

## **Trilateral Joint Statement from the Trade and Labour Ministers of the United States, Japan, and the European Union on the International Labour Organization's Global Forced Labour Estimates**

Ambassador Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative, Secretary Marty Walsh, U.S. Department of Labor, Mr. Nishimura Yasutoshi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, Mr. Kato Katsunobu, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan, Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for Trade, European Commission, and Mr. Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, European Commission released the following joint statement on the International Labour Organization's Global Forced Labour Estimates on September 15, 2022.

We, the Trade and Labour Ministers of the United States, Japan, and the European Union, share a concern about the global situation on forced labour and the newly released forced labour estimates from the International Labour Organization (ILO), [Walk Free](#), and the International Organization for Migration's [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery report](#). We take note of the estimated 28 million individuals in forced labour, and that the number has increased by 3 million since 2016. Furthermore, 86 percent of those in forced labour are in the private sector compared with 14 percent who are in state-imposed forced labour. The number of women and girls in forced labour is 11.8 million, of which 3.3 million are children. Migrant workers face three times the risk of being in forced labour compared with non-migrant workers.

We acknowledge the challenges associated with data collection and measurement for hard to reach victims in forced labour, and underscore the importance of United Nations organizations, such as the International Labour Organization, being able to engage in transparent data, research, and independent assessments to inform evidenced-based policy making on human rights and international labour standards. We commend the statisticians and researchers who are committed to data integrity and transparency.

We reemphasize our commitment to eradicating all forms of forced labour, including state-sponsored forced labour, from our rules-based multilateral trading system, and resolve to strengthen national and international efforts to meet this commitment. There is a moral imperative that we do so. Additionally, recalling the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998, as amended in 2022, and the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization of 2008, violations of fundamental labour rights – including forced labour – should never be used to gain an unfair competitive advantage in our global trading system.

We acknowledge that eradicating forced labour requires a multifaceted and multistakeholder approach that addresses the root causes of forced labour. This includes promoting human rights and international labour standards through measures such as due diligence. Acknowledging that a majority of forced labour involves the private sector, we will continue working towards enhancing clarity and predictability for businesses by clearly communicating their responsibilities in addressing forced labour in global supply chains and encouraging stronger action by them.

We welcome the [2022 G7 Trade Ministers' Statement](#), and recall the 2021 [G7 Trade Ministers' Statement on Forced Labour](#) and the [2022 G7 Employment Ministers' Statement](#), and share a commitment to explore new policies and initiatives that contribute to the fight against forced labour in global supply chains. We intend to examine current trade and labour policies that need to be strengthened and address any existing gaps. We also recognize the importance of engaging in dialogue with relevant stakeholders, including in developing countries, to further efforts to eradicate forced labour, and identifying opportunities for sharing data, evidence, tools, and resources.

We thank the ILO for its leadership in addressing forced labour globally, including through utilizing its supervisory mechanism, providing technical expertise, proposing appropriate policy responses, fostering international cooperation, and measuring progress on national and global efforts to eradicate forced labour.