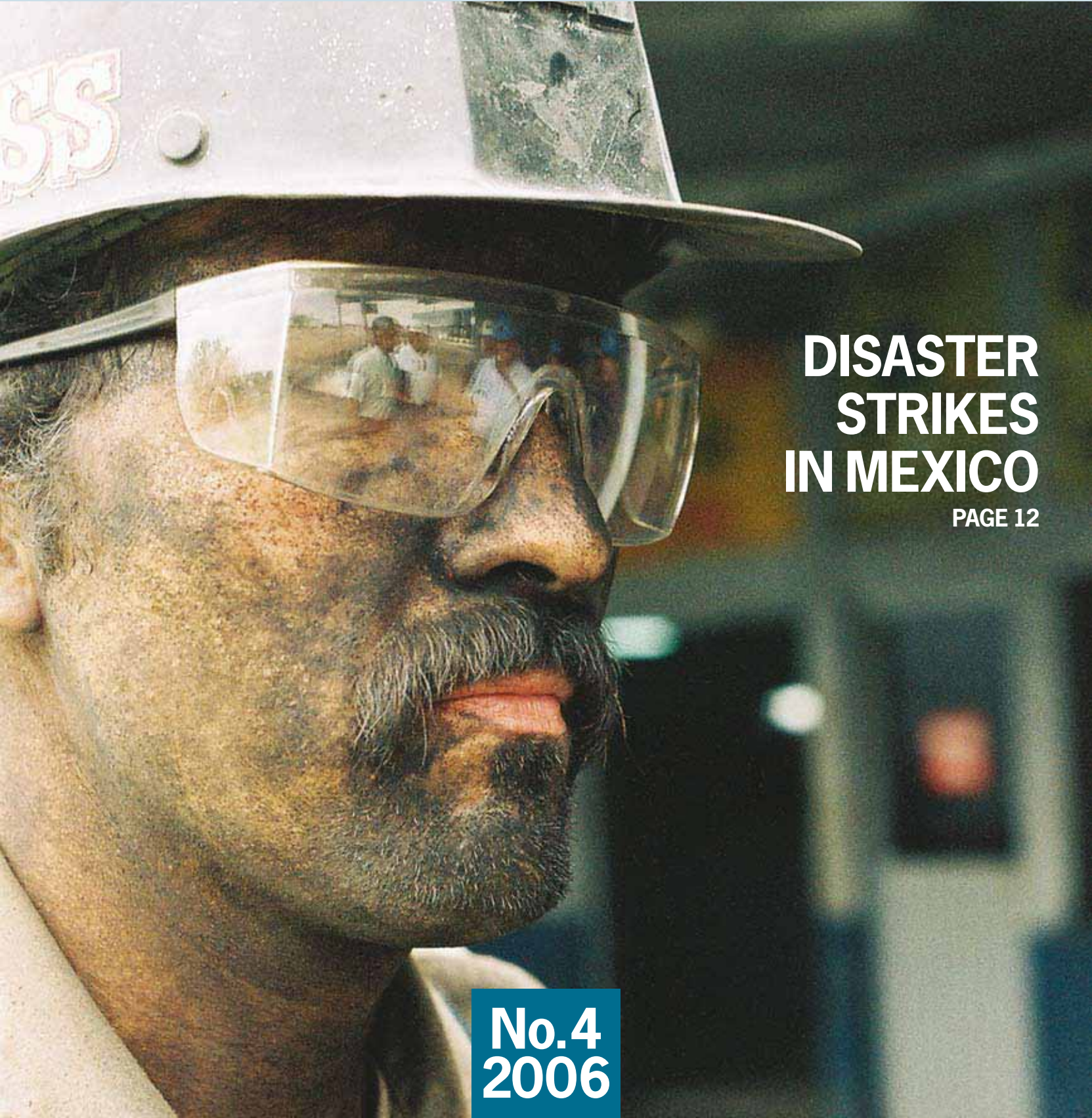


METAL WORLD

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS' FEDERATION



DISASTER STRIKES IN MEXICO

PAGE 12

No.4
2006

Supporting democratic unions in Mexico

The feature in this issue of Metal World is devoted to Mexico and reports on the aftermath of the explosion at the Pasta de Conches mine where 65 workers were killed in February this year.

Ever since President Clinton signed the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, Mexico has been under the spotlight. And rightly so.

From the very beginning U.S. and Canadian trade unions denounced the inadequacy of NAFTA and its lack of rules on vital areas such as labour legislation and environmental regulations.

Trade agreements that do not include clauses or rules about trade union rights or environmental protections should never be considered, even less signed.

Politicians on both sides of the Rio Bravo del Norte prized NAFTA as the panacea that would relieve millions of workers in Mexico from poverty and desperate working and living conditions.

More than a decade later the result is disastrously different.

Mexican workers living along the northern border are still poor and their living conditions are inhuman.

Shanty townships, no running water, no sewage system and deplorable health and hygiene conditions - this is the reality for millions of people who moved from the south of Mexico towards the U.S. border with the promise of finding work in the manufacturing and industrial areas that emerged.

Instead, NAFTA funds misery and poverty with many Mexican workers struggling to earn just enough to keep their nose above the water and survive.

This is not the first time the IMF has published an article that describes the reality as experienced by Mexican workers. In many respects, this time the situation is even worse.

For now the Mexican government has decided to attack a democratic trade union, the National Miners' and Metalworkers' Union (SNTMMSRM), by interfering in the union's internal business, removing its general secretary

and arresting its members.

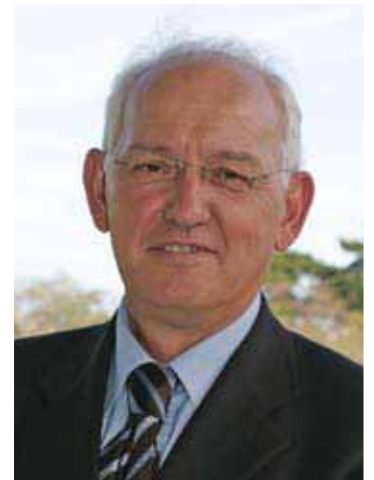
The IMF has filed a complaint against the Mexican Government with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the actions it has taken against the Mexican miners' union. IMF affiliates will show solidarity to Mexican workers on December 11 in a worldwide call for justice in Mexico.

In addition to this, the IMF intends to bring the government of Mexico before the ILO for breaching freedom of association in its existing labour legislation that allows companies and unions to conclude what are known as "contratos de protección" (protection agreements).

A "contrato de protección" can be negotiated between an existing union and the management of a company. The union negotiating and concluding the agreement does not need the mandate of the workers and it does not have to go back to the workforce to get the agreement ratified, although the workers automatically become members of the union.

These agreements are used as instruments to keep democratic trade unions out of the system and go against the principles of ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association, which has been ratified by Mexico.

It is time the international trade union movement, and especially the newly founded International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), takes this issue very seriously and makes it a priority. We must all fight to protect the autonomy of democratic and independent trade unions.



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Mittal: A global giant

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Reviewing Metal World

The spotlight on pages 18 to 22 examines the global policies of Mittal Steel and describes trade union experiences of the company. This company profile is the second in what hopefully will become a series of *Metal World* spotlights on companies of strategic importance in metal working sectors. The first, published a year ago, was on Alcoa and was enthusiastically received by many readers of *Metal World* who requested more.

For *Metal World* to be a useful and relevant tool in building international solidarity among metalworker unions, it is always important that we hear from you. Over the next few months we will be reviewing *Metal World*, so your views on this journal are especially useful to us at this time.

On the back page of this issue of *Metal World*, there is a short survey aimed at finding out more about your experience of the magazine. The survey is also available on the IMF website and I encourage you to fill in the survey and return it to us so we can continue to improve the metal workers' international trade union journal.

