



Draft Report on

Regional Consultation on SARTUC-SAFE Further Collaboration in the Protection and Welfare of South Asian Migrant Workers

13-14 August 2023

Hotel Himalaya, Kathmandu, Nepal

Background:

The South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (SARTUC), in collaboration with ILO (GOALS Project), conducted a two-day regional consultation on “SARTUC-SAFE further collaboration in the protection and welfare of South Asian migrant workers” in Kathmandu, Nepal on 13-14 August 2023. The regional consultation adopted the Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC agreed to work together for safe, responsible and legal migration to protect the rights of the Migrant Workers. The regional consultation was crucial for workers and employers to discuss the issues of labour migration, and addressing the challenges faced by South Asian migrant workers. Additionally, the comprehensive interaction and discussion happened on the draft SARTUC’s strategy paper based on SARTUC’s resolution on migrant labour to convene a meeting with SARTUC-SAFE for further collaboration in the protection of South Asian migrant workers.

The Regional Consultation commenced with the expectation and of gathering stakeholders from diverse sectors – trade unions, employers, civil societies, journalists, and researchers/academia. The regional consultation was supposed to observe the opening and welcome address from Rt. Honourable Prime Minister of Nepal, **Pushpa Kamal Dahal**, however, was unable to attend the programme due to the bad weather.

Objectives:

The objective of the SARTUC-SAFE regional consultation will be to collaborate further in the protection of the South Asian Migrant Workers and also to:

- Discuss the strategy paper [SARTUC’s strategy for collaboration with South Asian Forum of Employers (SAFE) for the protection and welfare of South Asian migrant workers] to collect feedback and suggestions on the paper from the representatives of the SARTUC-SAFE consultation meeting;
- To share best practices and successful models on labour migration from different countries within South Asia;
- To develop a joint action plan (resolution) to address the challenges to identify and improve the protection and welfare of South Asian migrant workers.

The Date and Venue:

- August 13th – 14th, 2023
- Hotel Himalaya, Kupondole, Kathmandu, Nepal

Introduction of Participants

Due to the uncertainty of opening and welcome address from Rt. Honourable Prime Minister of Nepal, **Pushpa Kamal Dahal**, an engaging session of participant introductions started. This interactive session facilitated networking and collaboration among the attendees, comprising trade union leaders, employers, representatives from civil society organisations, researchers, and journalists from across South Asia. The introduction created a conducive environment for open discussions and mutual learning throughout the event.



Session on New Social Contract: Strategy for Strengthening Employment Relationship

Dr. Fahimuddin Pasha, a Senior Officer for Workers' Rights at ITUC-AP, stressed the importance of an active role for workers in policymaking, advocating for a new social contract that centres on six core demands: jobs, rights, wages, social protection, equality, and inclusion. Under these demands, he called for the creation of decent work, just transitions, green and climate-friendly jobs, and the protection of fundamental labour rights. Social protection measures, including a global fund, were proposed, alongside efforts to combat discrimination and ensure inclusion. Additionally, he highlighted the need for trade unions to build power, enhance social dialogue, and collaborate across diverse sectors for meaningful change. He also emphasized the importance of including migrant workers in trade unions and promoting their rights, particularly through fair recruitment and wage protection. The presentation concluded with a way forward for the collaborative efforts on the various aspects of labour migration that can effectively address the six demands of the new social contract.

Opening Session

Mr. Harbhajan Singh Sidhu, President of SARTUC

He expressed his warm welcome to all the leaders of employers, trade unions, ITUC-AP, ILO officials, Dr. Pasha (ITUC-AP), researchers, global unions, and all the participants. This is the fourth meeting (including 2 online meetings) between SARTUC and SAFE. The trade union movement in South Asia is passing through a critical phase, including the challenge of labour migration in South Asia. Lack of employment in South Asia leads to labour migration. Labour migrants are facing a lot of challenges and to cope with these challenges the MOU between



government, employer and employee shall be made implemented. SARTUC came forward for the protection of migrant workers' rights during the time of COVID-19. The government shall monitor the migration process and tripartite engagement shall be promoted. After the bipartite meeting between SARTUC-SAFE, we can recommend it to governments in South Asia. Thanks to ILO, global unions (FNV and Solidarity Center), and ITUC-AP for their support and for carrying the issue.

Mr. Malik Tahir Javaid, President of EFP, from Pakistan

Grateful to the president of SARTUC and the chair of SAFE for initiating the bilateral meeting on migration. In the last 10-15 years, succeed to make understanding the government for the importance of bilateral ship - government; employer; and employee. Safe and responsible migration is a shared interest in enhancing skills and improving the condition of workers and the workplace. Engage in meaningful dialogue and commitment to the protection of migrant workers. He further stated the bipartite platform to address the issues of labour migration in South Asia within the broader framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM). He further expressed the importance of OSH, social protection, reintegration, capacity building, skill development and gender equality to workers for decent work and social justice. Furthermore, he expressed the achievements and initiatives done by EFP in Pakistan. He proposed to engage in dialogues with South Asian governments for safe and responsible migration.

