

**For immediate release**  
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### **National and International Stakeholders Reaffirm Commitment to Better Work Nicaragua**

(Geneva, 29 July 2010) At meetings with high-level officials on 27–28 July in Managua, Better Work Nicaragua stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to actively participate in the upcoming programme. National and international attendees, including Nicaraguan Minister of Labor Jeannette Chávez Gómez and U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solís, shared their vision and expectations for successful implementation in anticipation of the project launch in early 2011. The U.S. Department of Labor is providing funding support to the Better Work Nicaragua programme.

Secretary Solís and Minister Chávez Gómez took part in a high-level meeting hosted by Better Work to discuss programme goals and strategy with national stakeholders—in particular, factory owners and managers and trade unions. “The Better Work Program will help the workers and the private sector, and it will help the development of the textile sector in Nicaragua” declared Secretary Solís.

In addition to the high-level meeting, Better Work staff engaged substantially with the private sector. At events with international brands and retailers such as VF Corp., Levi Strauss & Co., Gap Inc., Gildan, Fishman & Tobin and Wal-Mart, as well as the textile employers’ association (l’Asociación Nicaragüense de la Industria Textil y Confección) and factory owners, Better Work reviewed plans for factory assessments and clarified the sign-up process to ensure a quick and smooth rollout. Discussions included the development of advisory and training services, a critical part of Better Work’s continuous improvement process for addressing non-compliance issues and supporting more effective management systems.

Better Work is a unique partnership programme between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) which seeks to improve labour standards compliance in global supply chains, both to protect workers’ rights and to help enterprises become more competitive. The programme focuses on scalable and sustainable solutions that build cooperation between governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and international buyers.

“We think that it is important to develop a program that, like Better Work does, highlights the respect and improvement of working conditions of the textile workers in Export Processing Zones” said Minister Chávez Gómez.

The Better Work programme that will be launched in Nicaragua will focus initially on the garment industry and will provide assessment, advisory and training services to participating factories. Better Work Nicaragua will also engage government, employers’ organizations, trade unions and la Corporación Nacional de Zonas Francas to provide strategic and operational guidance on challenges and solutions to compliance issues.

For more information on the Better Work programme, please contact Ms. Chandra Garber at +41 22 799 7814 or [garber@ilo.org](mailto:garber@ilo.org). Or visit: [www.betterwork.org](http://www.betterwork.org).