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## Historic move to stamp out forced labour at ILO

Unions and business unite to applaud a historic moment as a new legally binding protocol on forced labour is overwhelmingly voted for at the United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva.

Kate Carnell, ACCI CEO, said that she was pleased there was such a high level of support for the new protocol. "There is no place for forced labour anywhere, and no justification. It is a sad comment that there continues to be a need for instruments of this kind."

Ged Kearney, ACTU President, said the protocol aimed to advance prevention, protection and compensation measures, as well as to increase efforts to eliminate modern forms of slavery across the globe.

"Yesterday was historic because a protocol and recommendations which update Convention 29 on Forced Labour were approved. The old convention was 84-years-old and out-of-date," Ms Kearney said.

"More than a staggering 21 million people around the world are subjected to forced labour; 12 million of those are in The Asia Pacific region."

Ms Kearney said the profits gained through the illegal trade made it difficult – and yet, that much more urgent – to stamp out.

"Forced labour doesn't just affect developing countries. There are more than 1.5 million forced labourers in industrial nations and the profit gained per victim is around \$34,800 US. The profits from forced labour are \$150b annually of which almost one third is in developed economies," she said.

"The Protocol commits the ILO and member states to stamp out the scourge of forced labour. It calls on member states to take protective and preventative measures. This includes caring for rescued victims and to providing remedies such as compensation. "

The protocol calls on countries to ensure that both the private and public sectors use due diligence."

"The ACTU and ACCI are delighted that the Australian Government voted in favour of the proposed protocol and recommendation and we congratulate Minister Abetz for supporting the fundamental human right not to be subjected to forced labour."

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