Mr. Atul Sobti, Director General, Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE), India Representative of the Council of Indian Employers which is constituted of three major employers' organisation in India. He congratulated Mr Siddhu for being elected as president of SARTUC and expressed his relationship with him during the employers-employees meetings in India. The new president of SAFE - Mr Alok Shree Ram, shared best wishes for the programme and was happy to see SAFE's representatives from all the countries. The strategy paper has covered a vast subject of migration. Migration provides livelihood, and financial security to their family, and remittances to the country. Also, the migration process is important for the country of destination as well. The people or workers who are contributing to the economic development of the company/employers are also contributing to the development of the country as well, thus, they should be treated well and taken care of. He shared that SARTUC and SAFE have committed to the field of labour migration, however, there are more things to do and achieve in the subject and provided a commitment for the joint collaboration from SARTUC and SAFE.

Panel Discussion on Fair Recruitment and Decent Work

The subsequent panel discussion, a highlight of the day, was dedicated to the critical topics of fair recruitment and decent work for migrant workers. The panel discussion was skilfully moderated by **Dr. Jeevan Baniya**, Assistant Director at the Social Science Baha/CESLAM. He arranged an interactive and insightful dialogue, encouraging panellists to interact and exchange their perspectives.



Ms. Manju Gurung, Advisor at POURAKHI Nepal, representing civil society

- A lot of policies/laws exist for fair recruitment but in practice, it's not implemented properly.
- Ban to women migration - so moved through an undocumented process - not social protection, not enjoy any rights and provisions provided by Gov. of Nepal.

- Social stigma and discrimination against women migrant workers.
- Reintegration policy by Gov. Nepal, but not gender friendly.
- Advocating for the ratification of ILO C189, C190.
- Most Nepali women workers are working as domestic workers but have not been recognised by the Country of Destination (CoD) as workers.
- Sexual and reproductive rights/issues have not been recognised so these issues need to be addressed.
- Shall start the diplomatic social dialogue.

Mr. Shakil Akhter Chowdhury – representing SARTUC

- Decent work agenda is formulated by ILO 20 years ago, these decent work agendas are very much related to the ILO roadmap and national action plan in Bangladesh.
- 14 million people in Bangladesh have already migrated, around 9% of the total population and generating more than 22 billion as a remittance, contributing to the CoD as well. However, they do not have social protection at returning.
- The recruitment cost is around 18 months' salary in Bangladesh and the recruitment process is mostly done by private recruitment agencies.
- Sometimes they are in the modern slavery, not enjoying workers' rights properly, earning less than other workers compared to Nepali, Indian and Pakistani workers.
- Trade unions have to engage proactively.
- One of the best countries in the world to ratify the ILO conventions is Bangladesh, but the weaker in implementation and poor collaboration with Gov. and employers.
- Collaboration among all stakeholders shall be stronger, especially between trade unions and employers.
- The regional-level standard contract shall be there, Bangladeshi workers will be benefiting most in South Asia.
- All support - economic and social support - shall be started from the Country of Origin (CoO), enhance the system of economic and psychosocial support to migrant workers.
- Develop a comprehensive and effective database for migrant workers, including the skills and returnees.
- Need to develop bilateral agreements, including T2T MOA.



- Ratifying in the origin will alone not solve all the issues, destination countries need to ratify as well.
- SARTUC shall take initiative of study for good practices from the region on migration.

Mr. Atul Sobti, representing SAFE

- The employers and employees shall be meeting, the beginning has started.
- India is also a country of destination.
- Gov. of India is also concerned with the issue of migration and new laws have been implemented.
- The country of origin has less control over the employers in the country of destination.
- There is a need for bilateral agreements between CoO and CoD.
- SAFE shall try to interconnect with the regional platforms of employers, taking a good example from SARTUC's MOU with regional trade unions.
- Employers need to talk with governments discussed here in the regional consultation.
- Initiatives of the government of India; insurance for migrant workers; PDOT is there (however, not sure of implementation); digital initiatives - emigrant portals; national care services; MADAD, SWADES for returnees and other plans.
- Migrant workers are not only going for earning but also for learning.
- Platforms like these will take forward for the ratification; let's compile best practices.