Elsewhere in this issue of *Metal World*, we cover recent events and activities of IMF and its affiliates. In particular, we report on the current situation in Mexico and call on affiliates to support the international call for justice in Mexico on December 11. More information on this and more can be found on the IMF website: www.imfmetal.org



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Editor
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NEWS

New global labour confederation

GLOBAL With the dissolution of the world's two largest trade union bodies, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), the new International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) was founded at its congress in Vienna in November.

The formation of the ITUC comes at a time when more than ever workers need to fight together across borders and enterprises to ensure living wages, internationally recognized labour rights and basic worker protections.

"This is an important moment in labour history," said IMF general secretary Marcello Malentacchi. "The IMF proudly supports the new ITUC based on the successful experience of its own affiliation policy, which brought into the IMF independent or WCL-affiliated metalworkers' unions since 1981."



PHOTO: ITUC

The ITUC pledged to work towards strengthening the ILO and influencing other international and regional organisations in an effort to win decent work for workers everywhere. **KP**

Austrian agreement

AUSTRIA A new collective agreement for 161,000 workers in the Austrian metalworking and mining industries secured a 2.6 per cent wage increase, 100€ one-off payment and improvements in paid leave.

The agreement demanded four

rounds of negotiations and the support of works councils and members who participated in over 500 company rallies. Employers resisted wage increases and pressed for working time flexibility.

The new agreement took effect on November 1, 2006. **KP**

Serbian website in English

SERBIA The Metal Workers' Branch Union "Nezavisnost" launched an English version of its website in October. The site introduces the union and features news on union activities and events in Serbia and the region. It is packed with information, photos and useful links. The address is: www.gsmnezavisnost.org.yu **AG**



NEWS

IMF affiliates demonstrate at Japanese embassies in September



September 12 in Bangkok



September 12 in Melbourne

PHOTO: TEAM

PHOTO: AMWU

GLOBAL Sixty-three IMF affiliates from more than 43 countries participated in the September 12 Day of ACTION in support of dismissed Toyota Philippines workers.

Affiliates from Bangkok to Sydney, from Dhaka to Brussels held meetings with Japanese Ambassadors and embassy staff to discuss the situation at Toyota Philippines.

Elsewhere, IMF affiliates launched mass demonstrations in front of Japanese embassies and consulates, including:

- Indian National Metalworkers' Federation members in Chennai,

- Indonesian affiliate LOMENIK-SBSI demonstrated at the embassy in Jakarta,

- AMWU members rallied outside the Japanese embassy in Melbourne and also demonstrated in Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Perth and Sydney,

- Belgium affiliates met with embassy officials to deliver a petition with over 1,000 names,

- In Valenciennes, French affiliate the CFTC demonstrated in front of Toyota France,

- In Romania, METAROM held a picket in front of the Japanese embassy, and

- NUMSA members demonstrated in front of the embassy in Johannesburg.

Many other affiliates delivered letters of protest to their respective Japanese embassies and consulates seeking a just and fair resolution for the members of the Toyota Motor Philippine Corporation Workers' Association (TMPCWA).

Toyota Motor Philippines Corporation is refusing to reinstate 136 illegally dismissed workers, despite Supreme Court and International Labour Organisation (ILO) rulings in the workers' favour. Go to: www.imfmetal.org/toyotaphilippines **KP**

Australians take to the streets

AUSTRALIA On November 30, hundreds of thousands of workers and their trade unions took to the streets in capital cities around Australia, fighting against the loss of fundamental workers' rights.

Since new industrial relations laws came into effect in March this year, wages have gone down, particularly for young workers, while costs like interest rates and the price of petrol keep rising. At the same time job security has been

undermined by the new laws.

In October, the Howard Government forced through more laws, this time giving employers more control of occupational health and safety in workplaces covered by federal laws. **AG**

SOLIDARITY

Solidaridad

Call for JUSTICE
DECEMBER 11

Call for Justice, December 11

MEXICO IMF affiliates from around the world will demonstrate at Mexican embassies and consulates on December 11 in protest of the government's interference in union affairs and the unjust removal of union leader Napoleon Gómez.

Gómez's unjust removal was at the center of a complaint filed against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on November 8. The United Steelworkers (USW) filed the complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor under the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (NAALC), charging Mexico for violation of the NAFTA labor side agreement.

In the complaint, USW accuses Mexican labor authorities of violating both Mexican and international law when they withdrew legal recognition from the Mexican union leader, Napoleon Gómez, in February.



The USW also blames Mexico for failing to carry out proper safety inspections at the Pasta de Conchos mine, where an explosion killed 65 mineworkers on February 19 (see pages 12-16). More details on the situation in Mexico are available at: www.imfmetal.org/mexico **KP**

Solidarity with UNTMRA

URUGUAY The IMF called on affiliates to show solidarity support to the Uruguayan Metalworkers' Union (UNTMRA) after receiving reports of an attack on the union's office in October. In the early morning of October 28, the union office was attacked and set on fire. The attack came after the union organized a massive national demonstration to protest recent actions taken by right-wing political forces in Uruguay.

The union reports that since March 2005, Uruguay has seen steady democratic development. In October, after six months

of negotiations, unions reached national collective agreements in all sectors of the economy. Unions did not achieve all their goals, but the negotiations created a framework for continuing to deal with outstanding issues.

In addition, the government has put on trial some of those responsible for human rights violations during the dictatorship. Some of the bodies of fellow workers who disappeared were recovered. The first was a former member of the UNTMRA National Executive Council, who was tortured to death. **JC**

Indian auto unions meet

INDIA Solidarity between permanent and contract workers, unifying union strategies and structures and the remedying of rights that have been violated were key issues raised by delegates at an IMF auto meeting in India.

Over 30 participants representing workers from across India's automobile industry gathered in Pune, Maharashtra for two days in September to address challenges and trade union responses.

Workshop deliberations indicated employer resistance to union activity remains a challenge in many places. Delegates unanimously adopted a joint resolution calling for the reinstatement of illegally and unjustly dismissed and suspended workers and for full respect of trade union rights. Calls to remedy rights violations were cited at Toyota Kirloskar, Maruti Udyog - Suzuki, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India and Bajaj Auto Ltd. Delegates also expressed solidarity with the call for reinstatement of workers at Toyota operations in the Philippines.

The resolution concludes that some "automotive companies as employers in India engage in practices that restrict or deny workers their rights to freedom of association" emphasizing that "multinational companies should apply and respect the rights of workers in India as they do in their home country". **RB**

SHIPBREAKING

Shipbreakers urge IMO to save lives



PHOTO: Simon Clark

GLOBAL Indian shipbreaking workers travelled to London and Glasgow in September, armed with a short film documenting working conditions in Bangladesh and India to call on government and industry leaders to improve shipbreaking regulations in an effort to save lives.

Thousands of shipbreaking workers die, are injured or fall ill when recycling old ships in one of the world's most dangerous, dirty and largely unregulated industries. Ninety-five per cent of old ships are broken up and recycled on the beaches of Bangladesh, India, China, Pakistan and Turkey. In the most appalling conditions, earning less than a dollar a day, shipbreaking workers face hazards such as fire, explosions, falls from height and exposure to asbestos, heavy metals and PVCs.

While in London, the workers lobbied a meeting of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) where negotiations were underway to develop internationally agreed regulations on the recycling of ships. However, adoption of the regulations is not expected until 2009, and proper implementation by 2015 at best, if at all. In the meantime many workers will die or be injured.

Speaking on behalf of the shipbreaking workers Mr Vidyadhar V. Rane, Secretary of the Mumbai Port Trust, Dock and General Employees' Union, called on IMO members to deliver a mandatory set of regulations that set clear standards and protect the lives of shipbreaking workers immediately.

"Shipbreaking workers in India and other parts of the world need work, but they need safe work. I am appealing to

the developed countries who send their ships to Asia to take some responsibility and save lives," said Mr Rane.

