



**European Union
Statement**

International Labour Conference

104th session

(1st-13th June 2015)

**Committee on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Decent and Productive
Employment Creation**

EU Closing Statement

Geneva, 10 June 2015

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

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Creation**

EU Closing Statement

Thank you Chair.

I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

First of all we would like to reiterate our thanks to the Office for the report on SMEs and decent and productive employment creation, which provided a sound basis for our debate in the Committee.

We would like to thank the Chair, and the Vice-Chairs and interpreters, for their work in leading the Committee's discussion. We would also like to acknowledge, and express our gratitude for, the hard work of the Office and the long hours they have put into assisting the Committee in order for us to complete our work. Your support and encouragement made stay on Saturday bearable and worth the while!

Our special thanks go to the representatives of the Workers' and the Employers' groups, and to the other governments, for their engaged and constructive contribution to our discussions here in the Committee. We are particularly pleased that a common understanding could be found in the Committee, taking on board the key objectives and legitimate concerns of all constituents. The consensus we found proves that an ILC of two weeks is doable.

We support the conclusions of the Committee that underline that SMEs are vital for decent and productive work and prosperity. And that next to generic economic policies there is a clear need for SME specific support. We discussed main constraints and possible solutions in terms of interventions in which the ILO, Member States and social partners all have a role to play. Also that it is of great importance to base these specific policies on evidence-based research. In that field additional efforts are needed. Moreover policies need to take into account national specifics and characteristics of SMEs and have a special eye for women, young people and vulnerable groups.

We feel it important that efforts aimed at SMEs are mainstreamed in the ILO's work and are an integral part of the program and budget for this biennium and years to come.

We consider that these conclusions will provide valuable guidance to the Office, to ourselves as governments, and to Workers and Employers, in our actions and efforts to unleash the full potential of job creation in SMEs in a way that these jobs are both productive and of good quality. The EU and its Member States look forward to use this guidance in our actions and take them on board during next year's ILC that deals with Global Value Chains.

Thank you Chair.