Q&A

- Domestic workers and the protection of women migrant workers;
- Ratification of ILO Conventions (why late);
- SAFE shall play a very important part;
- Social protection is weak in CoO;
- Bipartite dialogue is important;
- Importance of T2T agreement;
- Implementation in the ground and moving ahead;
- Example of a standard contract (bilateral agreement) between the Maldives and Sri Lanka - how to take this system to other destinations as well;

Session on Activities, Achievements, and Progress on the Resolution on Migrant Labour

The session on activities, achievements, and progress since the Resolution on Migrant Labour (agreed upon during the event in New Delhi, India, in February 2019) was a pivotal moment for participants to reflect on the progress made since the last consultation. The session was gracefully moderated by Mr. Prabhu Rajendran, Regional Consultant from Mondiaal FNV. He highlighted the historical development of the SARTUC-SAFE collaboration from 2018, and the role of the GOALS project (ILO) and Mondiaal FNV to bring SARTUC-SAFE to a single platform. After brainstorming, migration was chosen as the thematic area for discussion between employers and trade unions. In February 2019, SAFE was having its conference in Delhi so it was seen as the best starting point for the discussion. SARTUC was invited to the conference, initially, the plan was



for a joint resolution but not possible. However, separate resolutions were produced. Later, due to COVID-19 the meeting was not possible, however, two online meetings were conducted during COVID-19 time.

SAFE, represented by **Mr. Malik Tahir Javaid**, President of EFP in Pakistan, discussed the progress and activities undertaken by EFP and SAFE. He highlighted the important step after the meeting of 2019 with SARTUC, the establishment of WEBCOP - Workers' Employers Bilateral Council of Pakistan, and noted the positive shift towards industrial peace and harmony. Improvements have been achieved in Bangladesh, India, and other countries for the advancing the rights of migrant workers. Improvements in working conditions and skill development programmes were noted in Pakistan, along with efforts to enhance gender equality and eliminate child labour. The importance of focusing on decent work was emphasized. He advocated for cooperation between SAFE and SARTUC, particularly in building international relations. He also mentioned ongoing programmes related to occupational safety and health (OSH) with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO).

SARTUC Secretariat, represented by **Mr. Kishor Bikram Shah**, provided a comprehensive overview of the organization's accomplishments over the past years. The South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (SARTUC), founded in 1988, has carved a notable path in advocating for labour rights and migrant workers' welfare. SARTUC has emerged as a significant regional and global advocate. Notably, its strategic efforts led to the inclusion of Social Protection and Migration as crucial agendas in the SAARC Summit (18th, 2014), underscoring SARTUC's impact on policy discourse. During the pandemic, SARTUC played a pivotal role in safeguarding the rights of migrant workers, supporting their well-being, and advocating for fair treatment. Collaborating with employers through platforms like SAFE, SARTUC facilitated vital social dialogues, amplifying the voice of labour. The organization's multidimensional approach included capacity-building workshops, research initiatives, impactful campaigns, and the creation of informative animation videos. These activities reflect SARTUC's dedication to shaping migration discourse, advocating for workers' rights, and creating a more just and equitable environment. Explore further for the publication from SARTUC on migration: <https://www.sartuc.org/documents/>

SARTUC's Strategy for Collaboration with SAFE for the Protection and Welfare of South Asian Migrant Workers

Mr. Laxman Basnet, General Secretary, SARTUC

Mr Laxman Basnet, General Secretary of SARTUC, highlighted the integral role of labour migration in South Asia's development. The significance of millions of South Asian migrant workers, mostly low-skilled, primarily go to GCC countries and Malaysia. SARTUC's engagement with employers (SAFE) was emphasized to foster dialogue between employers and workers. He expressed that engagement or cooperation shall be based on trust and humanity. Interestingly, he provided the example from his marital relationship where trust, faith, and humanity are key factors to move ahead, rather than legal agreements. Key themes of collaboration included ethical recruitment, skill development, fair wages, and social protection. Various collaborative initiatives

were expressed by him, involving policy development, training, and dialogue platforms. The strategies encompassed fair recruitment, gender-sensitive policies, safe working conditions, and reintegration of returnees. The importance of collaboration to ensure decent work, OSH and social protection for migrant workers, along with lobbying for supportive policies and the responsible role of employers.

Group Workshop

The participants were divided into 4 groups to discuss the draft strategy paper, each tasked with brainstorming actionable strategies and concrete steps to enhance the protection and welfare of South Asian migrant workers. Furthermore, engaged in the discussion for planning the strategies for thematic areas of cooperation. The collaborative nature of the workshop facilitated the exchange of ideas and innovative solutions to address the complex challenges faced by migrant workers. The group discussion provided an opportunity to sit with various stakeholders - trade unions, employers, civil societies, journalists, and researchers/academia, at a single round table to discuss the formation of strategies for the welfare and protection of migrant workers.