The shipbreaking delegation also met with British MP Terry Rooney and Hilary Benn, Secretary of State for International Development, before leaving London for Scotland where they met with a senior delegation of shipbuilding workers and visited a shipbuilding yard in Glasgow and the Amicus Regional Office.

The mission was a jointly co-ordinated effort between the IMF, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), IMF affiliates Amicus, GMB and SMEFI, with support from ICFTU.

To view the short documentary film and for more information about IMF work on shipbreaking, visit: www.imfmetal.org/shipbreaking

KP



PHOTO: Simon Clark

IMF MEETINGS

Alcoa unions in solidarity

AUSTRALIA Holding Alcoa accountable for its role in society is an aim of the IMF Alcoa action group, which held its first meeting in Australia in October.

IMF affiliates from Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America took part in the meeting, which was hosted by the Australian Workers' Union (AWU).

Participants discussed the current situation in each of their regions and the challenges faced by unions. The meeting identified that Alcoa increasingly sees itself as a global corporation and its management strategy is to make decisions centrally and then implement corporate goals through local management. Del-



legates discussed ways that unions could influence the corporate headquarters and adapt to this strategy.

Rob Johnston, IMF director of non-ferrous metals commented, "There is a strong resolve among the delegates that unions will maintain and develop the influence we currently have in Alcoa. No

matter which country Alcoa operates in, workers have a right to be treated fairly and enjoy decent conditions. Our job is to ensure that's the case."

The delegates also visited the Point Henry smelter in Victoria and had the opportunity to talk to shop floor representatives from the AWU. **KP**

Trade, employment and development

CANADA Including core labour standards in trade agreements is important, but not enough, was the conclusion reached at an IMF seminar on trade, employment and development. Seminar participants believe the international trade union movement must also present a clear alternative project to neo-liberalism.

Participants expressed concern about new trade liberalisation that, if imple-

mented in an inflexible and generalised way, could seriously damage less developed countries and undermine their ability to build their own industrial policy.

Concern was also expressed about the proposed tariff reductions that could result in the loss of many industrial jobs and increase the overall precarisation of employment conditions, moving workers from permanent jobs to a growing

"informal" labour market with little or no labour protection.

The IMF seminar brought together IMF affiliates from South and North America, Africa, Europe and Asia to develop a strategy for metalworkers on trade, employment and development. Full details of the seminar held at the CAW education centre in October are published at: www.imfmetal.org **AG**

Organising electronics supply chains

GLOBAL Forging new strategies to organise electronics supply chain workers and strengthening networks with relevant NGOs was discussed by IMF affiliates at a meeting in Singapore in October.

Today, very few manufacturing workers are employed directly by well-known brand-name companies such as IBM,

Hewlett Packard and Ericsson. These companies have divested manufacturing of their products to less familiar contract manufacturers (CMs) like Celestica, Solectron and Flextronics, major multinationals in their own right. Unionisation rates in these companies are extremely low and many thousands of workers, the majority of them women, are labouring

under sub-standard pay and conditions without the protection of a union.

The meeting determined that developing networks both within CM companies and along the supply chain is critical for sharing information about working conditions and building collective strength to push for improvements. **JH**

SOLIDARITY

Korean workers take action

KOREA Solidarity actions took place on November 15 in over thirty countries as part of the Korean Confederation of Trade Union's (KCTU) International Day of Action. The effort was launched to bring international attention to government attacks on Korean trade unionists, many of them metalworkers.

In South Korea, 138,000 workers from 193 unions affiliated to the KCTU participated in a four-hour warning strike. The Korean Metal Workers' Federation (KMWF) brought production to a stop at automakers such as Hyundai, Kia and Ssangyong.

In August, a trade union fact-finding mission on workers' rights violations, which included the IMF, went to Korea. The mission expressed deep concerns over the treatment of workers belonging to the Kiryung Electronics Workers' Union Local of the KMWF.

Kiryung Electronics has discriminated against union members by terminating contracts and dismissing them since July 2005. Despite a Korean Ministry of Labour ruling that Kiryung Electronics had been illegally using dispatch

workers disguised as subcontracting, the government and the company have failed to ensure affected workers are regularized as required.

The company, which manufactures satellite broadcast receivers, digital satellite radios and global positioning systems for automobiles and other uses, supplies equipment that is installed in many vehicle models of major automakers offering Sirius satellite radio.

Violations of worker and trade union rights at Kiryung Electronics are included in a recently filed complaint to the ILO by the IMF, KMWF and KCTU (see page 10). **KP**



ITUC, IMF and other global unions hand over letter of protest in Geneva

European wages for Lithuanian employees

LITHUANIA The Lithuanian Metalworkers' Union united with three national trade union centers in taking protest action in November calling for European wages for Lithuanian employees.

The action was held at the building of the employers' confederation (KPL) and then continued near the palace of the government. As part of the action, trade unions handed a petition to the KPL protesting against their plans to increase the working week from 48 to 60 hours and accusing authorities of only allowing for unjustifiably low wages that do not correspond to the economic situation in the country.

The workers also demanded from government an increase in the minimum wage from the present level of 175 Euros to around 200 Euros (700 LTL) from January 2007, and to consider this income tax deductible after December 2007. **AI**

Poisoned Chinese workers seek compensation

CHINA No decision was reached after a court heard from 146 former Gold Peak Industries workers seeking compensation for cadmium poisoning.

The IMF and the international labour community has repeatedly called on Gold Peak to address the health and safety conditions for its workers at its Xianjin and Chaoba factories in Huizhou.

According to a statement submitted by the workers in court, Gold Peak employees who were found to have high cadmium levels were fired and given very little compensation. Sick workers were promised medical checkups and living expenses, but the company has yet to deliver on such promises.

Workers are asking for another

cadmium test and compensation for the loss of working time, medical fees and re-employment. The company has taken the position that there is no legal basis for the workers' demands.

Gold Peak industries is one of China's leading battery makers, supplying the majority of Asia with batteries for toys, laptops and cameras. **KP**

GLOBAL

ILO complaint on Korea

KOREA The Korean Metal Workers' Federation (KMWF), the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and the IMF jointly lodged a complaint with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) against the Korean government for failing to protect workers' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining in breach of ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

The complaint to the ILO is another step in a long fight by unions demanding that the Korean government fully respects and enforces fundamental workers' rights. It documents rights violations dating from 2004 to the present at Hyundai Motors plants in Ulsan, Asan and Jeonju, as well as at Hynix/Magnachip, Kiryung Electronics (see page 9) and KM&I.

The complaint details how precarious workers in disguised employment relationships who try to form and join a union are subject to dismissal. Employers also use compensation suits to threaten union members into withdrawing from the union and punish those who do not.

"As a consequence, even the most poorly-paid, insecure workers in the most vulnerable positions are systematically subject to the full force of criminal Obstruction of Business, imprisonment, provisional seizure of assets and 'compensation claims', simply because they tried to promote bargaining with the principal employer," the complaint states. A copy of the complaint is published on the IMF website. **KP**

India Social Forum

INDIA More than 50,000 activists participated in the India Social Forum (ISF) in New Delhi in November to envisage a world free from exploitation.

The meeting featured seminars, conferences, workshops, cultural programmes and film and theatre shows.

Indian metalworker unions and the IMF joined with three other global union federations in hosting a seminar on the impact of globalisation and liberalisation on labour; a rally of 500 people marching through the forum and a stall where publications were given out. **AG**

Private equity must be reigned in

SWITZERLAND The destructive impact of private equity buyouts in Europe was the subject of a conference organised by the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF), Union Network International (UNI) and the IMF in Nyon, Switzerland on November 16.

Once largely confined to North America, private-equity owned firms today employ over 5 million European workers.

