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No. 08, Arul Nagar, Seera Thoppu,

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Tiruchirappalli – 620102

Phone : +91 94896 71437 – info@iledu.in / Chairman@iledu.in



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AN ACCOUNT OF THE UN INITIATIVES VIS-À-VIS
THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND LABOR CONCERNS
PLAGUING THE GLOBAL FASHION INDUSTRY

Virali Joisher

Student at Kirit P Mehta School of Law NMIMS Mumbai

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INTRODUCTION & PROBLEM STATEMENT:

“The SDGs recognize that the fight for human rights and the fight for the health of our planet must go hand in hand.”

–Audrey Stanton

Before, proceeding with specific instruments, it is essential to understand what UN SDGs are. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a global call to action to eradicate poverty, protect the environment, and ensure that everyone lives in peace and prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs are linked, recognising that actions in one area affect outcomes in others and that development must achieve a balance between social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Countries have decided to place a greater emphasis on improving the lives of the poorest people. Poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls are all targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To achieve the SDGs, all of society's creativity, know-how, technology, and financial resources are necessary, regardless of setting.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals by filling in the gaps. They

aspire to make human rights, gender equality, and women's and girls' empowerment a reality for everyone. They are inextricably linked and inextricably linked, striking a balance between the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. Over the next fifteen years, the goals and targets will motivate action in areas that are critical to people and the environment. This paper elucidates upon how the environmental sustainability and abusive labour concerns of the global fashion industry act as a hindrance to achieve the objectives set forth by the UNDP in the form of the SDGs.

One of the several problems plaguing the fashion industry recently is that the fashion industry today is causing a great deal of polluting and the industry is consuming way too many resources. The future of this industry depends on whether we are able to devise methods of reducing the environmental ramifications which result from the entire life cycle of garment production. Studies have revealed that an average consumer ended up buying 60 percent more clothing in 2014 as compared to in 2000. But what looks like the real problem here is that an average consumer kept each article of clothing for half the period of time before discarding it as compared to 2000. This problem seems to only get bigger with time because the purchases in the clothing sector are projected to rise by a whopping 63 percent over the next 10 years. To add to this already pressing issue, the study reveals that it is expected that less than one percent of these pieces of clothing are going to get recycled after they are discarded by consumers owing to their short lifespan.⁹¹

It is surprisingly alarming that among the world's most polluting industries, the fashion industry finds its place on the list. An industry which looks so harmless on the exterior is actually one of the biggest contributors to environmental problems since the industry requires enormous quantities of raw materials for fabrication of cloth. The fashion industry also generates substantial intensities of pollution which results into a weighty carbon footprint. On top of all this, the massive quantities of this production process then generates

⁹¹ TFL, 'Fast Fashion's "Sustainability" Endeavours Need to Be About More than Fabrics, Recycling' (The Fashion Law, August 14, 2019)

an alarming level of waste which mostly ends up in landfills. Water pollution is also one of the biggest concerns of the fashion industry because the textile industry produces enormous amounts of industrial waste which contributes seventeen to twenty percent of all of water pollution across the globe created by industries.⁹² The worldwide fashion industry contributes to a massive 10% of the world's carbon emissions, as a part of their production process and the subsequent supply chain.⁹³ The production process talked about here, involves making of fibres used to make textiles, and this process, in 2015, reportedly produced a projected 1.2 billion tons of greenhouse emissions. It should be noted that this figure exceeds the figure of carbon footprint from international flights and maritime shipping both combined.⁹⁴ Statistics on micro plastic shedding are alarming and show that synthetic clothing is the sole contributor for 20% to 35% of micro plastics found in marine life.⁹⁵ Whenever someone washes a garment, synthetic fibres and micro plastic are shed into the water system, in fact studies show that a single washing of clothes weighing 6 kg potentially releases approximately 700,000 fibres in the water system.⁹⁶ Furthermore, low-cost fast fashion comes at the expense of labourers, who are underpaid, overworked, and forced to work in hazardous conditions. The fashion industry in other countries exploits many people, especially children. Many international policies designed to safeguard businesses have harmed these workers. While outsourcing benefited many countries by allowing rich countries to manufacture their products at a lower cost and bringing jobs to poor countries, it also injured many innocent employees. As global citizens, we must determine whether the relationship between international law and the fast fashion business harms workers

