

PRESS RELEASE

BIR Textiles Division trade delegation visits World Bank in Nairobi

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For immediate release

In the framework of BIR's ongoing lobbying efforts to persuade the East African Community (EAC) to review its directive to phase out imports of used textiles and footwear by 2019, BIR President Ranjit Baxi and Textiles Division President Mehdi Zerroug visited Nairobi for a high-level meeting with trade advisors of the World Bank, whose work in Kenya aims to accelerate sustainable growth, reduce inequality, and manage resource scarcity.

The meeting was very constructive and gave BIR representatives the opportunity to explain in detail the benefits of importing primary sorted mixed clothing and to stress the importance of also building the secondary sorting and ancillary industries (production of wipers and other usable products from non-wearable textiles).

BIR recommended that EAC should promote the import of mixed sorted clothing with a view to enhancing sustainable growth and increased employment and should continue to support those parts of the population that depend on the employment in the sector.

To facilitate discussions, more research would need to be undertaken to build evidence on the job creation and other economic, social and environmental opportunities that could be

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realised if the EAC were to lift its threat of a ban on used clothing imports and actively pursue a programme to encourage the establishment of used clothing sorting and textile recycling businesses within the EAC.

In the interim, BIR will be seeking accurate information from national associations on their country's exports to EAC member states and to provide an informed overview of the potential scale of sorting that could take place in all five EAC member states.

Further meetings are envisaged to be held between the World Bank and BIR, the aim being to present a detailed report to EAC governments for reconsideration of the import ban.

The visit was jointly funded by BIR, FEDEREC (France), the Textile Recycling Association (UK), COBEREC (Belgium), Gemeinschaft für textile Zukunft (Germany), Boer Group (Netherlands), Vereniging Herwinning Textiel (Netherlands), with additional support from the French organisations Framimex/Ecotextile, KFB and Gebetex; as well as the UK organisations J&H Sales International Ltd, TW Beaumonts, BIU Group, ERC/Soex, Savanna Rags, Lontex, TIC International, Fortune Eximports, Salvation Army Trading Company, JMP Wilcox, LM Barry, TRAIID, Nathan's Wastesavers, Next Best Clothing, Air Ambulance Service Ltd.

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