In a joint statement issued after the conference, the three global union federations stated that buyouts based on leveraged debt were encouraging unnecessary closures and staff reductions and privatizing public assets. Trade unions were increasingly confronted with aggressive anti-union behaviour in the service of reducing wages and benefits. Moreover, the



PHOTO: UNI

process fostered the accumulation of record levels of debt that threatens financial stability.

Conference participants were

unanimous in concluding that private equity had to be reigned in. A full copy of the statement is published on the IMF website. **AG**

International Framework Agreements



GLOBAL At its November meeting, the IMF Executive Committee decided to establish a working group on International Framework Agreements to review and help implement the recommendations from the IFA World Conference that took place in Frankfurt in September.

The recommendations that arose from the conference address the importance of using IFAs for organizing drives and

the need for improved international solidarity support and training on IFA implementation and coordination at the local, national and international level.

The aim of the IFA conference in September was to analyse current IFAs and their usefulness in improving workers' rights and conditions.

"It is the hope of the IMF, and all of us, that IFAs be recognized and respected all over the world regardless of the national legislation of the country. We would like to see core labour standards observed in every part of the world, and I believe the IFA is one tool to make this a reality," said Marcello Malentacchi, IMF general secretary at the conference. A copy of the IFA conference recommendations are available on the IMF website. **KP**

IMF Executive meets

GENEVA Jeff Faux, author of *The Global Class War* and founder of the Economic Policy Institute in the U.S., addressed the IMF Executive Committee in Geneva urging labour unions around the world to coordinate a global political strategy to be implemented at the national level.

"We will get fair rules, not by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank or the International Labour Organisation, but only when people demand of their own leaders in their own countries a new global policy," Faux said.

At its November meeting, the IMF Executive Committee adopted the Programme of Activities and budget for 2007. Members of the Executive Committee also resolved to increase pressure on the Mexican government including taking action on December 11 in solidarity with the Mexican Metalworkers' and Miners' Union (SNTMMSRM). Via video conference, Napoleon Gómez, the general secretary

of the SNTMMSRM who was forced from his position by the Mexican government, gave a moving speech about the gross labour rights violations occurring in Mexico. Gómez received a standing ovation following his call for justice adding, "from North to South to East to West, this struggle will be won no matter the cost."

Executive Committee members also vowed to continue to work towards the reinstatement of Toyota Philippines workers fired for their union activities and took a decision to expand IMF efforts on working with progressive independent unions in the Philippines. **KP**



Combating precarious work

BRAZIL Global action against precarious work is the theme for the IMF Central Committee meeting in Brazil next year.

Variouly known as irregular, atypical, contingent, contract, dispatch and/or agency work, precarious work is increasing in many parts of the world. Precarious work ranges from fixed-term contract employment in an advanced auto plant in Europe to extreme exploitation in the shipbreaking yards of Asia.

Precarious work often stems from a deliberate avoidance of the employment relationship between the principal employer and the worker, resulting in a lack of protection of job security, minimum wages, health and safety, retirement security, social benefits and collective bargaining rights.

Strengthening international solidarity on this issue is one of the aims of the Central Committee meeting in 2007.

Trade union responses to precarious work will be discussed at IMF regional conferences and other relevant meetings throughout 2007, with the intention of developing proposals for action to be considered in Brazil.

The Central Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on November 28 and 29 in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. **AG**



Disaster strikes in Mexico

In February, 65 people were killed in a tragic disaster at Grupo Mexico's Pasta de Conchos mine in Mexico. In response, the Mexican miners' union spoke out strongly against safety deficiencies at the mine, sparking a full-scale government attack on the union that continues to this day. Trade unions around the world will call for justice in Mexico on December 11. Here Metal World reports on the events at the mine and the continuing struggle of the miners, their families and the union.

TEXT & PHOTOS: KRISTYNE PETER

In the cool early morning hours of February 19, just after the start of the third shift at Grupo Mexico's Pasta de Conchos coal mine, a fireball exploded in the bowels of the mine triggering cave-ins all along the 2.8 km shaft and trapping 65 miners hundreds of meters below the earth.

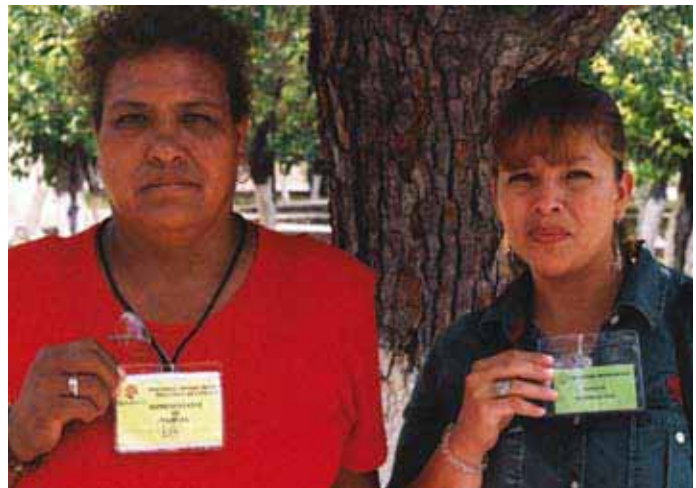
At 6am, José Pecina's father peeked out through the window of his house and noticed the flickering lights of an ambulance up at the mine. He immediately raced down the street to his son's house. José had returned hours earlier from his afternoon shift at the mine and was resting up for a meeting at the union hall.

Hilda Muzquiz was at home that morning when she heard a radio report of an explosion at the Pasta de Conchos mine. Praying that her husband, Ricardo Rocha, was okay, she grabbed her children and hurried to the mine.

RECOVERING THE LOST

In the days and weeks that followed, hundreds of friends and family members camped out near the mine entrance in hopes of seeing their loved ones again. As time wore on, the rescue mission turned to a recovery effort. Fearful that machinery might spark another blast, miners dug for their comrades by hand and with pickaxes. Twenty-five of the 65 workers buried below were union men from the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros, Metalúrgicos y Similares de la República Mexicana (SNTMMSRM). The recovery effort still inches along today. In almost ten months, only one body has been found.

For the 64 widows and 162 fatherless children left behind by the Pasta de Conchos disaster, the nightmare continues.



Widows show the cards which provide them access to the mine

Families wait in shifts outside the mine, close to a makeshift altar of flowers, photographs and candles. These wives and siblings are the forgotten few who have left their jobs, their homes and the lives they once had, unable to move forward, unable to go back.

Claudia Escobar, a 33-year-old newly-wed and now widow, is waiting for the day her husband is returned to her. She moves her weight from hip to hip when she talks, squeezing a coloured badge with her husband's name that hangs around her neck. The entry cards are given out sparingly to the families, affording them access to the highly guarded mine entrance - the place where their husbands, brothers and sons were last seen alive.

DISASTER STRIKES IN MEXICO

“We have gone through a very sad period. At the beginning we could hardly eat, we couldn’t sleep, waiting and waiting. We spent every single day at the mine. Yes, it has been very sad for us. We are four women in the family, three daughters and myself. So, it has been very tough, very difficult. We look forward to the day when we shall receive what we want, my husband’s corpse, so that we can give him a Christian burial,” Claudia said.

A COLLECTIVE VOICE

To the surviving families, the mine is the last connection they have to their loved ones. Some family members fear that if they leave the mine property, the company will quietly shut down the recovery operations and seal it, leaving it a forgotten common grave.

Guillermo Iglesias Lopez, who lost his father in the explosion, has won the trust of the miners’ families and is working with the union to ensure that search operations continue and that the surviving families receive just compensation. The 37 year-old worked in the mine as an engineer for two years and is the son of Guillermo Iglesias Ramos, a seasoned miner who spent over 20 years in the Pasta de Conchos mine.