and the environment, or whether it is trying to repair this dysfunctional industry. Workers in poor nations are actively exploited by the fast fashion business. The textile industry's poisonous staples are low salaries, hazardous working conditions, and long hours. To take advantage of inexpensive labour and a lack of laws, large corporations in wealthy countries outsource production to smaller developing countries. Sherman (2016) estimates that 97 percent of all clothing sold in the United States comes from offshore production facilities. The Clean Clothes Campaign of 2020 brings to light that, 93 percent of fashion brands fail to pay workforces a liveable remuneration. The fast fashion industry's minimum salary is estimated to be half to a fifth of a liveable wage. Workers in Cambodia, India, and Bangladesh are paid less than a dollar per hour. Workers must labour overtime to make ends meet because of the poor earnings. As a result, labourers, many of whom are children, work 14-16-hour days seven days a week. "Work for which the kid is either too young-employment done below the statutory minimum age-or work which, because of its damaging character or conditions, is entirely considered inappropriate for children and is prohibited," according to the United Nations. Child labour is estimated to affect 170 million children around the world, according to the International Labor Organization.⁹⁷ As a result, infractions of labour laws are another cause for concern. Hence, the paper undertakes a study as to how these concerns are addressed by international provisions and assesses their efficacy in ameliorating the said concerns and also in the end provides suggestions that can catalyse this process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

⁹² Rita Kant. *Textile dyeing industry an environmental hazard* (Natural Science 4 2012) 22,26

⁹³ James Conca. 'Making Climate Change Fashionable—The Garment Industry Takes on Global Warming' (2015) <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesconca/2015/12/03/making-climate-change-fashionable-the-garment-industry-takes-on-global-warming/#18725edb79e4>> accessed on 22 August 2020

⁹⁴ Ellen Macarthur Foundation, 'A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning Fashion's Future' (Ellen Macarthur Foundation, 2017) <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/A-New-Textiles-Economy_Full-Report_Updated_12-17.pdf> accessed on 20 August 2020

⁹⁵ Environmental Audit Committee, 'Environmental impact of micro plastics' (2016)

<<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmenvaud/179/179.pdf>> accessed on 24 August 2020

⁹⁶ R. C. Thompson *et al.*, *Lost at sea: Where is all the plastic?* (2004) 838

⁹⁷ Alexandra Grace Speed, 'The Impact of Fast Fashion and International Law on Workers and the Environment' (Oklahoma State University, May 2021)

<https://shareok.org/bitstream/handle/11244/329906/oksd_speed_HT_2021.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> accessed on 13 March 2022

The researcher has adopted the methods of doctrinal research in order to arrive at and prove the hypothesis, utilizing secondary sources in order to assess and analyse the subject, fulfil the research objectives, and answer the research questions adequately: considering the scope and nature of the topic, as well as the resources available and accessible. A diverse range of secondary sources including articles, journal articles, reports, and studies published by various reliable authorities, as available on the internet, and books authored by well renowned authors: were referred to. This research peruses a design consisting of mixed method i.e. including both quantitative and qualitative secondary data.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the United Nations initiatives for maintaining environmental sustainability in the global fashion industry?

The United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, which was established during the United Nations Environment Assembly, intends to end fashion's environmentally and socially harmful practises and instead use it to enhance the world's ecosystems. The Alliance is improving collaboration among UN agencies by reviewing UN agencies' efforts to make fashion sustainable, identifying solutions and gaps in their operations, and presenting these findings to governments to activate policy. The United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion serves as a communication and collaboration platform for a number of UN agencies working to make fashion more sustainable, including: Blue Fashion, an initiative that consumes sustainable marine materials and protects arable land, launched by the FAO of the UN; the Ethical Fashion Initiative that encourages artisans from developing countries was launched by the International Trade Centre; also, governments are being compelled to stimulate sustainable manufacturing practises by the United Nations Environment Programme.⁹⁸

UNECE's programme for transparency is one of many initiatives aimed at making fashion more sustainable. The

goal of UNECE's collaboration with United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business is to cultivate traceability criterions catering to the textile and leather industries that are heavily influenced by complicated value chains, subcontracting, and informal labour.⁹⁹

The United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion was instituted by ten distinct UN organisations and inaugurated during the 2019 UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi (Kenya) in March 2019.

