

Future supply chain relations: Production countries' perspectives and expectations

Panel Discussion – 25 November 2020, 11:00-13:00 (CET)

COVID-19 has destabilized the garment industry at an unforeseen scale and has brought to light vulnerabilities across all players in the supply chain. Beyond navigating the immediate impacts of the pandemic, the industry faces tough decisions on how to shape future supply chain relations. A strong collaboration from all stakeholders is imperative if the industry wishes to use the current crisis as a catalyst for change to become more resilient and to transform itself towards a more digital and sustainable future. In this panel discussion we want to provide a platform for different actors from production countries to voice their perspectives and expectations on what a “new normal” can and should look like.

A political statement from:



Dr. Maria Flachsbarth Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ, Berlin

Maria Flachsbarth, a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover, became a member of the German Parliament in 2002. Since 2006, she has been deputy chair of the CDU in the state of Lower Saxony, and since 2007, she has chaired the CDU district association for Hanover. From 2002 to 2013, she served on the Parliamentary Committee on the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

Then from the end of 2013 to March 2018, she served as Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture. Since March 2018, she is Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development.

An impulse input from McKinsey by:



Saskia Hedrich Senior Expert, McKinsey Apparel Fashion & Luxury Group

As senior expert and member of the leadership team in McKinsey's Apparel, Fashion & Luxury group, Saskia Hedrich works since more than two decades with fashion companies around the world on a wide range of topics including strategy, sustainability, sourcing optimization, and merchandising transformation. Additionally, she is involved in developing strategies for national garment industries across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe. Saskia Hedrich is author of the annual State of Fashion reports, which McKinsey publishes in collaboration with Business of Fashion, and she regularly writes about sustainability and sourcing in the apparel industry.

The panellists:



Herman Leung Head of Operations at DAKOTA Garment Group

Herman has been at DAKOTA, a one-stop solution in garment design and manufacturing company with facilities in China, Cambodia, and Myanmar, for more than ten years. He leads the creation, execution, and achievement of ambitious enterprise goals, and is responsible for the central functions on-site that support the group's development. Herman has been responsible for leading the group through different transitions, positioning DAKOTA with technology and high efficiency in the fashion industry. Over the years, he has continued to explore disruptive changes to the Group, such as collaborating with a university on using Big Data to pursue smart AI-decisions in the supply chain.



Christina Hajagos-Clausen Director, Textile and Garment Industry at IndustriALL

Christina Hajagos-Clausen is IndustriALL Global Union's director for the Textile, Garment, Shoe and Leather Sector. IndustriALL Global Union is a force in global solidarity representing up to 50 million workers and taking up the fight for better working conditions and trade union rights around the world. She is a board member of ACT (Action, Collaboration and Transformation), a member of the Global Steering Committee for the ACCORD on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh and also a Board Member at the newly established RMG Sustainability Council. Christina holds a M.A. in Women Studies from the New School for Social Research and a M.S. in Union Leadership and Administration from the University of Massachusetts. She is also a graduate of the Harvard Trade Union Program.



Dr. Rubana Huq President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)

Dr. Rubana Huq is a businesswoman, and a poet. Whilst she is the first female BGMEA President, she is the first occupant of the post who has a PhD. She is also the Managing Director of Mohammadi Group, a family business-conglomerate whose journey began exporting readymade garments, and has since diversified into software, digital distribution, real estate, power generation and the launch of a television channel called Nagorik. She was featured in BBC's 100 Women. Huq won the SAARC Literary Award for her poems in 2006. She is the former CEO of TV Southasia, a collaborative platform of South Asian electronic media based in Kolkata. She also sits on the board of trustees for the Asian University for Women.



Nazma Akter Founder and Executive Director of Awaj Foundation

Nazma Akter is the founder and Executive Director of Awaj Foundation. She has been fighting to improve workers' rights, especially women, in the garment sector in Bangladesh for over 32 years. Nazma is also the President of Somnilito Garments Sramik Federation, one of the largest union federations in Bangladesh, an Ashoka Fellow 2019 and co-chair of the Asia Pacific Women's Committee of IndustriALL Global Union. At Awaj Foundation, Nazma has focused her efforts on increasing women's participation in decision-making at the workplace and at home. She also works on improving negotiations and bargaining skills among women garment workers so they can build better relationships between workers and factory management, thereby creating harmonious industrial relations in the garment sector in Bangladesh.



Matthijs Crietee Secretary General at International Apparel Federation (IAF)

Matthijs Crietee's career has had a full focus on the fashion industry. He started with the Dutch fashion industry association, FENECON. After a brief stint at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, he returned to fashion to work with FENECON's successor: MODINT, as its deputy director. From then on, Matthijs achieved many relevant goals within MODINT, amongst them was his involvement in the Dutch fashion industry's full recognition as part of the creative industry and as a 'top sector' in the Netherlands. Starting 2012, Matthijs began its path within IAF and as of January 1st, 2015 began his duties as IAF's Secretary General. He is also adviser to the Dutch innovation institute for the creative industries ClickNL (Click Next Fashion) and he frequently lectures at several Dutch fashion management institutes.