

**9th Public-Private Dialogue
Global Workshop in Tunis
9 May, 2017**

**Welcome address by Mr. Jacob Kjeldsen, Director,
The Confederation of Danish Industry**

Your excellences. Ministers. Dear friends and guests.

[Introduction]

It is a great pleasure for me to also welcome you to Tunisia and to the headquarters of our long-term partner UTICA. Two years ago, we at DI hosted the 8th PPD workshop in Copenhagen and I am excited to also be among the organisers this year in close collaboration with UTICA, the World Bank Group and other distinguished partners.

Jointly, we have done our utmost to provide you with the best possible framework for this conference and workshops on Public Private Dialogue.

Your participation today confirms to me that the subjects for this conference is high on the international development agenda. An agenda, which aims at:

- Securing sustainable, inclusive economic growth
- Creating decent jobs - especially for the youth and women
- Dealing with gender challenges

- Promoting social inclusiveness of minorities & migrant workers
- And respecting human rights.

These are among the core values for the Danish business community.

Thus, they consequently reflect *our* way of doing business worldwide.

When we source components, when we distribute intermediate goods and when we manufacture final products to the end-user.

From experience, we have learned that with the appropriate business environment conditions, private sector companies can play a substantial role in addressing the challenges of employment related to youth, women and migrants.

On a global scale and throughout the entire, global value chain, it is essential that companies trust governments to enforce legislation. And that they enforce them equally to all companies.

To make it happen, we need to work together to the benefit of societies, companies and every one of us.

This is why we are gathered here in Tunis today and the coming days.

[Business contribution to global challenges]

In 2015, The United Nations decided on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, replacing the Millennium Goals and highlighting global challenges such as climate change, unemployment and poverty.

For DI, the SDGs are important because they represent “what is important to the world”. When the SDGs were launched in September 2015, then United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, "There can be no Plan B, because there is no Planet B."

For the first time, it is recognised that meeting these global challenges requires that views and inputs from the business community are at the centre. Because companies are *part* of the solution when they invest, create jobs and provide new technologies.

In this respect, good policy frameworks are crucial. And for this Public-Private Dialogue is crucial.

[Job creation]

As this event so clearly underlines, job creation is of great importance. In Africa alone, around 1 million young people graduate every month and look for a job.

On top of this, countries in most parts of the world need to secure equal jobs for women and additional jobs for migrant workers, while ensuring economic growth.

It is not an option for the public sector to hire all these young and hopeful people. Most of the jobs *must* be found in private companies – large companies, SMEs and start-ups.

This requires a more developed private sector and better local business environments.

But we should take note that not all business communities around the world engage in policy discussions.

In some countries, the business community is simply not organized. In other countries, it is not the tradition to take business opinions into account.

Either way, the result is that business is often not heard when governments design policies.

This leads to reduced competitiveness of the local private sector. It hampers foreign investments. The result is *less* growth, *fewer* jobs and *less* wealth. In turn undermining the efforts of improving living conditions globally.

[DI examples]

The Confederation of Danish Industry and our member companies are deeply involved in Public Private Dialogue.

It is part of our obligation to identify challenges met by companies and to find solutions in a dialogue with other - often public - stakeholders.

Let me give you two examples.

[The Danish Model]

In Denmark, Public Private Dialogue is the rule rather than the exception for the business community.

My first example is the Danish system of labour market regulation, often referred to as “the Danish Model”.

In Denmark, we do not have laws on minimum wage and working hours. We have collective agreements made between us - the employers’ organizations - and the trade unions.

The idea is that the labour market partners, in a dialogue, should identify challenges and find solutions on the labour market. The result is a steady and flexible labour market.

Our system based on dialogue has worked for more than 100 years. Moreover, the sitting government has always respected it.

Actually, we have just finalized a round of collective bargaining that will constitute the framework for the Danish labour market for the next 3 years.

However, we also engage the Danish government jointly with our labour union counterparts through tripartite negotiations.

Last autumn, the labour unions and the employers entered discussions with the government and regional authorities in Denmark to reform the Danish system of migrant worker inclusion on the labour market.

This agreement was finally agreed upon in March this year and provides a flexible model for private sector companies to employ migrant workers and refugees through a combination of education and job training.

Hence, jobs for this group of people are created, our members get access to a new pool of employees and the integration and social inclusiveness efforts in Denmark are reinforced.

In short, the agreement is a novel example of how Public-Private dialogue can help solve a major challenge and where the solution benefits all stakeholders and the society.

This spring, we are entering into a new round of tripartite negotiations with the government. This time the subject is youth job creation and skills development and the main theme is how to enhance the number of apprenticeships within private sector companies. And we feel optimistic regarding the possibilities of reaching another agreement with our partners.

In Denmark, this kind of dialogue does not only apply to the labour market. The business community and other stakeholders are in general invited by politicians to contribute to the legal process.

[Capacity building]

My second example relates to our international activities. For almost 20 years, DI has collaborated with business communities all over the world.

Together with the private sector in developing countries, we provide policy recommendations for governments. Exactly as we do in Denmark.

We seek to assist sister organizations in emerging and developing markets with inspiration on how to engage governments and perform policy advocacy. In other words, we assist our sister organization partners to become the voice of the private sector in their respective countries.

Through this partnership, they are strengthened in delivering concrete recommendations to governments on how to create jobs and economic growth. And we can assist in qualifying the dialogue between the local private sector and governments.

UTICA is a good example of this. Our cooperation with UTICA is long lasting and ongoing, and UTICA has more than proved that it is possible to make a difference to society when a business association engages in a dialogue with the government, labour unions and other civil society organisations.

[In conclusion]

Let me end my speech by urging for increasing transparency, trust and openness, as these are key to dialogue.

We are convinced that sustainable growth requires dialogue with politicians and authorities, with the trade unions and with civil society.

It requires dialogue between the public and private sector.

PUBLIC PRIVATE DIALOGUE.I wish you success and a fruitful event over the next couple of days. Thank you.