“As a mine engineer, people search for my support and I am not going to let them down. I was assigned by the governor as head of the representative committee of the families. I don’t want to let down my mother, the families, or the governor. That is the reason for my constant struggle, so that the bodies are rescued or located. I have given up my job. They could no longer finance my leave. My wife is a teacher and she has a good salary. I maintain the struggle.”

Reports of company compensation for the dead vary greatly in the news and in official documentation. According to many news outlets, Grupo Mexico offered widows and their children anywhere between US\$64,000 and US\$100,000 for each fallen miner, with scholarship benefits for each of the miner’s children. However, during an IMF fact-finding investigation in July, some widows reported that the company compensation packages differed from one family to another. They said some entitlements were based on age and the potential for each widow to remarry.

Recently, the local newspaper *Nueva Rosita* reported that company payments made to miners were dramatically lower than Grupo Mexico promised and do not meet the wage levels and contractual rights of the killed workers. While some family members have reportedly accepted a lump sum payment, most have refused any money from Grupo Mexico until the company recovers the bodies of the dead.

The paper quotes Guillermo as saying, “Although the most important issue is to continue to rescue the bodies and not the price of life of the loved ones...it is important to clarify doubts as far as compensation and contractual benefits to



Guillermo Iglesias Lopez lost his father and now represents the families

which they will be entitled, the widows and children...Above all, as relatives, we are demanding justice, so we are not going to give up.”

The union has been active in keeping the miners’ families informed of developments between the company and the union, as well as helping provide legal assistance, groceries and financial support.

“BUT WE ARE NOT GUILTY”

Grupo Mexico’s vice president for international affairs, Juan Rebolledo, has gone on the record about the Pasta de Conchos tragedy saying, “We are responsible. Of course we are responsible. But we are not guilty. It’s something you cannot control. Coal mines are dangerous everywhere in the world.”

Families of the miners and the union disagree.

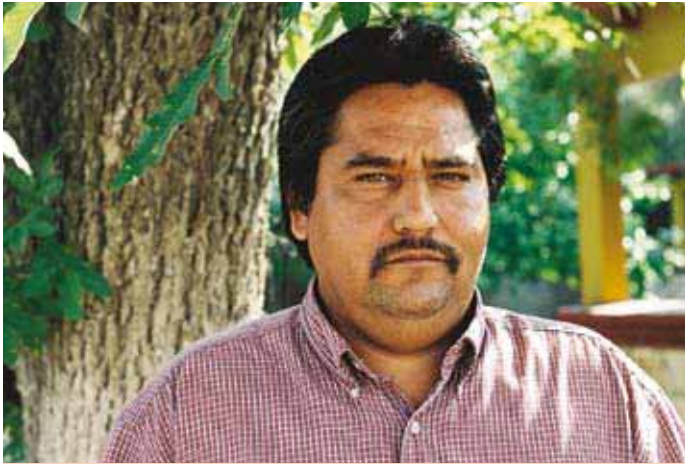
A number of surviving miners complained that they had reported the smell of gas and problems with the wiring and machinery to the company prior to the explosion. They say they were told to keep working, or leave.

In fact, the Pasta de Conchos mine, one of eight major mines in Mexico’s Coahuila State, had a notorious reputation among miners for dangerous gas levels, faulty wiring, poor ventilation, and contract hires with poor training. According to many of the Pasta de Conchos workers, it was a disaster waiting to happen.

“There were always gas leaks,” said José Espinosa, a 37-year-old miner and SNTMMSRM member who has worked at the Pasta de Conchos mine for the last 16 years. “Very often, some of my colleagues stopped the machines, but the engineers said that nothing would happen and ordered us to keep working. Those who refused to continue were given their card so that they left the place.

According to the union, the SNTMMSRM planned to

DISASTER STRIKES IN MEXICO



Union miner José Espinoza said miners were coerced to continue working despite unsafe equipment and gas levels.



In Mexico, the Catholic Church is integral to everyday life. Religious altars and statues of the Virgin Mary guard mine entrances across the desert.

strike after the second shift on February 19 to protest the dire conditions but the walkout was delayed in order to follow formal procedures and bring the decision to the union's Assembly. The mine exploded during the third shift.

Grupo Mexico has denied workers' claims that safety procedures were not followed and that conditions were too dangerous to work. However, backing the union's charges, recent findings by the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), a government-appointed council that investigated the accident, found gross negligence on the part of the company and the Mexican Labour Ministry.

According to the CNDH report, inspectors from the Labour Ministry found 48 health and safety infractions in July 2004, seven of which were deemed urgent. The unsafe conditions included oil and gas leaks, missing safety devices and malfunctioning lighting according to the CNDH. The council's findings stated that the Labour Ministry did not verify company compliance with safety regulations until February 7, 2006. The report stated that during the February 7 inspection, Labour Ministry officials were notified by the workers in mine number 8 (where the explosion occurred) "about improper safety conditions in which work was being performed", but nonetheless concluded that the company had addressed all previously noted safety violations.

The union has filed criminal law suits against Grupo Mexico and the authorities.

BLOOD FOR COAL

When it is asked how long a miner has worked underground, there is a common thread to the answers. Hilda Muzquiz's husband, Ricardo Rocha, worked in the Pasta de Conchos mine for one year and seven months, José Espinoza worked there 16 years and four months, José Pecina, 18 years and two months. The subtle tally of days, weeks and months

punctuates a more obvious truth about mining in Mexico – it is deadly work. And the pay is little more than about US\$50 a week.

With few other jobs available, the dangers of the mine compete with the needs of the family. "Workers couldn't do anything [about the unsafe working conditions at Pasta de Conchos] out of necessity to work," said José Espinoza.

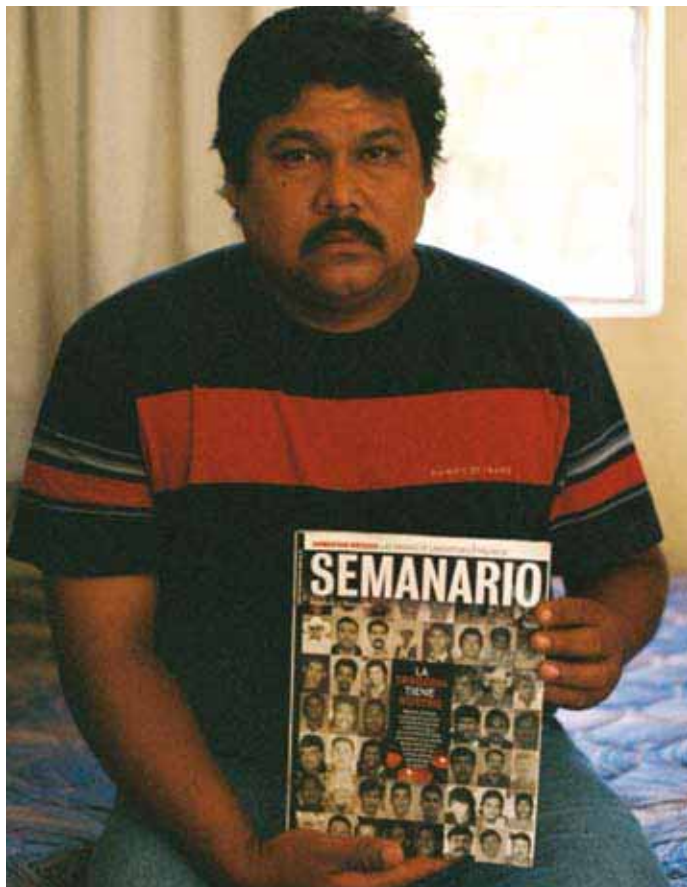
For contract workers, life in the mines is that much harder. Receiving less training, less equipment, less pay and longer hours, contract workers are usually given the most dangerous jobs and are often the first to be injured or killed. In the case of the Pasta de Conchos explosion, 40 of the 65 dead were contract hires.