The Five Thematic Areas of Cooperation:



1. Promote **fair and ethical recruitment** of migrant workers and ensuring wage protection and access to justice for migrant workers;
2. Facilitate the **economic and psychosocial reintegration** of returnee migrant workers;
3. Promote **social protection** of migrant workers in destination and at home;
4. Ensure **protection of migrant** workers particularly women migrant workers including in domestic and care work through **Capacity building of Trade Unions, Employer organisations and other stakeholders**;
5. Work for the improvement of **occupational health and safety** and the situation of accommodation of migrant workers, particularly those in precarious conditions such as domestic workers.

Debriefing and Consolidation of Inputs in the Strategy

A representative presented inputs and strategies from their respective groups on the formulation of strategies for the different thematic areas of cooperation. The inputs and strategies will be included and updated in the SARTUC's strategy paper (*SARTUC's strategy for collaboration with SAFE for the protection and welfare of South Asian migrant workers*) and circulated with all the participants and stakeholders.



DAY – 2: 14th August 2023 (Monday)

Ensuring Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) of Migrant Workers for Mutual Benefits

Ramhari Lamichhane, PhD, Skills and employment expert

During his informative session, **Dr. Ramhari Lamichhane**, a skills and employment expert, discussed the critical aspects of ensuring OSH for migrant workers. He highlighted the broad scope of OSH, encompassing the prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses and the enhancement of worker well-being, as recognized by the ILO. Moreover, he underlined existing and potential hazards, ranging from emergency plan deficiencies to toxic chemicals. He elaborated on effective OSH management systems and strategies for addressing OSH concerns, including incident reporting and collaboration with top management. Crucially, he expressed the responsibilities of both host and labour-exporting countries, stressing the creation of safe environments, provision of protective equipment, training, and healthcare facilities. Additionally, he made a session informative and interactive through video information on OSH and mind teasers to participants. Finally, he emphasised the integration of OSH competencies in training, establishment of OSH departments, and the importance of OSH within agreements between host and exporting countries, providing actionable insights for a safer work environment for migrant workers.

Economic and Psychosocial Reintegration of Returnee Workers

Mr. Uddhav Raj Poudyal, Independent Consultant

In his presentation, **Mr. Uddhav Raj Poudyal** shed light on the multifaceted challenges faced by returning migrant workers from the Gulf and Malaysia, emphasizing both the economic and psychosocial dimensions of their reintegration. He outlined statistics illustrating the scale of migration from South Asian countries, highlighting exploitative working conditions and grievances such as poor wages, abuse, and family separation. Moreover, he stressed the psychological toll on returnees, including anxiety and difficulty readjusting. He underscored the need for economic reintegration, citing the lack of opportunities in home countries and advocating for skills training, industry linkages, and self-employment. Moreover, he discussed the significance of psychosocial support, including mental health services, peer groups, and social integration activities. Finally, he concluded by outlining collaborative strategies involving governments, employers, workers, and civil society to advocate for policy reforms, allocate resources, and create comprehensive reintegration programs for returning workers.

Session on Social Protection of Migrant Workers

The session was smoothly moderated by **Mr. Nilambar Badal**, an Independent Researcher renowned for his insights into labour and migration. He brought out in-depth discussions, exploring social protection mechanisms and their real-world implications, including for migrant workers.

Employer's Perspective:

Social Protection of Migrant Workers at Country of Origin and Country of Destination from Employers Perspective.

Mr. Sonjoy Prasad Mallick; Deputy Secretary-General



Mr. Md. Moslem Uddin; Assistant Secretary General
Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF)

During their presentation, both of the speakers from the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) highlighted their pivotal role in representing employers within ILO's tripartite framework and emphasized their commitment to migrant worker well-being. They underlined Bangladesh's significant contribution as a source of migrant workers, discussed challenges faced by these workers, and stressed their importance to the national economy through remittances. They expressed the outline of BEF perspective on social protection, focusing on fair wages, safe working conditions, healthcare, and prevention of exploitation. They delineated the roles of employers in both origin and destination countries, including pre-departure training, ethical recruitment, support networks, fair employment conditions, healthcare access, and safe living conditions. Moreover, they also shared best practices, highlighted their benefits for employers, and emphasized the necessity of collaboration between origin and destination countries. The presentation concluded by highlighting their involvement in advocating for fair recruitment, protecting migrant rights, and facilitating the reintegration of returnee migrants.

