



DEWAN PIMPINAN NASIONAL SERIKAT BURUH MIGRAN INDONESIA

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Subject : **SBMI's Intervention Statement on item agenda On Labour Standard Discussion**

Chair and distinguished delegates,

First of all, we would like this intervention to be attributed to the Union of Indonesian Migrant Workers (or SBMI) and the Global Tuna Alliance.

Chair,

We welcome the Secretariat's study on labour standards. Thank you for the effort of compiling this study.

However, we note that the Commission now has more than enough evidence showing that forced labour and abusive working conditions are occurring within the IOTC area of competence. These abuses have been repeatedly documented by unions, civil society organizations, and the governments. This is no longer a question of whether the problem exists. The problem is already well known.

*For that reason, **we support** the practical roadmap proposed in the Secretariat's study, particularly **the establishment of a working group on Labour Standards** to address this issue. However, what is concerning is that, **despite this reality**, the practical response being proposed is to **wait another year merely to establish a working group**.*

SBMI and Global Tuna Alliance must state clearly that we strongly disagree with this approach.

*Delaying the establishment of a Working Group on Labour Standards until 2027 risks sending the message that the Commission recognizes the problem but **is still unwilling to act with urgency**. Establishing a working group is already **the most basic institutional step available to this Commission**. Postponing even that minimal action demonstrates a serious gap between the level of concern expressed by CPCs and the level of political commitment actually being shown.*

*While these discussions are delayed, fishers continue to experience forced labour, violence, debt bondage, excessive working hours, abandonment, and other forms of **exploitation on vessels operating within this region**.*

*SBMI and our coalition partners in Indonesia continue receiving complaints directly from migrant fishers connected to fishing operations in the Indian Ocean. For workers at sea, **another year of delay is not simply an administrative timeline, but it means more workers trapped in abusive conditions**.*

Chair,

SBMI and Global Tuna Alliance appreciates that several CPCs have expressed support for discussing labour standards and acknowledged the seriousness of forced labour in fisheries. However, **we are deeply disappointed** that **no CPC has yet shown willingness to lead or facilitate the proposed Working Group on Labour Standards.**

Without a CPC willing to actively lead on this issue, there is a serious risk that the Secretariat's study will ultimately become another document acknowledged by the Commission but disconnected from any meaningful outcome. The Commission cannot continue asking for more studies, more discussions, and more time while avoiding **even the first institutional step toward action.**

Nevertheless, if the establishment of the Working Group on Labour Standards is ultimately pushed to next year, even though **we are deeply disappointed**, we expect this Commission to ensure that the process does not **once again** lose momentum after this meeting concludes.

SBMI and Global Tuna Alliance wish to state clearly that next year's Annual Meeting must result in the formal establishment of the Working Group on Labour Standards. Fishers experiencing exploitation in the IOTC fisheries cannot continue waiting through endless procedural delays.

Chair,

No economic interest, political sensitivity, or procedural delay **should outweigh the humanity and dignity of fishers working within the IOTC fisheries. The workers sustaining this industry cannot continue being treated as secondary to the system that profits from their labour.**

Thank you, Chair.