Grave fire and construction hazards in the workplace, extreme working hours, inadequate pay, gender based violence and restrictions on trade union rights as well as violence against trade unionists are all part of the everyday reality of global supply chains. These conditions have been the subject of increased political and societal debate since the fire disasters in Pakistan and Bangladesh in autumn 2012 and the Rana Plaza catastrophe in Bangladesh in spring 2013. Trade unionists and civil society actors are taking action in a variety of forms in production countries, in consumer states and on the international level in an effort to improve working conditions in global supply chains.

Over the course of our two-day symposium we aim to analyze and reflect on these various international and national strategies. The focus will be on the question of how existing efforts can be improved and better linked with one another. We will also examine the role law and legal interventions can play in this context.

The conference will be held in German and English, simultaneous translation will be provided.

The event is jointly organized by Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB) and Berlin based European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) and is supported by the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

1. Day, 3.9.2015

09:00-09:15 Welcome Remarks
   Jochen Steinhilber, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
   Oliver Emons, Hans-Böckler-Stiftung
   Frank Zach, German Trade Union Federation / DGB

09:30-11:30 Global supply chain – Economic and Political Background
   Neo-Liberal Economy and Global Supply Chain Structures – Stakeholder,
   Legal Frameworks and the Promise of Social Up Grading (Presentation)
   Cornelia Staritz, Austrian Foundation for Development Research, Vienna

   Theories of Change: What helps to Improve Working Conditions in the
   Global Economy? (Moderated Talk)
   Ali Karamat, Pakistan Institute for Labour Education and Research, Karachi
   Cornelia Staritz, Austrian Foundation for Development Research, Vienna
   Frank Hoffer, International Labour Organization, Geneva
   Wolfgang Kaleck, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, Berlin
   Facilitator: Anke Hassel, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin

11:30-12:00 Coffee break

12:00-13:00 International Standards to Protect Workers’ Rights (Moderated Talk)
   Reingard Zimmer, Berlin School of Economics and Law, Berlin
   Kirstin Drew, Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD, Paris
   André Gunia, IG Metall, Frankfurt am Main
   Facilitator: Frederike Boll, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Berlin

13:00-14:30 Lunch break
14:30-16:00  What is the role of Companies?

When does Corporate Social Responsibility work and what are the limits?
How can works council work with the UN Guiding Principles? Can bad CSR practices be legally challenged? Is legal regulation the answer?
(Moderated Talk)

Jeffrey Vogt, International Trade Union Confederation, Brussels
Brigitte Hamm, Institute for Development and Peace, University of Duisburg
Stefano Bertone, Lawyer, Italy
Sarah Lincoln, Bread for the World / CorA Network, Berlin

Facilitator: Miriam Saage-Maaß, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, Berlin

16:00-16:30  Coffee Break

16:30-18:00  From Voluntary to Binding Standards

The Safety Accord in Bangladesh (Moderated Talk)

Henrik Maihack, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Bangladesh
Mahmudul Hasan Sumon, Activist Anthropologist, Bangladesh
Ben Vanperstraete, UNI Global Union, Brussels
Ineke Zeldenrust, Clean Clothes Campaign, Amsterdam

Facilitator: Frank Zach, German Trade Union Federation, Berlin

Afterwards: Reception
2. Day, 4.9.2015

09:00-10:00  From Voluntary to Binding Standards

The German Textile Alliance (Moderated Talk)
Frank Zach, German Trade Union Federation, Berlin
Tandiwe Gross, Clean Clothes Campaign, Bonn
Remo Klinger, Attorney at Law, Berlin

Facilitator: Miriam Saage-Maaß, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, Berlin

10:00-11:30  On the Company Level

Strengthening Worker’s Representation and Legal Remedies for Workers and Transnational Litigation of Workers’ Rights (Moderated Talk)
Gudrun Willner, H&M work council member, TIE
Jasmina Smaijlovic, H&M work council member, TIE
Carolijn Terwindt, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, Berlin
Ali Karamat, Pakistan Institute for Labour Education and Research, Karachi

Facilitator: Jeffrey Vogt, International Trade Union Confederation, Brussels

11:30-12:30  Lunch break

12:30-13:30  Discussion & Wrap-Up

How do existing strategies complement each other?
Ineke Zeldenrust, Clean Clothes Campaign, Amsterdam
Kirstin Drew, Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD, Paris
Wolfgang Kaleck, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, Berlin

Facilitator: Brigitte Hamm, Institute for Development and Peace, University of Duisburg