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United States and Guatemala Sign Groundbreaking Agreement on Labor Rights Enforcement Plan

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By Laura Buffo, Office of Labor Affairs

Representatives of the United States and Guatemala signed a robust [enforcement plan](#) last week to resolve concerns raised in a labor case brought by the United States under the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). The two countries signed the agreement, announced on April 11, 2013, following a legal review of the text for accuracy, clarity, and consistency of translation. This is the first labor case that the United States has brought to dispute settlement under a trade agreement.

The 18-point Enforcement Plan is the result of extensive engagement and resolve by both governments. It includes concrete actions with specific time frames that Guatemala will implement within six months to improve labor law enforcement. Under the Enforcement Plan, Guatemala has committed to strengthen labor inspections, expedite and streamline the process of sanctioning employers and ordering remediation of labor violations, increase labor law compliance by exporting companies, improve the monitoring and enforcement of labor court orders, publish labor law enforcement information, and establish mechanisms to ensure that workers are paid what they are owed when factories close.

The labor case is suspended while the Enforcement Plan is being implemented.

Read more on the full Enforcement Plan [here](#), and visit [this page](#) for more information about U.S.-Guatemala trade relations.

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