

The United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Hold a Labor Subcommittee Meeting Under the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement

Amman, Jordan – Government officials from the United States and Jordan convened the Labor Subcommittee under the United States-Jordan free trade agreement. The Subcommittee works to promote labor rights and enhance technical cooperation on labor matters, such as respect for labor rights and improving working conditions for foreign workers in Jordan's growing garment sector.

Jordanian Assistant General Secretary of Labor Dr. Mohammad Al-Qudah, led council discussions on behalf of Jordan, while U.S. participants included the U.S. Embassy in Jordan's Deputy Chief of Mission Stephanie T. Williams, Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Labor Affairs Carlos Romero, and Chief of Staff of the Bureau of International Labor Affairs at the U.S. Department of Labor Amit Pandya.

At the subcommittee meeting, officials reviewed implementation of the labor obligations of the United States-Jordan free trade agreement, and discussed areas of technical cooperation and capacity building. A key objective of the meeting was to support and advance the Labor Implementation Plan the two governments signed in 2013 to address labor concerns in Jordan's garment factories, including anti-union discrimination against foreign workers, conditions of their accommodations, and gender discrimination and harassment. The subcommittee also discussed a Memorandum of Understanding that the U.S. Department of Labor signed with the Government of Jordan in December 2013, which sets up a Labor Cooperation mechanism with priorities for cooperative activities on labor matters.

The subcommittee meeting concluded with a public session and roundtable discussion with stakeholders from Jordan's worker organizations, businesses, international buyers and other interested parties, in furtherance of the two governments' commitment to a participatory process.