Workers' Perspective:

Mr. Padmashree Ranawakaarachchi from the National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) emphasized the importance of a tripartite approach to social protection, highlighting its role in upholding human rights and reducing poverty and vulnerability among migrant workers. He noted that most migrant workers, often engaged in temporary roles, lack the rights of regular employees, and stressed the significance of their remittances for rural areas and economic development. He expressed concerns about weak social protection and reintegration policies at the Country of Origin (CoO) and urged strengthening them before seeking improvements at the Country of Destination (CoD). He praised SARTUC's role in promoting social protection and called for regular meetings to collectively produce a clear document. He also encouraged joint efforts from employers and trade unions to pressure governments for change. Furthermore, he presented the idea of 3R for Recruitment or reintegration; 1) recognise and respect; 2) rebrand and restructure the migration; and 3) reward the migrant workers.

Q&A Session

The presentations were followed by questions from the participants. The dialogue-rich nature of the session prompted a lively Q&A segment, with participants probing panellists for additional information and practical recommendations on effective social protection measures.

Open Discussion and Experience Sharing on Advancing Migrant Worker Rights

The session was held with the objective of providing a platform for participants to share their experiences, challenges, and good practices in advancing the rights of migrant workers within the trade unions and employers' organisations (Country wise). **Mr. Hari Sharma**, an esteemed political and trade union expert, moderated the session, fostering an environment encouraging to meaningful discussion. The session was structured into two parts: Employer's Perspective and



Worker's Perspective, with speakers from various countries presenting their insights and engaging in open discussions. The moderator for the session highlighted the importance of reflection from regional consultation and the way forward. He mentioned, the meeting of SARTUC in 2012 in Colombo - identified 6 areas to work and migration was one of them for the last 20 years migration is a priority issue in South Asia. He emphasised the improved condition of OSH to migrant workers as well as the contribution of businesses at home and abroad to collaborate to make their life safe and sound. Furthermore, he expressed that the economy has changed and the future of work be changed with AI and technological advancement.

Employer's Perspective:

Bangladesh: Mr. Sonjoy Prasad Mallick (BEF)

- We have to start a joint effort for the study.
- Both employer and worker have to work together.

India: Ms. Akansha Kohli (AIOE)

- Highly skilled workers and students have been also migrating from South Asia.
- She has expressed the initiatives developed by the Gov. of India and e-shram portal.

Sri Lanka: Ms. Anjali Wijayasinghe (EFC)

- We have to put pressure collectively on CoD as they need human resources.
- Good practices: Skill passport (smart card with QR code listed with the skills of returnee); and Disability unit at employers federation.

Nepal: Mr Hansa Ram Pandey (FNCCI)

- Labour migration has provided benefits to both CoO as well as CoD.
- This is a good forum where employers and trade unions from South Asia gather together, and a good initiative has been taken by SARTUC and SAFE.
- We have to bring the respective government to the board to make influence the CoD.
- We shall continue stronger collaboration and partnership between employers and trade unions.
- Our (FNCCI) commitment is always there.

Trade Unions:

Bangladesh: Mr. Shakil Akhter Chowdhury (BLF)

- Challenges yet to be discussed - the future of work - challenge due to automation; AI; robotization; and technological advancement.
- We have to take the relationship (employer and worker) further in respective country as well.
- Combine study on a regional basis for SATUC-SAFE.
- Creation of a loose platform to work ahead.

India: Mr. Chandra Prakash Singh (INTUC)

- The platform has provided the opportunity to move ahead for both SARTUC and SAFE.
- 2.5 million Indian migrate overseas per year.



- Good practices in India: The system of online Grievance redresser (MADAD) is extremely useful.
- Need for Migrant Welfare Fund to provide (timely) insurance and compensation, including natural deaths and suicides.
- Challenges of keeping data and record management.
- Concrete measures and formation of laws to protect the rights of migrant workers.
- Strategies: Union to Union linkages and networking from both CoO and CoD is important.
- Reach out and organise migrant workers at ground level.

Maldives: Mr. Mauroof Zakir (MTUC)

- Trade unions in South Asia use political power and try to convince the government - the importance of migrant workers.
- Focus more on the recruitment process
- Rather than focusing on multiple issues, a specific focus shall be made.

Nepal: Ms. Smritee Lama (GEFONT)

- She briefly described the work of 3 major trade unions (ANTUF, GEFONT, and NTUC) on migration - the department of migration in unions; Pre-departure training, Advocacy, coordination, and lobbying for safe migration; Ad-hoc committee/Migrant Support Groups.
- Connection of migrant workers to trade unions at the CoD, if there is no trade union in the CoD, we collectively work for human rights and the embassy.
- We need to rethink the cycle of migration.
- Standard contract shall be implemented at the regional level.
- Ensure voting rights of migrant workers.

Pakistan: Mr. Muhammad Aslam Adil (PWF)

- Regularise the migrant workers, reduce the risk of irregularities, and proper registration and data management shall be there for migrant workers.
- Recruitment costs shall be reduced
- Challenges for the internal migrant workers as well.
- Chinese do not follow the labour law and they won't provide proper rights to their workers.
- There are contractors and workers from China in Pakistan.