POLITICAL FALLOUT

The explosion at the Pasta de Conchos mine ignited a national firestorm throughout the government, the mining industry and the Mexican labour movement. Just days after the accident, Napoleon Gómez Urrutia, general secretary of the SNTMMSRM, accused Grupo Mexico and the Ministry of Labour of "industrial homicide" and called for an immediate investigation.

The Labour secretary, Francisco Xavier Salazar Saenz, who has business ties with Grupo Mexico, retaliated by forcefully removing Gómez as the union's leader and replacing him with a government appointee. The government also froze all assets of both the miners' union and Gómez, accusing Gómez of stealing US\$55 million from union accounts, a charge he and the union sharply deny. So far, the Attorney General has not been able to find a federal judge that will issue a warrant against Gómez.

The government intervention sparked strikes at mines throughout the country, including Grupo Mexico's large copper mines and the country's largest steel plant, where



José Pecina holds a local publication featuring the fallen miners of Pasta de Conchos.

the army opened fire on the workers, killing two. More than 250,000 steelworkers and mineworkers took to the streets to protest Napoleon's removal and to demand safer working conditions in Mexico's factories and mines.

To the members of SNTMMSRM, Gómez's leadership speaks for itself. In the last four years as general secretary, he has won unheard of wage gains and improvements in benefits for his members and over 600 university scholarships have been awarded to union members and their families, the only program of its kind.

Gómez's criticism of Grupo Mexico echoes the experience of the Pasta de Conchos miners. Thirty-six-year old José Pecina, an active member of the SNTMMSRM, has worked in the Pasta de Conchos mine since he was 18, following in the footsteps of his father who worked there for 30 years.

"Whenever someone said to the company that something was wrong, their answer was that we had to keep on and on. If you refused, they said, 'here is your card to go back home.' Because we fight, the company wants to punish us. They restrain overtime, they discipline us by removing two or three days of salary. That's the kind of company it is," Pecina said.

TAKE ACTION ON DECEMBER 11

On December 11, IMF affiliates will support the Mexican miners' union at Mexican embassies and consulates around the world, demanding government officials respect union autonomy.

This call for justice is in response to the Mexican government's forceful removal of Napoleon Gómez Urrutia as general secretary of the National Miners' and Metalworkers' Union (SNTMMSRM) in March 2006.

Napoleon was removed as general secretary after he spoke out against the government and the company following the tragic mine accident in Pasta de Conchos that left 65 miners dead.

In March, the IMF lodged a complaint with the International Labour Organisation against the Mexican government protesting the government's illegal removal of the union leader.

In July, the IMF sent a mission to Mexico to investigate the circumstances surrounding the mine blast, and Gómez's unjust removal. To find out more about the situation in Mexico and international solidarity action in support of the Mexican miners go to: www.imfmetal.org/mexico



Poster artwork is available from the IMF on request

Monday Aguele



NIGERIA Monday Aguele is president of the new IMF affiliate, the Steel and Engineering Workers' Union of Nigeria (SEWUN). Forty-four year-old

Monday began his career 29 years ago at Tower Aluminium Industries and has held various positions in the union at the branch, council and national level.

In 1995 he was elected president of the Metal Product Workers' Union of Nigeria and was part of the Nigerian labour leadership that oversaw the merging of 41 industrial unions into 29. In 2003, Monday was elected national president of SEWUN and holds that position today.

Japhet Moyo



ZIMBABWE As acting deputy secretary of the Zimbabwean Council of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and general secretary of the new IMF affiliate the National

Engineering Workers Union (NEWU), Japhet Moyo has seen his share of government-sponsored violence against trade unionists.

Moyo, 42, has been part of the Zimbabwean labour movement for the last 20 years. He joined NEWU in 1986. In 1994 he was appointed as a regional officer and then later researcher, educator and assistant general secretary. He has served as general secretary for NEWU since 2001.

Vadim Borisov



RUSSIA Vadim Borisov has replaced Svetla Shekerdjieva as IMF's representative to CIS countries, taking up the post in the project office in Moscow in September. He joins

the IMF from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, where he was the ICFTU Representative for CIS and Director of the ICFTU Moscow Office.

Vadim previously worked as assistant to the President of the Coal Miners' Union of Russia. He has an academic background in sociology and has published extensively on Russian trade union issues. Vadim is also the author of the lyrics of several trade union songs.

IN MEMORIAM

Aurel Radi



ROMANIA President of METAROM since 1994, Aurel Radi dedicated himself to improving the lives of workers, promoting social dialogue and

modernizing trade unions. He also played a crucial role in building unity within the Romanian trade union movement. In January 2006, he was the key figure in bringing together unions in the steel sector in Romania, resulting in the creation of the Federation of Steel Workers METAROM, of which he became the president. The trade union movement is deeply indebted to him for his contribution to the reestablishment of democracy in Romania. He died at the end of August at the age of 52.

PHOTO: Paula Carlan

IN MEMORIAM

Árpád Danyi



HUNGARY Árpád Danyi, former head of the Hungarian Metalworkers' Federation VASAS' International Department, died in

October at the age of 65. With his excellent language skills, Árpád played a key role in assisting the Hungarian metalworkers become an integral part of the international trade union movement after the regime change. It was during this time that VASAS rejoined the IMF, of which VASAS is a founding member.

Árpád originally trained as an electrical engineer and took his first job at the GANZ electricity works and joined VASAS. He then spent five years working in East Germany before returning to Hungary to work for the union.

PHOTO: VASAS

IN MEMORIAM

Timo Ronkainen



FINLAND Timo Ronkainen from the Finnish Metalworkers' Union died in August at the age of 60 after a short illness. He had just

retired from a long career in the Finnish union where he spent many years working in the training and education department. In particular, he was in charge of Nordic cooperation in the education sector and assisted in IMF trade union education projects in Latin America. Timo started in the Finnish Metalworkers' Union as an active trade unionist on the shop floor in a car body factory, later moving to the union head office as a youth secretary. All who met Timo remember his wonderful sense of humour.

PHOTO: Maarit Rautio



PHOTO: USW

Mittal: A global giant

2006 is a year that will be remembered by steel workers across the globe. It has seen the evolution of the world's first truly global steel producing company, a trend that other companies are likely to follow.

BY ROB JOHNSTON

The Mittal empire has grown at a phenomenal pace and shows no sign of slowing. Mittal Steel is already a truly global steel producer with operations in 17 countries across four continents. Mittal's bold move to takeover Arcelor, the world's second largest steel producer and its main rival, will add facilities and put the company's steel producing capacity far ahead of others.

The acquisition of Arcelor, itself a company formed by the merger of Aceralia in Spain, Arbed in Luxembourg and Usinor in France in 2001, adds production facilities in Latin America and Europe. The end product will be a company with 61 plants in 23 countries.

Mittal currently produces 49.2 million tonnes with a turnover of more than US \$28.1 billion and has 224,000 employees. Add the Arcelor figures of 47 million tonnes, a turnover of 30 billion euros and 94,600 employees and you end up with the world's number one steel producer by some margin (see graph one).

The Arcelor move is part of Mittal's stated plan to become a 100 million tonne a year producer. With Arcelor's strength in Western Europe and Latin America along with Mittal's in North America, Eastern Europe and Africa there appears to be limited geographical overlap (see world map).

Growth has been rapid for the Mittal company, which expanded from its base in India through acquisitions in Trinidad and Tobago (1989), Mexico (1992), Kazakhstan (1995), US (1998, 2004), Romania (2001), South Africa (2002), Czech Republic (2003) Poland and Bosnia (2004). The full integration and completion of the new company structure of Arcelor and Mittal Steel is expected to be completed by June 2007 (see graph 2 on page 22).



