

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE CONGRESS ON HUMAN, LABOUR AND GLOBAL COMPETITION

Istanbul, 4 – 5th May, 2018

The International Congress on Human, Labour and Global Competition was jointly organized by the Confederation of Public Servants Trade Unions (MEMUR-SEN) and the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East (TODAIE) from 4th to 5th May 2018 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Congress brought together 154 confederations from 105 countries from all over the world.

The main objective of the congress was to discuss the recent underlying challenges of trade unionism such as Social Dialogue, Sustainable Development, Migration, Labour Exploitation, Global Competition, Decent Work, Violence and Harassment at the Workplace.

The participants have committed to undertake the responsibility of pioneering the labour struggle in various continents, regions and countries. The congress declared that even though “our skin colors are different, our sweat is the same”!

Even though there are differences between us, they cannot be used as a barrier for the trade union solidarity and cooperation.

Accordingly, the congress resolved the following:

Social dialogue is a crucial tool for sustainable development to materialize and represent the interests of society. It is fundamental that real spaces of social dialogue are not only created but also strengthened at local, national, regional and global levels, and it is also fundamental that the unions acknowledge their role of giving voice to the needs and aspirations of working people and defend those interests in every way and everywhere.

It is, therefore, necessary to commit the states to the creation and promotion of broad and decisive structures of social dialogue, including unions in the processes of debate on public policies in a real and not only formal way. In addition to the existence of these structures, it is necessary to ensure that social participation is as broad as possible, respecting the basic principles of social dialogue as embodied in ILO conventions and documents.

It is the duty of States to mediate the real conflicts in the work-capital relationship and to provide mechanisms for the resolution of disputes that are fair to all sectors, recognizing the differences and inequalities between each actor in the search for social justice.

In a system where capital and labor relations are sometimes conflicting and dynamic, the social dialogue must be uniform, not only in numerical terms but also in terms of institutional capacities, we believe that the trade union movement needs to pay attention to some elements, in order to be effectively inserted in this process. The first of them is the extension of their political power, and this is only possible through the increase in the affiliate numbers and the strengthening of the relation between workers and their unions. In this sense, organizing women, youth and workers in the

informal economy is the most sustainable way not only to strengthen the union structures in the present but also to guarantee their relevance in the future.

The second element is the continuous development of their leaders, so that they are properly prepared and able to meet not only the challenges but also the aspirations of workers and especially the opportunities provided by real social dialogue, that can advance in the construction of a society in which men and women can live in dignity.

We cannot fail to recognize that globalization has not been able to universalize the capacity of states to promote development and dignity for the people. Despite the fact that money moves globally, it is important to recognize that a large number of aspects related to development are not given or accessible for everyone: access to economic and even natural resources for the consolidation of a development agenda is not the same for all. Working conditions for men and women are not equal in all nations and government efforts, and the ability to implement public policies to overcome inequalities and the search for justice is also not the same for all nations.

It is not possible to talk about social justice if these inequalities do not become the focus of the debates regarding globalization and development.

In this scenario, where inequalities are becoming ever greater and where the capitalist system exploits in a hostile manner and does not take into account the real needs of the human being, where consumption needs are created with the use of heavy marketing strategies and where people work to accumulate more and more resources and products to satisfy non-essential necessities, the role of the union movement becomes every day more relevant.

The unity of the union movement on common grounds is the first step in addressing this question. Organizing globally to reduce local inequalities can bring some fairness to this unfair system, and provide a more just and more equitable development of the nations, providing tangible benefits to the society.

The dominance of the financial capital over the countries, which has been intensified in all continents of the world, must also occupy the debates of the union movement. If corporate strategies are global, the response of workers must also be global!

Labor should not be seen as a cost in the global production system, and workers should not be treated as mere commodities, which may have their value defined by profit-making entrepreneurial greed. States cannot anymore be corrupted by corporate interests, but they should fulfill their role of bringing development with economic, social and environmental justice, pushing a sustainable development agenda that guarantees not only the present but also the future of our world.

A change of paradigms is necessary and urgent. And this change of paradigm must be driven by workers' organizations based on the principles of international solidarity that allows us to create the tools to face the power of the capital.

Decent work is a paramount tool for the search for social justice, and all of its aspects must be respected by governments, employers and workers representatives.

In this sense, we understand that workers organizations must act to enforce social dialogue to create more and better jobs, with respect to the fundamental principles and rights at work and strong and sustainable social protection floors.

The congress noted that violence and harassment at work is a key aspect of both the Decent Work Agenda and the SDG 2030 Agenda. In relation to the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, the fight against all forms of violence towards women and men, and especially in the workplace is being strongly pushed by the ILO and its constituents.

However, women are disproportionately affected by the unequal power relations, are lower paid, usually underemployed in the informal economy such as the informal domestic work, and are exposed in a daily basis to every kind of physical, emotional and psychological abuse.

Consequently, it is the Unions' mandate to be the first ones to fight against violence and harassment at all levels.

Trade unions should take the lead in denouncing these uncalled for acts and effectively punish those who violently harass women or men, despite of their positions or level of influence.

Trade unions should promote the sustainability of the fight against violence and harassment towards women through the development of policies. The most important measure that can be taken is to guarantee that in every country, at every workplace and in all levels, women are paid the same as men for the same job.

Trade unions should make sure that ending Violence and harassment issues are included in the collective bargaining agreements.

For effective ending violence and harassment at workplaces women should be involved in all decision making processes.

Solid legal background, constant education, public initiatives and social partnerships are all equally important measures which help to ensure a safe work place for everyone, everywhere.

Child labour shows the darkest side of our capitalist-greed system, and should be eradicated at all cost.

The Congress observed that economic neo-liberal model irresponsibly promotes precarious working conditions around the world, and is one of the central causes of the increase in migratory flows, because of the lack of decent work in developing many countries. Therefore, out of desperation people are forced to migrate somewhere to search for greener pastures.

Generally labour migration can be a catalyst of regional integration and economic cooperation globally. However, serious, prevalent lacuna in decent work and in informal, sub-standards, and all too often abusive employment and labour relations. The widespread absence or non-application of regulatory standards and measures results in significant risks for migrant workers, often subject to informal and exploitative employment relations and unprotected conditions of work.

Migrants are regularly found to be working in jobs that are dirty, dangerous and degrading; while for some migration is a positive and empowering experience, far too many migrants have to endure human rights violations, discrimination, xenophobia and exploitation.

We should promote Rights-based Approach to Migration in line with the ILO Conventions, strengthen the protection of migrants and combat threats such as xenophobic or racist attacks in countries of destination, tackle unfair global economic and trading systems in order to promote sustainable development for migrants and campaign for effective engagement and participation of governments, business community, employers, trade unions and other stakeholders in designing responses that stimulate growth and create decent jobs in the respective countries,

Social dialogue must be at the heart of labour migration policy.

Strengthen trade unions' capacities to defend and promote the rights of migrant workers within the frameworks of the ILO's Fair Migration Agenda

We extend our solidarity to the strong people of Palestine in their struggle for freedom. No one should have its freedom denied. We stand against the American administration's decision to transfer its embassy to Jerusalem.

Lula is a political prisoner and we demand his immediate release and the restoration of the democracy for the Brazilian people.

#FreePalesine

#FreeLula