Sri Lanka: Mr. Padmashree Ranawakaarachchi (NTUF)

- It is always difficult to bring employers to the board, however, this platform has been able to bring employers to the board.
- Work for common objectives - to make migrant workers comfortable and support the returnees.

Overall, the session provided a comprehensive platform for stakeholders to exchange insights and solutions, contributing to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in advancing the rights of migrant workers across different countries and sectors.



Animation Video on Labour Migration in South Asia

The video covers the entire process and cycle of labour migration in South Asia - its opportunities, challenges, and impacts of the migration.

Closing Remarks and Vote of Thanks

The conclusion of the two-day consultation was marked by closing remarks that summarised the shared sentiment of collaboration, progress, and unity.

Mr. Atul Sobti, Director General of SCOPE, expressed gratitude for the invitation and thankful to senior brothers Mr. Siddhu (President, SARTUC) and Mr. Laxman (General Secretary, SARTUC) for organizing the event flawlessly. He acknowledged his role as a learner in the subject matter upon entering the event, praised Nepal's efforts in migration, and called for a joint study supported by ILO on South Asian migrant workers, including the gender perspective. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of continuous dialogues, robust legal frameworks, and action-oriented execution. Finally, he expressed that SARTUC invited SAFE as a guest but he considered them as partners and highlighted everyone's commitment to the cause.

Mr. Harbhajan Singh Sidhu, President of SARTUC, graced the closing session with his presence and expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the dedication of the participants. He reiterated the importance of ongoing collaboration and emphasized that the regional consultation was a stepping stone toward achieving the overarching goals of protection and welfare for South Asian migrant workers. Additionally, he emphasised that SARTUC has precisely made a strategy paper, outlining tentative strategies to address key issues. He stressed the importance of government involvement in formalizing and legalizing migration. During the discussions, consensus was achieved on various critical matters, including the adoption of a standardized contract, recognition of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) (which has been adopted as a fundamental right for workers), the establishment of social protection mechanisms, adherence to ILO Convention 190, and the initiation of a collaborative study on migration.

The Outcome of the Two-day Regional Consultation

Meaningfully, the adoption of a **Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC (13-14 August 2023 at Kathmandu, Nepal)**, was a significant achievement of the regional consultation and more importantly, it was signed by SAFE and SARTUC (SAFE representatives and the president of SARTUC). *(Please find the full Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC in Annex-I).*

In summary, the Regional Consultation on SARTUC-SAFE Further Collaboration in the Protection and Welfare of South Asian Migrant Workers was a definite success. Over the course of two days, stakeholders engaged in comprehensive discussions, shared experiences, and planned strategies to ensure the rights, protection, and welfare of migrant workers in the South Asian region. The event not only fostered collaboration but also created a platform for meaningful and impactful actions that will shape the future of migrant workers' lives in the region through a **Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC (13-14 August 2023 at Kathmandu, Nepal)**.



Annex-I
Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC

Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC

13-14 August, 2023

at

Kathmandu, Nepal

Two days SARTUC-SAFE Regional Consultative Meeting for Further Collaboration in the Protection and Welfare of South Asian Migrant Workers was held on 13 and 14 August, 2023 in Kathmandu Nepal.

As an outcome of the meeting both SARTUC and SAFE agreed to work together for safe, responsible and legal migration to protect the rights of the Migrant Workers while supporting the businesses based on the principles of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Global Compact on Migration (GCM), Just Transition, and agree to carry out a Joint Research Study on South Asian Migrant Workers encompassing present status, issues including Gender Perspectives, Best practices and preparing towards Future of Work.

[Signature]
Maya TARA
PRESIDENT
SAFE

[Signature]
HR Pandey
FIRECCI

[Signature]
ATUL SOBTI
CIE India

[Signature]
Deputy Secretary-General
BEP

[Signature]
President SARTUC

[Signature]
A. Phuyang
Angli Phuyang
ETC
Sri Lanka...

