

Enterprises and networks commit to preventative safety and health culture

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The Düsseldorf Statement, witnessed by Hans Horst Konkolewsky (left), ISSA Secretary General; Sameera Al-Tuwaijiri, Director ILO SafeWork; and Dae-Yul Choi, Director General of KOSHA

A new stage in building a global movement for safety and health at work was reached at a high-level European meeting held in Düsseldorf, Germany, on 4 November, when representatives of business and professional organizations committed to promoting a “preventative workplace safety and health culture worldwide.”

The enterprises and networks represented at the high-level meeting signed the “Düsseldorf Statement” in support of the objectives of the Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work, which is an international reference point for a preventative occupational safety and health culture, launched in 2008.

Convened by the International Social Security Association (ISSA) in collaboration with the International Labour Office and the Korea Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA), the event was the latest in a series of initiatives in support of a preventative safety and health culture.

Towards a movement for a culture of prevention

Addressing the participants at the high-level meeting, the ISSA’s Secretary General, Hans-Horst Konkolewsky, said that the signing marked a symbolic stage in building a “community of organizations and companies, and a step towards a movement for a culture of prevention”.

Mr. Konkolewsky called on the companies and institutions present to encourage others to commit to the principles of the Seoul Declaration, and he announced the creation of a new Website (www.seouldeclaration.org) to mobilize support.

The high-level meeting involved representatives of sixteen companies, trade unions, and occupational safety and health-related bodies, and included a representative of the World Health Organization. The meeting took place in the context of the ILO’s International Safety Conference and the A+A Safety and Health Trade Fair, involving participants from over 60 countries, in Düsseldorf, Germany, 3-6 November 2009.

Sameera Al-Tuwaijiri, Director of ILO’s SafeWork programme that organized the International Safety Conference, emphasized that the Seoul Declaration had been envisioned as a tool to raise occupational safety and health higher on the global political agenda, and she welcomed the involvement of new stakeholders from diverse sectors to give impetus and long-term commitment to occupational safety.

The European Forum for the Seoul Declaration

A range of safety and health specialists discussed the implementation of the Seoul Declaration during the European Forum that followed the signing ceremony, and outlined some of the diverse initiatives in support of its objectives.

Among other projects, the regional government of the Canary Islands confirmed plans for an International Observatory for Preventative Culture with the involvement of the ILO, the ISSA and other partners.

Dae-Yul Choi, Director General of KOSHA, described the Seoul Declaration as “the world’s first OSH global charter”, and reiterated the commitment of his agency to implement the Seoul Declaration.

The European Forum and the Düsseldorf Statement are the latest in a series of events organized in support of the Seoul Declaration, and further initiatives are planned by the Joint Secretariat, jointly run by the ISSA, the ILO and KOSHA.

THE SIGNATORIES OF THE DÜSSELDORF STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE SEOUL DECLARATION:



Bernd Siegemund CEO B.A.D GmbH & Team Prevent Group, Germany

Philippe de Buck Director General Business Europe Health and Safety Working Group

Erik Brandsma Vice President Responsible Management E.ON, Germany

Peter Coyle Director of Operations Energy Networks Association United Kingdom

Ulrike Bollmann European Network Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health, Germany

Giancarlo Bianchi Chairman European Network of Safety and Health Professional Organisations

Karl Kuhn Chairman European Network for Workplace Health Promotion

Walter Cerfeda Confederal Secretary European Trade Union Confederation

Marie-Chantal Blandin Presidency European Forum of Insurances against Accidents at Work and Occupational Diseases

Thomas Siekmann Chief Safety Engineer Hella KGaA Hueck & Co. Germany

Norbert Breutmann Chair of the Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardization,
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Joachim Schäfer Managing Director Messe Düsseldorf Germany

Eleftheria Lehmann General Director NRW Institute of Health and Work Germany

Horst Otto Head of Occupational Philips Deutschland GmbH Germany

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