

**Recommendations by the French National Contact Point to Companies  
on the Issue of Forced Labour in Burma**

**Thursday, 28 March 2002**

**(Translation from the original French)**

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises states that "enterprises should.... contribute to the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour." Chapter IV "Employment and Industrial Relations".

On this basis, several labour unions asked the French National Contact Point (NCP) to look into the question of forced labour in Burma. In conformity with the procedural guidance set forth under the OECD Guidelines, the NCP undertook consultations with several enterprises, with the following results.

The NCP is of the opinion that companies operating in Burma should do everything possible in order to avoid direct or indirect recourse to forced labour in the normal course of their operations, in their relations with sub-contractors or through future investments, particularly in zones with a strong military presence and in activities controlled by the army.

In this respect, the consultations undertaken by the NCP have brought to light the following practices that companies can use to contribute to the fight against forced labour:

- Undertaking co-operative action with international labour organisations at the relevant levels;
- External monitoring;
- Promoting legislation against forced labour;
- Contributing to development projects, especially in their areas of involvement;
- Verification by local managers of the behaviour of sub-contractors;
- Contributing to training operations.

Other company practices can also contribute:

- Development of a social dialogue with organisations representing employees at the local and international levels;
- Provision of regular information to Boards of Directors about initiatives taken to avoid recourse to forced labour.

Such practices obviously cannot substitute for the enforcement of the measures necessary for the suppression of forced labour by the Burmese government itself in conformity with the recommendations of the ILO, nor for actions by its member States.