

Title: Can we have more Renee Zellwegers in the movie “New in Town”?

Dear EEWG Friends,

Have you seen the comedy movie "New in Town"? Renee Zellweger, playing the part of a Miami businesswoman, is transferred to rural Minnesota and becomes transformed when she falls in love with a union representative, Harry Connick Jr., by gaining an understanding of the value of people and labor.

I am not saying all business people should fall in love with union representatives! However, at least we can see how people change when they internalize the importance of human values. Meaningful encounters matter.

The Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) and Global Compact Korea Network made a significant encounter possible. These two co-hosts held the International Seminar on the Labour Principles of the UN Global Compact and Sustainable Development Strategy on September 15, 2009 in Seoul, South Korea, with the sponsorship of UNDP Korea. It was attended by leaders and officials of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions and its member organizations, current and potential signatories of Global Compact Korea Network, and academics and civil society organizations.

As we all know, Corporation 20/20 has been advocating long term and coherent pictures of future corporations with diverse groups from law, labor, business, civil society, government, journalism and finance etc. This recent event has a similar composition. One or two events may not guarantee practical progress. However, where there is discord, it is very important to nurture common visions to surpass different perspectives and to explore ways to build mutual understanding and trust. I sincerely hope that these precious efforts for social dialogue can lead to many fruitful outcomes in the future.

Please also share with us your stories of what has been happening in your countries and regions in the area of labor. EEWG is eager to listen and learn from you.

Best Regards,

Angela

[Please see below: Program of the International Labor Seminar]

[Attachment: Summary of the International Labor Seminar]

[Program of the International Labor Seminar]

**International Seminar
on the Labour Principles of the UN Global Compact
and Sustainable Development Strategy**

- * Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2009 (8:30 am ~ 5:20 pm)
- * Venue: Press Conference Room of Press Center, 19th Floor, Seoul, South Korea
- * Co-hosted by the Federation of Korean Trade Unions and Global Compact Korea Network
- * Sponsored by UNDP Korea

8:30 ~ 9:00 Registration

MC: Lee, Jun-Suk, Team Manager, Global Compact Korea Network

9:00 ~ 09:10 (10 min.) Welcome and opening speeches

- Jang, Seok-Chun, President of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions
- Nam, Seung-Woo, President of Global Compact Korea Network

09:10 ~09:15 (5 min.) Congratulatory speech

- Zhe Yang, Representative of UNDP Korea

09:15 ~09:55 (40 min.) Session 1: “UN Global Compact and realization of decent work”

- Ursula Wynhoven, Head, Policy & Legal of Global Compact Office

09:55 ~ 10:35 (40 min.) Session 2: “UN Global Compact and labour principles: Focusing on involvement and engagement of international labour movement”

- Jim Baker, Coordinator of Council of Global Unions

10:35 ~ 11:40 (65 min.)

Session 3-1 (20 min.): “A good practice of a Korean corporation in employer and labour relations”

- Hwang, Sang-In, VP, LG Electronics

Session 3-2 (30 min.): “Promotion of social dialogue on labour issues: Global trends and domestic situation”

- Cho, Seung-Min, Chief Advisor of Economic and Social Development Commission

11:40 ~ 12:30 (40 min.) Q & A and discussion

(Moderator: Ju, Chul-Ki, VP and Secretary General of Global Compact Korea Network)

- Presenters of session 1, 2 and 3
- Ju, Chul-Ki, VP and Secretary General of Global Compact Korea Network
- Kang Choong-Ho, Spokesman & International Secretary of Federation of Korean Trade Unions

12:30 ~ 13:30 Lunch

13:30 ~ 14:00 (30 min.) Session 4: “Increase of corporate social responsibility for sustainable development: Focusing on compliance of labour principles by corporations”: Global trends and prospects of domestic situation

- Park, Young-Beom, Professor of Economics, Hansung University

14:00 ~ 14:30 (30 min.) Session 5: “Status of corporate social responsibility activities of Korean corporations and suggestions for improvement: Focusing on the labour principles of Global Compact”: Recommendations of how Global Compact can contribute to the improvement of basic labour rights and social unity

- Kwon, Sun-Won, Professor of Business Administration, Sookmyung Women’s University

14:30 ~ 14:50 (20 min.) Coffee break

14:50 ~ 15:50 (60 min.) Commentary Session (10 min. per person)

(Moderator: Kwak, Noh-Hyun, Professor of Law, Korea National Open University)

- Kang Choong-Ho, Spokesman & International Secretary of Federation of

Korean Trade Unions Korean Employers Federation

- Hwang, In-Cheol, Director of Bureau, Economic Research Bureau, Korean Employers Federation
- Jang, Keun-Seob, Director, International Cooperation, Ministry of Labor
- Lim, Hang, Labor Specialist & Editor, Kukmin Daily News
- Ju, Chul-Ki, VP and Secretary General of Global Compact Korea Network

15:50 ~ 17:20 (90 min.) Discussion: Interactive dialogue among all Korean and non-Korean presenters and commentators and the audience

17:20 Adjourn

[Summary of the International Labor Seminar]

Jang, Seok-Chun, President of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions opened this significant event saying, “FKTU joined Global Compact in 2007 as the first trade union signatory of South Korea...Derived from the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the labour principles of the UN Global Compact are core elements to realize social unity and sustainable development by guaranteeing the fundamental rights of workers who play a leading role in economic activities...I hope today’s seminar can provide the momentum to share activities of domestic and global trade unions and to explore concrete ways to realize decent works and corporate responsibility in actions.”

