



Trade Facts

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Status of Oman Labor Commitments

Earlier this year, the Government of Oman made several commitments to the United States to enact additional labor law reforms by October 31, 2006. On July 9, 2006, Oman issued a Royal Decree covering many of the commitments it made. According to the Government of Oman, this decree cancels or supersedes all provisions of the labor law that contravene or contradict its provisions. Among these important reforms was changing the terms of reference for workers' organizations to "unions" (formerly "representative committee") and "federations" (formerly "main representative committee.") Specifically, the decree:

- Directs the Minister of Labor to issue regulations to allow for collective bargaining
- Prohibits dismissal of workers for union activity
- Amends the law to allow for more than one union per workplace
- Prohibits dismissal for union activity and established tougher penalties for employers who engage in anti-union activity
- Guarantees right to strike
- Guarantees unions and federations the rights to practice their activities freely and without interference from outside parties
- Prohibits dismissal for union activity and establishes penalties, including fines and imprisonment for depriving workers of their rights to carry out lawful union activities
- Raises penalties for child labor violations, including fines and imprisonment

Although the Government of Oman had committed to implement these changes by October 31, Oman has instead taken an extraordinary step by doing so almost four months early and clearly demonstrated that it takes labor law reforms seriously. Oman is preparing further regulations to address the remaining issues and is committed to adopting those Decisions by October 31.