**The Context**

Hawkers Joints Action Committee Hawkers Joint Action Committee is an all India joint platform of hundreds of federations, associations, unions, collectives, groups of street vendors having a membership base of more than four lakhs street vendors across India in the states of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal ,Haryana and Karnataka etc. where we are working to collectivize, aware the street vendors on their entitlements and assist them in securing entitlements in the light of the Street the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014 and under the national flagship programmes such as PM Street Vendor’s AtmaNirbhar Nidhi” (PM SVANidhi) scheme though facilitating them in applying for receiving Certificate of Vending (COV) in order to avail loans under the scheme that envisions robust strengthening of their livelihoods and contributes to the national growth.

Over the years, Hawkers Joint Action Committee engaged multiple stakeholders in order to steer the processes for transition for strengthening the retail democracy of India. Being an active associate of Janpahal’s intervention for making street food clean by training street vendors in food safety and hygiene in partnership with FSSAI, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. In the journey, Hawkers Joint Action Committees has been focused on collectivisation, access to entitlement, representation of the demands of the street vendors with the appropriate authorities in reference to the following:

1. Ensuring the survey of all street vendors
2. Issue of Certificate of Vending (COVs) to the street vendors
3. Constitution of Town Vending Committee as per the Street Vendors Act,2014
4. Constitution of Grievance Redressal Committees in all the ULBs
5. Notification of the Vending Zones/Areas in the ULBs
6. PMSVANidhi: Access to all eligible street vendors
7. Capacity building of the TVC leaders
8. Training of the street vendors in food safety and hygiene.

With deep appreciation of the slogan of the **vocal for local** pursued by the NDA government over the last near one decade, we do believe that local economy is boosted by small businesses, farmers, MSMEs and this is linked to the market through shopkeepers and street vendors, producers, manufacturers across the locations which is very much climate friendly and economically viable. This indeed represents as a clear exemplar of inclusive and sustainable growth as well. We believe that India should be developing policy and programme for nurturing the indigenous value chain of producers, retailers, street vendors, shopkeepers and consumers seamlessly instead of pursuing models that are not suitable to Indian realities which remains a mixture of informal and formal chain of producers, retailers, street vendors, shopkeepers and consumers.

Given this vibrant and organic policy space, it is fortuitus that India is not bound to commitments to World Trade Organisation either in reference to the e-commerce sector or in reference to the retail sector and thus we have saved our policy space as a sovereign nation. This policy space gives us an opportunity to build policies in the arena of E-commerce which is poised to grow more and more. The Indian e-commerce market was estimated to be worth over $55 Bn in Gross Merchandise Value in 2021. By 2030, it is expected to have an annual gross merchandise value of $350 Bn.

In this background, we find that small and medium enterprises are the backbone of the both real and virtual e-commerce medium in which producers and consumers are connected across the rural and urban areas within and across the states. We apprehend that this backbone will be destroyed if we do not regulate the space of e-commerce and their major operators. However, we are not opposed to e-commerce but we are very much concerned with the prospect of losing our market and customers. This means that small producers will lose market since corporate e-commerce operators are not procuring from small and medium enterprises. On the one hand, we need to regulate the corporate e-commerce operators in the best interests of multi-sector small businesses, shopkeepers and street vendors in the local economy, on the other hand, we wish to ensure that small businesses receive an opportunity to have fair playing field in the arena of Indian e-commerce since the present economy is getting more and more data driven and most importantly AI driven too.

Given this precarious situation of the multi sector small and medium businesses in the Indian economy, Hawkers Joint Action Committee joined the call of Gig Workers Association of India for nation-wide activities on November 24, 2023 for expressing solidarity with their cause of social protection legislation and schemes and presented the following demands to the Ministry of Trade and Commerce:

1. Immediately frame E-Commerce policy for safeguarding small businesses in India
2. Notify rules for E-Commerce operators in order to regulate them.
3. Onboard small businesses including street vendors on Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)
4. Include the representative/s of street vendor's organisations on the Government of India’s board on trade and investment.
5. Frame specific policy to protect and promote street vending.
6. Provide all e-commerce facilitating data to small businesses across the sectors.

**ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now)** which is a membership organization of low-and-moderate income **tenants, workers, residents and which has been** fighting for a better life for common people and communities with an understanding that the economic and political set-up doesn’t work for common people. ACORN International affiliates share an approach to taking back what belongs to people. The shared principles include: always organize the unorganized, strive for self-sufficiency, co-ordinated autonomy between local groups, issues as vehicles for building power, taking action to secure wins, and the organization belongs to its members.

**WSF Activity on Informal Worker: Ensuring Social Security for All**

**In the context of the intense work in India by Hawkers Joint Action Committee in collaboration with Gig Workers Association of India (GigWA), Amazon India Workers Association (AIWA),** Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union and Rajasthan Gig and App Based Workers Union and other organisations and unions in the National Capital of India and other cities, the WSF activity is planned by Hawkers Joint Action Committee in collaboration with ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now).

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the 90 minutes of the reflections will have substantive sharing by key speakers from across the world representing regions that are bound together with the critical concerns and demands of the informal workers. The reflections will be based on the quick recap of the policy space in the countries with key recommendations in order to take forward the collective agenda of the informal workers’ rights within and across the nations.

**Outcome:**

A joint statement consisting of the recommendations and a declaration of the call of action, campaigns required for attaining the goals of legislative protection and social security for the informal in the informal economy that will be made as a feeder in the WSF declaration for this thematic areas of action. documents.