groups. The International convenings act as effective and important drivers, and it is important ExCo considers both of these aspects before reaching a decision.

Action:

- The Secretariat will run an offline session with ExCo members individually to discuss and decide on when and where to host the convening.

## 5. Next In-person Meeting

18<sup>th</sup> January 2008, London

It is not yet certain whether we have quorum for this meeting, as currently no NGO representatives have confirmed attendance.

Action:

- The Secretariat will confirm attendance and ensure quorum.

## 6. AOB

Collaboration between the MFA Forum and BSR

Concern was raised in the previous ExCo regarding the role of BSR and the MFA Forum. Following this Sasha has been in conversation with BSR on the technical issues regarding this collaboration.