Nam, Seung-Woo, President of Global Compact Korea Network expressed the importance of the seminar in his opening speech saying, “On September 15, one year ago, the global economy melted down and caused a domino effect starting with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers...this seminar has been prepared to explore ways that we can overcome the potential economic and job security crisis for pursuing decent works. This is a problem that requires solutions from worldwide economic players, including South Korea, that will produce sustainable development.”

Ursula Wynhoven, the Head, Policy & Legal and Special Assistant to the Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact Office, opened her remarks by showing her appreciation for the inspirational collaborative efforts of the two co-hosts whose

example could be followed by other Global Compact Networks around the world. She explained some of the key assumptions on which Global Compact is based and their relevance for achieving and promoting decent works. As a person who leads the Global Compact Office's work programs on human rights and labour principles, she also highlighted some important new resources to help business to implement the labour principles of Global Compact with examples and practical guidance. One of these resources was distributed on site. This was the translated Korean version of "The Labour Principles of the United Nations Global Compact: A Guide for Business", the result of a collaborative effort between ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) and IOE (International Organization of Employers).

Jim Baker, Coordinator of the Council of Global Unions, saluted everyone's efforts in making a seminar that was "seeking to create a less conflictual 'space' to listen and talk and understand and build trust. If this experiment, based on the labour principles, succeeds, you will make a major contribution, not only to the quality of industrial relations, but to your country." By pointing out that precarious employment with disposable workers is not only a problem for workers and their unions, but also for employers and larger society, he emphasized that global sustainable solutions must be long term in order to overcome the world's economic, social and environmental problems based on short-termism.

Hwang, Sang-In, Vice President of LG Electronics presented the company's innovative practice of labor management with a candid description of past labor strikes and disputes in the 1980s. Through the leadership of top management, which focused on creating stable relations between management and workers, LG Electronics succeeded in establishing horizontal and mutually respecting labor and management relations based on support, recognition and understanding. Workplace-led labor management with open internal communication enabled LG Electronics to achieve a 20.8% increase in sales and a 42.3% increase in operating profits even during the 2008 recession year.

Cho, Seung-Min, Chief Advisor of the Economic and Social Development Commission, described South Korea's history of social dialogue among labor, business and government by explaining the theories of pluralism, state corporatism and societal corporatism. The 1998 Asian financial crisis introduced societal corporatism based social dialogue frameworks. From that time, the Economic and Social Development

Commission has generated power to overcome crises and ease societal conflicts. He spoke of the necessity of continuous endeavors for effective social dialogues that take into account similarities and differences between the good practices of European societal corporatism and the special context of South Korea.

Park, Young-Beom, Professor of Economics at Hansung University described global CSR trends and various labour related international standards and guidelines. He highlighted the impacts of these trends on the overseas operations of South Korean corporations, especially labor intensive small and medium enterprises, by describing examples of poor labor management of local workers in the Philippines and El Salvador. He praised the activities of active labor union and the efforts of the business sector and governmental supervision of labor management, but he also urged for more attention to be given to supply chain policies and the practices of large corporations. He stated that that government of South Korea should pay more attention on tackling these issues as they can cause foreign affairs problems.

Kwon, Sun-Won, Professor of Business Administration at Sookmyung Women's University, introduced the results of his research identifying the labour focused CSR status of South Korean companies. He collected data from 51 companies in the 10 labour related areas: family friendliness, high quality of life, non-discrimination, job creation and retention, investing for people and respecting people, law compliance, health and safety, sound industrial relations, labour participation and caring for local communities. Some important findings were the high level of performance and commitment in areas institutionalized by law, the relatively low level of performance of labour participation, and the strong influence of middle-long term vision and action plans on CSR within a company.

Kwak, Noh-Hyun, Professor of Law at Korea National Open University, moderated the diverse discussion panel session coming from labor, employer, government, the media and Global Compact Korea Network. He emphasized each sector's important role in pursuing the realization of good works and labour principles of Global Compact for sustainable development.

Kang Choong-Ho, Spokesman & International Secretary of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions Korean Employers Federation, emphasized that sound industrial relations

that honor labor values is not an option, but rather is a must-have element for sustainable development. He added that the invisible pressures of global trends, such as ISO 26000, has made this imperative even more important. He stressed the importance of active participation on the part of both labor and business including all large, medium and small enterprises together to resolve various labour issues in South Korea.

Hwang, In-Cheol, Director of Bureau of the Economic Research Bureau of Korean Employers Federation, described various business dilemmas that South Korean corporations have experienced in domestic and global contexts. He also pointed out the reality gap between the institutionalization and implementation of labor laws. He also talked about the efforts of South Korean corporations to find practical solutions for pursuing labour principles requested by international and domestic laws and standards.

Jang, Keun-Seob, Director of the International Cooperation of the Ministry of Labor, described the efforts of the Ministry of Labor in Vietnam, where he spent three years working with 1,600 factories, and parts of the supply chains of Nike and Adidas to improve labour practices. He also talked of the Ministry's endeavors to create cross ministry collaborations with the Ministry of Knowledge Economy by underscoring the strong willingness of the Korean government to improve socially responsible business practices and sustainable development.

Lim, Hang, Labor Specialist & Editor of the Kukmin Daily News, shared many insights based on his experiences working as a labor specialist, including the need to balance incentives and punishments in labor relations. He also illustrated some effective labor related dispute resolution practices within the Kukmin Daily News and emphasized the importance of protecting the rights of workers.

Ju, Chul-Ki, a former South Korean ambassador to France and current Vice President and Secretary General of Global Compact Korea Network, explained that Global Compact has played a major role as a dialogue platform for various social stakeholders under UN values. He spoke of the importance of maintaining good will and efforts for this kind of international labor seminar and expressed his hope for continuous endeavors for sustainable development of Korean society.