



## Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy - Response to BHRC

July 2022

The Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) began engaging with the hospitality sector in 2019 and has embedded its Workers' Welfare Standards (WW Standards) within all hotel agreements under its scope. The SC has a robust monitoring and enforcement system to assure compliance with the WW Standards and actively investigates non-compliances.

The SC's on-going intervention and due diligence of this sector has resulted in key improvements in recruitment practices amongst hotel operators, such as: (a) terminating the existing agreements with recruitment agencies and signing up with Ministry of Labour-registered agencies; (b) including ethical recruitment clauses within the contracts as an obligation; (c) increased oversight during the recruitment process; (e) relying more on direct hiring to mitigate the risk of recruitment fees being charged; and (f) completing the new joiner checklist which includes interviewing workers, inquiring if workers paid recruitment fees and performing the necessary investigations.

While charging recruitment fees is a rampant practice in worker sending countries, the SC has identified – through its auditing system and worker interviews – that the recruitment fees paid by the staff within the hospitality sector is significantly less than what has been observed in the construction sector. When such cases are identified, the hotel operators have reimbursed these costs back to their workers. For instance, some hotel operators are paying back pre-employment medical charges to the workers as these were not borne by them.

The SC is committed to continuing to monitor and enforce these practices in the hospitality sector as it has done in the construction sector through its ground-breaking recruitment fees reimbursement programme, the SC Universal Reimbursement Scheme, which resulted in more than 22.6 million euros in unethical recruitment fees repaid to 49,286 SC and non-SC workers by 266 contractors over a 36 month period.

More widely, the SC continues to engage with hotel operators and stakeholders within this essential sector to ensure workers are protected by robust welfare standards. While hotel operators are not obligated to publicly disclose their practices, they do have reporting obligations to the SC and it is important to note that most of the recommendations outlined in the report have already been implemented due to the contractual arrangement with the SC and the WW Standards.