

Summary remarks by Ms. Alette van Leur

There are already many ongoing different initiatives including research conducted by the ILO and other initiatives taken by public and private sectors, and social partners. What is clear from this meeting and its panel members is that there is leverage and momentum, and a clear display of political will from all parties, including unions, business, global compact and the Government. However, there is still scope for improvement in terms of coherence and collaboration among these initiatives, as not all initiatives are yet fully aligned. Global supply chains are extremely complex, diverse and fragmented. However, instead of requiring complex, diverse and fragmented responses to challenges, simple, coherent and consolidated responses are needed.

Being a developed country with a rich tradition of social dialogue, industrial relations and labor management, Japan could set an example for other countries. Set in a highly diverse region, and Asia & the Pacific accounting for 50% of global supply chains, Japan could play a particular role.

Some limitations to the scope of effectiveness of CSR were mentioned today. What is clear is that the voluntary nature of CSR will at some point reach its limits, not because the initiatives mentioned today are not functioning and contributing towards the sustainability of global supply chains, but because there are unfortunately partners in the world that are not as well-intended as those we heard today. This meeting and its exchange of information have been extremely helpful in further building the momentum and ensuring that Global supply chains can reach their full potential in contributing to sustainable development. I hope and am convinced that the debate in Japan will continue, and the ILO stands ready to continue to work with the Government, workers and employers of Japan to close governance gaps for a better world.