“The UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion is made up of several UN agencies, including the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Global Impact, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Climate Change, and the United Nations Office for Partnerships, all of which collaborate to advocate for and implement changes in the fashion industry's accepted practises. Furthermore, the alliance actively promotes the following aims, which are at the heart of its operations:”

1. Promoting Active Collaboration: The alliance promotes development through cooperative initiatives such as outreach, research, and new guidelines aimed at raising awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Knowledge Sharing: Using a knowledge platform, promote an effective flow of ideas by being transparent about processes, data, and activities.
3. Improving Harmonization and Strengthening Synergies: Working to increase harmonisation and synergies across existing programmes.
4. Outreach and Advocacy: Works to achieve United Nations-wide outreach and advocacy, focusing on the business sector, governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other relevant stakeholders.

During the UN Conference on Trade and Development, it was announced that the industry of fashion was second most

⁹⁸ “UNEP, ‘UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’ (UN Environment Programme, 14 March 2019) <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/un-alliance-sustainable-fashion-addresses-damage-fast-fashion> accessed on 13 March 2022”

⁹⁹ International Labour Organisation, ‘UN Partnership on Sustainable Fashion and the SDGs’ (ILO, 10 July 2018) https://www.ilo.org/newyork/news/WCMS_634927/lang-en/index.htm accessed on 13 March 2022

industry that was polluting the world and this prompted the involvement of other UN organizations. The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), one of the 10 original members of the Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, further highlights the urgency of the situation and the reason for the creation of the organization in the first place. “The Global production of clothing and footwear generates 8% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions (...) the greenhouse gas emissions from the industry are expected to rise by almost 50% by 2030.” Due to its association with the United Nations and the alliance's objective, the UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion is also responsible for supporting the sharing of ideas towards the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the Alliance seeks to shift the route of fashion in a way that lessens its negative environmental implications by looking at it through the prism of the Sustainable Development Goals, which is seen in Sustainable Development Goals 9, 12, and 17¹⁰⁰ i.e. “to Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; and Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.”

The Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action was created under the auspices of UN Climate Change by fashion stakeholders who worked throughout 2018 to provide strategies for the larger textile, garment, and fashion industries to move toward a comprehensive commitment to climate action. The Charter sets the goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. The Fashion Industry Charter was announced at COP24 in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018 and will be renewed at COP26 in Glasgow, United Kingdom, in November 2021. The Fashion Sector Climate Action Charter goes above and beyond previous obligations made by the industry as a whole.

The Fashion Charter for Climate Action aims to get the fashion industry to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, in line with the Paris Agreement's targets of keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees. The fashion sector, as an important global stakeholder, must play an active part in helping to accomplish the Paris Agreement's goals of reaching climate neutrality in the second half of the twenty-first century, as stated in the Charter. The UN Climate Change Charter's Signatories and Supporting Organizations will work together to meet the document's responsibilities. Working groups will be established to bring key stakeholders, experts, and projects from the fashion and textile industries together.

- “Decarbonization pathway and GHG emission reductions”
- “Raw material”
- “Manufacturing/Energy”
- “Logistics”
- “Policy engagement”
- “Leveraging existing tools and initiatives”
- “Promoting broader climate action”
- “Brand/Retailer Owned or Operated Emissions”¹⁰¹

2. What is the efficiency of the labour law provisions prescribed by the ILO in light of fast fashion workers?

Sustainable fashion has societal effects in addition to environmental considerations. The 11th Sustainable Development Goal focuses on making cities and human settlements more inclusive, safe, resilient, and long-term. Since the deadly Rana Plaza Factory collapse in 2013, which killed 1,134 textile factory workers, fashion designers have increasingly turned their attention to the structures where people create their products. Working conditions can no longer be considered a secondary priority, as the sad event revealed.¹⁰² Because smaller developing countries are