JOB SECURITY

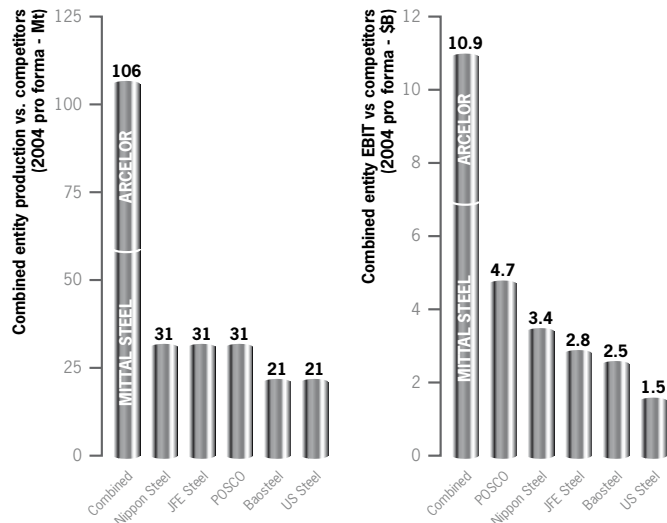
The unions involved in both companies are keen to seek assurances that any new company structure will not impact on employment stability. But with Mittal announcing 26,000 redundancies in 2006 in its existing structures, it seems likely that some form of restructuring will continue.

To date, trade unions' experience of Mittal management have been mixed, with a strong open relationship in the U.S. and at best a difficult one in Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe Mittal Steel has focused on buying previously state-owned steel facilities and Mittal's ownership has often been followed by an acceleration in job losses. For instance in Macedonia there has been a 30 per cent reduction in the workforce since Mittal bought out two steel plants in 2004. In the Czech Republic, where Mittal Steel bought five plants, the number of jobs in the plants was also reduced from 15,000 to 12,000. In both countries the unions representing the workers report a difficult relationship with Mittal Steel and are confronted by a lack of respect of agreements and an obsession with cost reductions, employee reductions and increases in productivity.

But its not just workers and unions in Eastern Europe that have felt the affects of Mittal ownership. In South Africa the state-owned steel company used to employ 80,000 workers. The process of reducing the workforce began before Mittal Steel bought the company, but the reduction in the number of employees has significantly accelerated since Mittal's acquisition in 2004 and the company now employs 15,000 workers.

Then there is Ireland. In 1995 Mittal's Ispat group bought the state-owned producer in a deal that included millions in state subsidies. Mittal said there would be no job losses for five years. Six years later, the plant was closed on the grounds that it was loss making and 400 employees lost their jobs, receiving only statutory redundancy pay. Workers in Aceralia, Arbed and Usinor also suffered as a result of restructuring in the formation of Arcelor, a process that took three years to complete.

Merger creates undisputed leader



Graph one: Mittal's market share in terms of steel production and earning before interest and tax (EBIT). Source: Mittal Steel's presentation to IMF Mittal Conference, June 2006

HIGH PRICES

The expansion of Mittal has taken place during a golden period for the steel industry with demand from China outstripping supply and driving prices high. Global market conditions in June 2006 are approaching the best in the last decade with prices for most steel products rising rapidly. Demand expectations for the rest of 2006 are strong. All major producers anticipate increasing production well over output in 2005. Share values in the industry have also been buoyed by merger and acquisition speculation as well as reasonably good results in 2005.

However the steel industry is notoriously cyclical and it remains to be seen what will happen when supply starts to exceed demand. Currently one tonne in three of crude steel globally is cast in China and this proportion is likely to increase despite some rationalisation of output. China is likely to be a major exporter from 2006 onwards as it steadily increases capacity and its domestic demand slows as the process of urbanisation begins to tail off.

CHINA

This Chinese challenge is likely to be felt most acutely in other Asian countries, but could also lead to a surge of exports to the U.S. and worsen global trade tensions. Steel is

often regarded as a strategic industry and governments tend to take a close interest in national steel sectors, even where they have no ownership of steel assets. Hence the need for company Chairman and CEO Lakshmi Mittal to devote a lot of time to discussions with governments. In the latest acquisition of Arcelor, Mittal had to amend the bid, surrender the extent of family ownership proposed and give guarantees about employment as well as raise the value of the bid.

The challenge for workers and unions alike is to argue for continuity of employment and to ensure that workers share in the success of the company. For instance, productivity improvements in steel in most countries is remarkably high - often approaching double digit rates of increase and two or three times faster than the average for manufacturing. However these increases are not always being matched in improved wages and conditions.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

While differences in wage levels, working hours and employment practices reflect a wide range of economic and cultural aspects, there can be no justification for differences in health and safety provisions. The International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF) and its affiliated unions actively pursue upward international harmonisation in



Constantin Manaila
General Secretary,
Metarom, Romania

“A major issue our members face in the companies taken over by Mittal Steel in Romania is the failure to provide good working conditions and ensure adequate health and safety measures. The number of work-related accidents in the past few years is extremely high, many resulting in death, as well as professional-related illnesses.

“As a trade union, we have great difficulties to establish an efficient social dialogue, especially regarding wage negotiation and promotion to higher wages. Also, the information and consultation of the employees is deficient on the future development of the activities, the employment situation, major shifts in the organization or the transfer of production.

“We hope that through international solidarity we can establish wage levels with adequate hierarchy as in the EU countries, correlated with productivity and profit rates. Also, we think that our participation in the Mittal Steel European Works Council and the conclusion of international accords at the level of Mittal Steel Group would be a great help to us.”



Peter Scherrer
General Secretary,
European Metalworkers' Federation

“The key issue for workers and unions in Europe is knowing more about Mr Mittal's plan when it comes to the industrial perspective of the newly-merged Arcelor-Mittal. At the start of November the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) sent to Mittal a suggested platform for co-operation. In this we have asked for information regarding the industrial concept of the group: what are they planning for Europe, will production of steel continue to take place in Europe? We are very concerned about safe-guarding employment and steel producing jobs in Europe.

“For unions in Europe one of the major issues that should be tackled through international solidarity is improving the health and safety standards in all locations in the Arcelor-Mittal group. This is in the interest of workers and management and I believe there is a lot of common ground between workers, unions and management on the issue of health and safety. Health and safety has traditionally been a problem in the steel industry and we want to tackle these issues jointly.”

respect of health and safety protection with particular emphasis on accident prevention, education and training facilities, and the establishment of effective health and safety committees where they do not already exist.

Mittal has had problems with health and safety as recently demonstrated by an explosion that claimed 41 lives in a Kazakh mine on September 20, 2006. The accident occurred despite Mittal investing US\$ 250 million in trying to modernise the complex. Workers say that piece work and low pay contribute to dangerous working practices and allege that Mittal Steel has done little to improve labour and safety conditions since taking over Kazakhstan's largest metal factory and the mines that fuel it 11 years ago.

In contrast, in the U.S. the most recent contract between Mittal Steel and labour preserved health and safety protections won throughout the steel industry over many years and added additional new rights and expanded some existing ones. For example, the agreement forbids programmes that discourage workers from reporting accidents, it adds to the rights of the union safety committee, and to the right to refuse unsafe work, and adds a full-time safety representative at each plant.



Mziwakhe Hlangani
Numsa, South Africa

“The takeover by Mittal of the country's major steel supplier and a former state-owned enterprise, which was privatised by government, has brought an extreme threat to job security and an increased use of an undesirable atypical employment system.

“We have now become accustomed to unilateral job restructuring processes which often resulted in massive retrenchments, outsourcing of the so-called non-core business units, down-grading of employment benefits and deteriorating work conditions in terms of safety and security.

“Through international solidarity, we will be able to force Mittal to accede to demands for implementation of accepted international labour standards. Other countries trading with South Africa should also help put pressure to bear on government to ensure that import-parity pricing is strictly controlled with respect to products that are important to the poor people, such as housing material, and regulate export of scrap metal in order to allow local business to access metal at competitive prices.”

