

May 8, 2017

Globalization and the G20: Business needs to be part of the solution

At a multi-stakeholder event held in Berlin last week, *Promoting Responsible Business through the G20: Due Diligence and Tackling Modern Slavery*, the message was clear: business must contribute to a fair and just economy through ensuring responsible conduct in their global supply chains.

The event, which was hosted by [Friedrich Naumann Stiftung](#), the [Business and Human Rights Resource Centre](#) (BHRRRC), and the [International Corporate Accountability Roundtable](#) (ICAR), and took place the day after representatives from the over seven hundred businesses that form the [Business-20](#) engagement group meet in the city for the B20 Summit. It brought together business representatives and associations, government officials, labor union representatives, and members of civil society to discuss the importance of due diligence in supply chains.

The former Human Rights Representative of the German Government, Markus Löning, introduced the discussions, which centered on the need for business to be part of the solution in addressing increasing inequality in the globalized international economy.

The first round of discussants focused on the need for coherence across G20 countries in relation to government expectations of business in relation to identifying, avoiding, mitigating, and remedying human rights abuses in their global supply chains. The second panel dove deeper into the case of modern slavery in supply chains, discussing state and business leadership in addressing the more than estimated 45 million people working under conditions of forced, child, and slave labor and opportunities for international progress.

As business joins [civil society](#) and [labor](#) in calling on the G20 to address due diligence in global supply chains, it is now up to the G20 countries to respond.

With the [G20 Labor and Employment Ministerial meeting](#) less than two weeks out, the event was a timely one. The German government has been [outspoken in its commitment](#) to addressing sustainable global supply chains during this year's G20 process. This follows from the German G7 Presidency in 2015, which saw governments from the world's seven largest economies [commit to](#) promoting better working conditions through increased transparency, risk prevention, access to remedy, and private sector implementation of human rights due diligence.

Stakeholders from across the globe and engagement groups are all hopeful that the 2017 G20 will produce strong commitments to increasing the sustainability of global supply chains, and establish policy coherence to better guide business.

More information about last week's event, including a list of speakers, is available [here](#).