¹⁰⁰ Kylee Traylor, ‘UN ALLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION BACKGROUND GUIDE’ (University of California, San Diego, 05 March 2021) <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d490427e408600012fc1ef/t/605a4e69879a380de97f745d/1616531049691/UN+Fashion+Alliance+BG.pdf> accessed on 13 March 2022

¹⁰¹ United Nations Climate Change, ‘Global Climate Action in Fashion’ (UN Climate Change) <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/global-climate-action-in-fashion/about-the-fashion-industry-charter-for-climate-action> accessed on 13 March 2022

¹⁰² Global Fashion Agenda, ‘FASHION ON THE 17 UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS’ (Global Fashion Agenda, 27 January 2021)

disregarded on a global scale, no regulations have been made to protect future workers since the collapse of the textile factory in Bangladesh.¹⁰³

Workers demand better protection; reasonable salaries, safe working conditions, and shorter shifts should all be standard in this industry. Only by strengthening international legislation controlling fashion sector offshore outsourcing can this be possible. The UN General Assembly endorsed four labour pillars in September 2015: job creation, social protection, workplace rights, and social discourse. They also created the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for everyone. This is a worldwide initiative aimed at bettering working conditions. The international framework indicated above fosters equality in the global economy and aids countries in resisting the temptation to lower labour standards in order to gain a competitive advantage in international trade. Lowering labour standards can result in poor wages, a lack of skills, and significant staff turnover, all of which will hinder a country's long-term development of high-skilled employment. The ILO is the exclusive enforcer of labour standards, having adopted one hundred and eighty-seven labour treaties and identifying eight basic human rights conventions or core standards:

- 1) Freedom of association and protection of the right to organize (1948),
- 2) Right to organize and collective bargaining (1949),
- 3) forced labour (1930),
- 4) Abolition of forced labour (1959),
- 5) Minimum age (1973),
- 6) Worst forms of child labour (1999),
- 7) Equal remuneration (1951),
- 8) Discrimination (1958).

These treaties cover topics defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as fundamental principles and rights at work. The majority of the 186 member countries have ratified all eight conventions, but the United States and

eight other countries have only ratified two of them: the prohibition of forced labour and the prohibition of child labour. As a member of the ILO, the United States "is required to respect, promote, and fulfil the values of the ILO statement," according to Greene (2007), but is only legally bound to follow the conventions that have been ratified. To better protect workers at home and abroad, the United States and other member countries must ratify all eight of these standards. Developing countries must be held to the same standards as developed countries. All countries wishing to gain access to the global market should be required to adhere to labour regulations and expand basic human rights. The three nations where fast fashion is mostly manufactured, China, Vietnam, and Bangladesh, are all members of the United Nations, but have not ratified all of the core conventions. These countries are not breaking any laws because the ILO is unable to enforce labour rules that have not been ratified.¹⁰⁴ Therefore the efficacy of these provisions by the International Labour Organisation is questionable.

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) Better Work Programme, which affects 2.1 million factory workers in eight countries, strives to improve working conditions and promote global supply chain competitiveness. In addition, the programme improves factory compliance with ILO and national labour standards, particularly in the areas of compensation, contracts, occupational safety and health, and working hours. According to an independent study conducted by Tufts University, Vietnamese factories who participated in the Better Work Programme reported a 25% increase in profitability and improved working conditions over the course of four years. In order to achieve SDG 8 and make sustainable fashion a worldwide reality, the ILO will continue to collaborate with other UN partners.¹⁰⁵ SDG 8 aims to achieve long-term, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, as well as full and productive employment and decent work for all people. In the fashion sector, decent labour, job creation, social protection, workplace rights, and

<https://www.globalfashionagenda.com/fashion-on-the-17-un-sustainable-development-goals/> accessed on 13 March 2022

¹⁰³ Supra note. 7

¹⁰⁴ Supra note. 7

¹⁰⁵ Supra note. 9

social discussion are all required. Forced labour, commonly known as modern slavery, must be abolished. In order to contribute to a more resilient fashion industry in the future, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is a part of a Garment Industry Call to Action, which includes commitments from various industry parties such as speeding up access to emergency financing for both workers and employers and establishing stronger health and social protections.¹⁰⁶

