

UNI Apro supports call for private sector businesses to exercise responsibility toward migrant workers during COVID-19 pandemic



Published: 14 August 2020

UNI Apro supports the call for Urgent Justice from Wage Theft, a coalition of civil society organizations and trade unions, urging businesses to fulfil their legal obligation toward protecting the labour and human rights of their workers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought on immense difficulties for businesses and workers. As the pandemic continues to unfold, it will become increasingly difficult to predict what the final impact will be. However, migrant workers are without a doubt one of the most affected groups during this period.

Migrant workers played an important role in contributing to the prosperity of the businesses before COVID-19 struck. But some businesses are already observed to have unilaterally adopted cost-saving measures that adversely impact the workers. Many migrant workers are also expected to be repatriated as the economic situation in destination countries worsens.

UNI Apro, together with the ASEAN Trade Union Council (ASETUC), urges all businesses to ensure all claims on wages and any outstanding entitlements should be properly settled before any migrant worker is repatriated. The pandemic is no reason nor excuse to dismiss the migrant workers' contribution and due for compensation.

The coalition's call outlined 14 specific steps that employers and businesses can take to protect their workers from wage theft. This is the third call in a series of appeals issued earlier on 1st and 9th July urging for a justice mechanism as part of a global campaign to address the situation of migrant workers who have been repatriated without their due wages and benefits. The two appeals call on governments and UN agencies to take immediate action to establish a transitional justice mechanism addressing wage-related grievances, claims and labour disputes of repatriated workers who have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic.

Click [here](#) for full recommendations in the current call.