Annex-II Participants List

SN	Country	Organization	Participant	Designation	Email Address
1	Bangladesh	Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC)	Mr. Nur Mohammad Akand	Acting President	bftuc@agni.com
2		Bangladesh Jatyabadi Sramik Dal (BJSd)	Mr. Shofiq Ahmed Chowdhury	Joint General Secretary	bjsd.bangladesh@gmail.com
3		Bangladesh Labour Federation (BLF)	Mr Shakil Akhter Chowdhury	General Secretary	shakilbils@yahoo.com , shakilbils@gmail.com
4		Bangladesh Mukta Sramik Federation (BMSF)	Mr Mojibur Rahman Bhuiyan	General Secretary	mojiburbhuiyan1950@gmail.com
5		Bangladesh Sanjukta Sramik Federation (BSSF)	Mr Jahangir Alam Chowdhury	General Secretary	jahangir_bstpsf@yahoo.com
6		Jatio Sramik Legue (JSL)	Ms Khandakar Imran Azam	Political Analyst	jatiosramikleague@gmail.com
7	India	Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS)	Mr Harbhajan Singh Sidhu	General Secretary	hms1gs@gmail.com
8		Indian National Trade Union Council (INTUC)	Mr Chandra Prakash Singh	National Vice-President	intuchq@gmail.com , chandraprakash.intuc@yahoo.com
9	Maldives	Maldives Trade Union Congress (MTUC)	Mr Mauroof Zakir	President	mauroof.zakir@teammaldives.org , Info@mtuc.org
10	Nepal	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)	Mr.Binod Shrestha	President	binod.stha01@gmail.com , office@gefонт.org
11		GEFONT	Ms. Smritee Lama	Secretary Foreign Affairs	smriteelama@gmail.com
12		GEFONT	Mr.Bhakti Ghimire		office@gefонт.org
13		Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC)	Mr.Yogendra Kunwar	President	ykkunwar@gmail.com , ntucoffice@gmail.com
14		NTUC	Ms. Shushila Ghimire	Deputy General Secretary	ntucoffice@gmail.com
15		All Nepal Federation of Trade Union Council (ANTUF)	Mr. Jagat Simkhada	President	jagatsimkhada@yahoo.com , antuf2007@gmail.com
16		ANTUF	Ms. Sangeeta Baniya	Secretary	antuf2007@gmail.com
17	Pakistan	Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF)	Mr. Muhammad Aslam Adil	Vice Chairman	generalsecretary@pwf.org.pk , aslamadil@pwf.org.pk
18	Sri Lanka	National Trade Union Federation (NTUF)	Mr Padmashree Ranawakaarachchi	General Secretary	dgpadmāsiri@gmail.com
19		Sri Lanka Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya (SLNSS)	Ms Gamage Chithra Surnagani	Member of National Ex. Committee	slnss@sltnet.lk
20	Bangladesh	Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF)	Mr. Sonjoy Prasad Mallick	Deputy Secretary-General	sonjoy.mcci@gmail.com
21		BEF	Mr. Md. Moslem Uddin	Assistant Secretary General	mukhan79@gmail.com
22	India	Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE)	Mr Atul Sobti	Director General	scopedg@scopeonline.in
23		All India Organisation of Employers	Ms Akansha Kohli	Executive Officer	akansha.kohli@ficci.com

24	Pakistan	Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP)	Mr Malik Tahir Javaid	President	tahir@mgaautos.com
25		Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP)	Mr Syed Nazar Ali	Secretary General	nazar@efp.org.pk ; nazarali.sdc@gmail.com
26	Sri Lanka	Employers' Federation of Ceylon	Ms Anjali Wijayasinghe	Senior Industrial Relations Advisor	anjaliw@empfed.lk
	Nepal	FNCCI	Mr Hansa Ram Pandey	Senior Expert	hansarpandey@gmail.com
27		Mondiaal FnV	Mr.Prabhu Rajendra	Regional Consultant	prabhu_rajendran@hotmail.com
28		ITUC-AP	Dr. SM Fahimuddin Pasha	Senior Officer	fpasha@ituc-ap.org
29		ILO Nepal	Ms. Bina Thapa	Senior Program Officer	bina@ilo.org
30		Solidarity Center	Ms. Luna Ranjit	Country Program Director	lrnjit@solidaritycenter.org
31		SAGP	Ms. Nishi Kapahi	Coordinator	nkapahi@gmail.com
32		SSB/CESLAM	Mr. Jeevan Baniya	Assistant Director	jbaniya@gmail.com
33		Independent Researcher	Mr. Nilambar Badal		nilambar@gmail.com
34		TVET and Management Expert	Mr. Ramhari Lamichhane		rhlamichhane@gmail.com
35		Purak Asia	Mr. Hari Sharma	Executive Director	juhang@gmail.com
36		Independent Consultant	Mr. Uddhav Raj Poudel		uddhav626@hotmail.com
37		SSB/CESLAM	Ms. Sadikshya Bhattarai	Research Coordinator	sadi.bhattarai@gmail.com
38		SSB/CESLAM	Ms. Ratna Kambang	Senior Research Associate	
39		POURAKHI Nepal	Ms. Manju Gurung	Strategic Advisor	grgwomen@gmail.com
40		AMKAS Nepal	Ms. Bijaya Rai	Founding Chairperson	amkasbijaya16@gmail.com
41		NNSM	Mr. Krishna Prasad Neupane	General Secretary	krishna.peopleforum@gmail.com
42		NNSM	Ms. Chandani Rana	Treasurer	rchandani@gmail.com
43		POURAKHI Nepal	Mr. Manish KC	Executive Director	manishsubedikc@gmail.com
44		Solidarity Center		Researcher	
45		Kantipur National daily	Mr. Hom Karki		hom.reporter@gmail.com
46		Kantipur National daily	Mr. Dinesh Regmi		dinesh.regmi@gmail.com
47		Issara Institute	Ms. Krishma Sharma	Nepal Partnerships Manager	krishma@issarainstitute.org
48	SARTUC Secretariat		Mr. Laxman Basnet	General Secretary	sartuc.kathmanduoffice@gmail.com
49			Mr. Kishor Bikram Shah	Programme Officer	sartuc.kathmanduoffice@gmail.com
50			Ms. Sweanta Lama	Admin and Finance Officer	sartuc.kathmanduoffice@gmail.com