Wages and working hours have a direct impact on the lives of employees and the competitiveness of businesses. The ILO's work includes the development of international labour standards that assist governments in enacting national legislation to regulate wages and working hours and provide employers and workers' representatives with a solid legal framework for collective bargaining and other forms of negotiation. The right to "fair and favourable remuneration" was declared as a fundamental human right in 1948 by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides a life worthy of human dignity. The 2006 version of the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles on Multinational Companies and Social Policy emphasises the need of multinational companies (MNEs) complying to pay levels and working conditions and "within the confines of government policies, give the best feasible salaries, benefits, and working conditions." The International Labour Conference (ILC) unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization in 2008, which stated that "achieving an improved and fair outcome for all has become even more necessary" and reaffirmed the ILO's obligation to promote the goals of "full employment and raising living standards, a minimum living wage, and the extension of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need."¹⁰⁷

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

Interactions between the fast fashion business and international law are actively harming workers and the

environment. As seen by the ILO's incapacity to enforce important labour rules, international law does little to enhance this industry and safeguard employees, but there is still time to change that. Fast fashion companies must start working on sustainable clothes as soon as possible, or face grave consequences. Retailers can take steps toward more sustainable fashion by pledging to pay workers a living wage, enforcing factory safety standards, lowering output, switching to more sustainable materials, and advocating for the application of international rules and regulations.¹⁰⁸

“Research shows that fashion presents many opportunities for reducing waste and improving the environment. But the fashion industry cuts across many sectors, and so to capture the full opportunity, the UN and its partners need an integrated approach that goes beyond individual Sustainable Development Goals.”

“-H.E. Siim Kiisler, President of the UN Environment Assembly.”¹⁰⁹

Therefore, it is recommended that the aspects of traceability and transparency are looked into:

Traceability is important for the consumers' awareness. If consumers are buying slow fashion and spending extra to ensure the environment is not being affected, then it is obvious that they want some kind of proof as reassurance that the product they are buying has labels and certifications which are genuine. This becomes the manufacturer's onus and he needs to provide information about every stage of the production procedure of the garment, from the cultivation and sourcing of every raw material, to the transportation mode. This habit of maintaining utmost transparency about the production of the garment is called traceability and is beneficial for the consumers to check for the authenticity of the claims of sustainable clothing since some companies might tag products as sustainable to justify their higher prices.¹¹⁰ An effective example of this would be The 'Öeko-Tex Standard 100' that offers additional consumer protection in France and other countries like Japan. This provision is a

¹⁰⁶ Supra note. 12

¹⁰⁷ International Labour Organisation, 'Wages and Working Hours in the Textiles, Clothing, Leather and Footwear Industries' (ILO, September 2014) https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@secto

r/documents/publication/wcms_300463.pdf accessed on 13 March 2022

¹⁰⁸ Supra note. 7

¹⁰⁹ Supra note. 8

¹¹⁰ Beth Stewart, 'Upcycling: The New Wave of Sustainable Fashion' (Triple Pundit, 2014)

program for the testing and certification of textiles. The Öeko-Tex Standard 100 guides the clothing and textile industry with regards to the harm that may be potentially caused by toxic substances in not only finished products but also raw materials; thereby including each and every stage of the production of the garment. If a product has Öeko-Tex Standard 100 certification, then it means that the product is completely free from harmful chemicals and is therefore safe to use. This kind of a provision enables an increase in consumer awareness and encourages them to buy products which are less toxic and sustainable. This definitely provides some impetus to revolutionize the garment industry.¹¹¹ Other countries can be a part of this and ensure sustainable fashion. Together with key industry players, UNECE and UN/CEFACT investigated such difficulties and risks and initiated a proposal for an international framework effort to improve transparency and traceability for sustainable value chains in the garment and footwear industries. The project's goals for 2019-2022 include creating a multi-stakeholder policy platform, establishing policy recommendations, traceability standards, and implementation guidelines, as well as building capacity and conducting pilots on project deliverables. As part of that effort, UNECE, or the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, has established "The Sustainability Pledge" and it is hereby advised that all 56 member nations use the toolkit of measures to improve the sector's environmental and ethical credentials.¹¹²

