

I refer to the Public Consultation on Investment Screening:

Permit me to propose that this is a valuable moment to consider introducing, as part of any such screening, an assessment of labour standards in the company seeking investment, to detect and dissuade labour exploitation and trafficking. As part of a coordinated EU effort, this could lead to a virtuous circle, improving global standards.

As one representative example, a criterion for investment could be to provide a legally notified written declaration that no Conflict Minerals are used, nor are such such Conflict Resources procured or used in their supply chain.

(e.g. Coltan mining in the DRC is often carried out under grossly exploitative, dangerous conditions and there are credible reports of child labour. Coltan-derived Tantalum is in high global demand as it is used in the manufacture of electronic components in the phone, computer and automobile industry among others.)

This could be bolstered by an auditing system, with the usual safeguards.

Similarly, working conditions (including living wages, fire safety, adequate rest etc.) must meet EU safety standards, at a minimum, before Investment can be offered.

Failure to comply with and meet the standard could result in investment being withheld, revocation of existing license to operate, publication of the failure in an EU database, and - in the event of discovering human rights abuse - a criminal investigation.

I have no vested interest and consider myself to be a 'general member of the Irish public' with regard to this issue.

I hope this helps.

Thanks for your consideration.

Contact Details Supplied