Annex-III

Agenda

13-14 August 2023

Kathmandu, Nepal

Day 1: 13th August 2023 (Sunday)

9:15 – 10:00	Registration	
10:00 – 10:50	Opening Opening and welcome address: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr Harbhajan Singh Sidhu, President, SARTUC;- Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE;- Mr Malik Tahir Javaid, EFP, Pakistan;- Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, Mr Pushpa Kamal Dahal (<i>Unable to attend the programme</i>)	
10:50 – 11:00	Group Photo	
11:00 – 11:15	Tea/Coffee Break	
11:15 – 11:30	Introduction of Participants	
10:30 – 12:00	New Social Contract: Strategy for Strengthening Employment Relationship	Dr Fahimuddin Pasha , Senior Officer, Workers' Rights, ITUC-AP
12:00 – 13:00	Fair recruitment and decent work. Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employer; Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE• Worker - Mr Shakil Akhter Chowdhury, BLF, Bangladesh• CSO; Q&A	Moderator: Dr Jeevan Baniya , Assistant Director, Social Science Baha
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 14:30	Activities, achievement, and progress on the activities agreed on Resolution on Migrant Labour (<i>12-13 February 2019, New Delhi, India</i>) Speaker (10 minutes each) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SAFE (Mr Malik Tahir Javaid, EFP, Pakistan)• SARTUC Secretariat (Mr Kishor Bikram Shah) Q&A	Moderator: Mr Prabhu Rajendran , Regional Consultant, Mondiaal FNV
14:30 – 16:00	SARTUC's strategy for collaboration with SAFE for the protection and welfare of South Asian migrant workers	Presentation: Mr Laxman Basnet , General Secretary, SARTUC



		Followed by a group workshop
16:00 – 16:15	Tea/Coffee Break	
16:15 – 17:00	Debriefing and consolidation of Inputs in the strategy	SARTUC
17:00	End of Day 1	
19:00	Solidarity Dinner	
DAY – 2: 14 th August 2023 (Monday)		
9:00 – 9:30	Registration	
9:30 – 10:15	Ensuring Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) of Migrant Workers for Mutual Benefits	Dr. Ramhari Lammichhane, HDNCG
10:15 – 11:00	Economic and Psychosocial Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers.	Mr Uddhav Raj Poudel, Independent Consultant
11:00 – 11:15	Tea/Coffee break	
11:15 – 11:50	Social Protection of Migrant Workers at Country of Origin and Country of Destination. Speakers (10 minutes each) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Employers’ Perspective - Mr Sonjoy Prasad Mallick and Mr Md. Moslem Uddin, BEF, BangladeshWorkers’ Perspective - Mr Padmashree Ranawakaarachchi, NTUF, Sri Lanka Q&A	Moderator: Mr Nilambar Badal, Independent Researcher
11:50 – 13:00	Open Discussion and Experience Sharing Country-Wise sharing – Employer and Workers separately (3 minutes for each speaker) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Sharing of good practices and challenges for advancing the rights of migrant workers;Way forward for advancing the rights of migrant workers (<i>Open discussion</i>)	Moderator: Mr Hari Sharma, Political and Trade Union Expert
13:00 – 13:15	Reflection from the Regional Consultation	
13:15 – 13:30	Closing remarks and Vote of thanks <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE (SAFE);Mr Harbhajan Singh Sidhu, President, SARTUC.	
13:30	Lunch/End of Programme	

Annex-IV Photos



Group Photo



Mr. Harbhajan Singh Sidhu, President of SARTUC (Opening Remarks)



Mr. Malik Tahir Javaid, President of EFP, from Pakistan (Opening Remarks)



Dr. Fahimuddin Pasha, a Senior Officer for Workers' Rights at ITUC-AP (Session on Social Contract)



Participants at the Regional Consultation



Joint Resolution between SAFE and SARTUC (13-14 August 2023 at Kathmandu, Nepal)