Green-washing is the practice where brands label their products as sustainable in order to charge consumers more for profits thereby cheating them. Therefore, to curb this, there should be a predetermined standard to certify the sustainability of the product and provide customers with transparency about the manufacturing and supply chain procedure. In short, there is a need for authentic verification and certification of fashion clothing via unbiased third-party

assessments to reduce the practice of "green-washing" by verifying indicators like water usage and energy usage that can be measured and monitored. Therefore, a system of third-party evaluation of sustainable products is important to ensure authenticity.¹¹³ A fitting model to combat green-washing and maintain authenticity and transparency about sustainable fashion is The Higg Index which was developed by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, in order to enable manufacturers and to accurately measure and score a product's sustainability performance based on several measurable indicators. The Higg Index not only encourages brands to maintain transparency about their production process but also empowers consumers to make more informed purchasing decisions.¹¹⁴

The TCLF industries have been more informalized as a result of the demand for more flexibility and labour cost concerns. Many corporations in many nations reduce their formal personnel and subcontract labour to lower tiers to save money. While permanent employees are normally covered by national wage laws, informal employees are frequently not. Informalization frequently has a greater impact on women than on men, and this is a regular occurrence in various countries, including Brazil, China, and India. As a result, informal sectors must be regulated as well. Other key aspects like:

- "Need for daily, weekly and perhaps annual limits on working hours,"
- "Importance of keeping overtime exceptional,"
- "limiting the number of additional hours and providing adequate compensation,"
- "Right to regular and uninterrupted weekly rest,"
- "Right to paid annual leave,"
- "Need to keep night-time work exceptional and warranting special protection,"

<<https://www.triplepundit.com/story/2014/upcycling-new-wave-sustainable-fashion/58691>> accessed on 24 August 2020

¹¹¹ A. Joy, C. Peña, *Sustainability in Fashion: A Cradle to Upcycle Approach* (Palgrave Macmillan 3 2017) 31.54

¹¹² United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 'Traceability for Sustainable Garment and Footwear' (UNECE) <https://unece.org/trade/traceability-sustainable-garment-and-footwear#:~:text=UNECE%20and%20UN%2FCEFACT%2C%20>

[jointly.the%20garment%20and%20footwear%20industry](https://www.triplepundit.com/story/2014/upcycling-new-wave-sustainable-fashion/58691) accessed on 13 March 2022

¹¹³ A. Joy, C. Peña, *Sustainability in Fashion: A Cradle to Upcycle Approach* (Palgrave Macmillan 3 2017) 31.54

¹¹⁴ Sustainable Apparel Coalition, 'The Higg Index' (Sustainable Apparel Coalition) <<https://apparelcoalition.org/the-higg-index/>> accessed on 22 August 2020

- “Importance of enterprises’ needs in respect of flexible working-time arrangements,”
- “Right to collective bargaining and the full and genuine consultation of employers’ and workers’ representatives on working-time regulation,”
- “Need for an effective labour inspection system or other enforcement measures to prevent and punish abusive practices;”

should also be taken into consideration for attaining the objectives ILO aspires to.

In addition, the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh in 2013, which killed over 1,200 workers, served as a catalyst for multiple stakeholders to collaborate to reform labour practises in the textile and garment industries. These heinous occurrences drew worldwide attention to the dreadful working conditions of textile employees. Improved cooperation between the tripartite components and other stakeholders has resulted in the establishment of new and innovative labour agreements since then. Bangladesh ratified the Accord on Fire and Building Safety, sometimes known as "the Accord," on May 13, 2013. It plans to implement necessary health and safety criteria over a five-year period in order to establish a safe and sustainable Bangladeshi ready-made garment sector.¹¹⁵ The Accord has been signed by 150 worldwide firms, representing approximately 2 million workers and 1,700 factories, with the ILO serving as the "neutral chair and facilitator." The ILO has launched a three-year project to improve working conditions in the ready-made garment sector in order to assist the Plan of Action's implementation and coordination. It's also in charge of the Rana Plaza Donor Trust Fund, which pays out compensation to injured workers. This method might be used in other countries with sweatshops for fast fashion, such as Vietnam, Morocco, Pakistan, and India.¹¹⁶

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¹¹⁵ The Bangladesh Accord (signed 24 April 2013)

¹¹⁶ Supra note. 18

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