STRONG UNION PRESENCE

From an employment perspective there are several factors which distinguish the company and the trade union organisation in it. Because of the relatively large scale of most steel installations and their usually close connections with the local communities nearby, in nearly all the plants the rate of trade union organisation is higher than in all other industrial sectors. This means that unions are a significant stakeholder in Arcelor-Mittal.

The new company is truly global and represents about 10 per cent of the world's steel production, making it necessary that trade unions also develop a global strategy that will build influence within the new company. The IMF believes this will be achieved by building on past initiatives carried out within Arcelor and Mittal. This includes the International Framework Agreement that was signed by Arcelor on September 12, 2004. At a recent European Works Council meeting, Laskmi Mittal stated on the subject of the IFA:

“I can reassure you that Arcelor and Mittal will totally respect the International Framework Agreement on Corporate Social Responsibility which Arcelor signed last year. The full implementation of the Agreement in the new perimeter of the Group will form an ambitious goal but I am sure that together on a step by step basis and in a constructive and trustful spirit we will reach this goal.”



Leo Gerard
International President,
United Steelworkers

“The USW has already developed a strong relationship in the Mittal group, and we look forward to increasing the role of the union in planning and delivering improvements in health and safety on the job through programmes that empower our members. We will also seek to increase the role of the union in delivering workplace training to ensure fair advancement and job security. Arcelor-Mittal is the world's largest steel company and the USW believes that the standards we achieve in this company should act as a benchmark for others to follow.

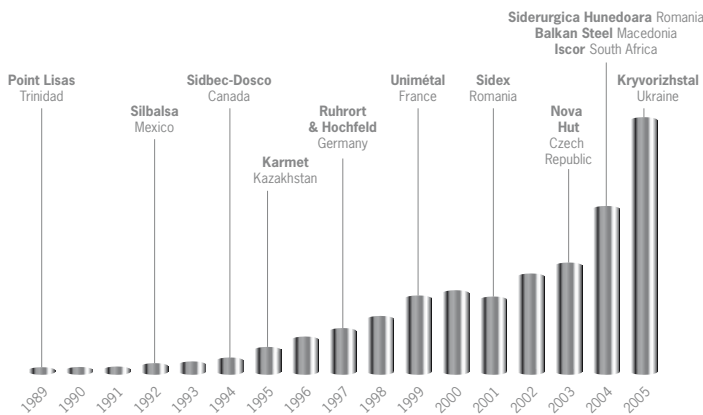
“The size and scope of the company means that as unions we have to develop a global strategy. Of course in doing so, we will have to take account of local factors but the ultimate aim must be two fold, first, a successful company that provides job security for its workers and second, recognition of the valuable role that unions play. Future challenges such as overcapacity in the steel industry and the threat of a race to the bottom are real issues that can only be dealt with at the international level.”

GLOBAL TRADE UNION RESPONSE

Communication and information sharing among unions is vitally important and by developing a directory of sites and contacts unions should be able to promote more active communication. For example, by bringing together unions during the merger talks of Arcelor-Mittal, the IMF was able to develop a common position, improve understanding of regional concerns and establish some early goals for the new company, which included the continuation of the Arcelor IFA.

The new Arcelor-Mittal company will face many challenges as it develops into a single entity and this process is also likely to set many challenges for the unions. Dealing with these challenges and building trade unions strength in Arcelor-Mittal will be the subject of an IMF global conference in 2007 for unions with members in Arcelor-Mittal.

Growing production through acquisitions



Graph two: The growth in Mittal's production through acquisitions.
Source: Mittal Steel's presentation to IMF Mittal Conference, June 2006



José Wagner Morais de Oliveira
Secretary for Administration and Finance of CNM/CUT, Brazil, National Co-ordinator for the Steel Sector at CNM/CUT, National Works Council of Arcelor - Acesita Unit

“The main issues at Arcelor’s steel facilities in Brazil are working time, health and safety and respect for trade union organisation. In Brazil there is a law for sectors with continuous production, including steel, that defines a maximum of six working hours per day. However there is a loophole in the law which allows for changes through negotiation. While Arcelor reasonably complies with Brazilian legislation on health and safety, it is failing on aspects that should be covered by the company’s public commitment to corporate social responsibility. Brazilian legislation on trade unions is limited and hinders trade union action, making it difficult to fight for better health and safety or against changes in working hours.

“The consolidation of the world and national works council at Arcelor and actions aimed at implementing the IFA are international actions that contribute to trade union organisation of workers in Brazil. Local legislation does not provide for a national company works council, but the international action of Arcelor workers made it possible.

“Actions to ensure the implementation of the IFA (here the company shows a certain resistance to present it to the workers) can contribute substantially to solving the main problems workers are facing in Brazil. Another possibility for international action is to push for better conditions and representation of outsourced workers. This campaign could even make use of the IFA provisions.”

Mittal Steel – the essential facts

Headquarters: Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Number of employees: 224,000

Revenue: US \$28.1 billion (2005)

Net income: US \$3.4 billion (2005)

Flat Products: Hot-rolled, cold-rolled, galvanised, tin-plate, exposed quality automotive, galvanised automotive, electrical steel, plates, pipes, seamless and welded tube.

Long Products: Wire-rod, mesh, flats, structural steels, blooms, billets, round ingots, straight and coiled bar, carbon steel, fastener steels, alloy-structural steels, hot and cold work tool steels, hollow drills steels, free cutting steel, wire.

Industries and customers: Mittal supplies steel to the automotive, appliance, machinery and construction sectors. Customers include Ford, Honda, General Motors, Toyota, DaimlerChrysler, Steelcase, Caterpillar, Valeo, Maytag, Whirlpool and Bekaert.

Countries where Mittal Steel operates: Algeria, Bosnia, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Mexico, Romania, Poland, South Africa, Trinidad, Ukraine and the U.S.

This is the IMF

The International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF) represents workers in the metal industry. The IMF was founded in 1893 and has its head office in Geneva, Switzerland. Currently the IMF represents the interests of 25 million metalworkers in 200 affiliated unions in 100 countries.

The IMF endeavours to build a strong metalworkers' movement throughout the world. The Action Programme adopted by the last IMF Congress, in 2005, presents four major areas of activities: working for an alternative economic programme, organising the unorganised, promoting solidarity and fighting for human and trade union rights.

The highest decision-making body of the IMF is the Congress, which meets every four years. Between Congresses, the Central Committee, consisting of the delegates of all affiliated unions, meets every second year. The Executive Committee consists of 25 members elected by the Central Committee and usually meets twice a year.

The IMF head office, where the Secretariat is located, is in Geneva, Switzerland, where worldwide activities are coordinated with a network of regional and project offices:

- East and Southern Africa - Johannesburg, South Africa;
- South Asia - New Delhi, India;
- Southeast Asia and the Pacific - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;
- Latin America & Caribbean - Santiago, Chile and Mexico City, Mexico;
- CIS - in Moscow, Russia (project office).

The IMF has also developed regional and sub-regional structures for Africa, Asia and Latin America. In some countries, the IMF-affiliated unions have formed Country Councils.

To coordinate activities in specific industrial sectors, the IMF has industrial departments for the following sectors: aerospace, automotive, electrical and electronics, mechanical engineering, shipbuilding, and iron, steel and non-ferrous metals.



For the address of the IMF head office in Geneva, see page 2. The addresses for regional and project offices are:

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Calendar 2007

Due to the IMF budget and planning cycle, only a few activities for 2007 were scheduled at the time of printing Metal World.

DECEMBER

- 04 – 05** IMF Southern Africa Regional Steel Meeting, Johannesburg, South Africa
11 International Call for JUSTICE in Mexico

JANUARY

- 20 – 25** World Social Forum, Nairobi, Kenya

FEBRUARY

- 06** IMF Working Group on Non-Manual Workers, Stockholm, Sweden

MAY

- 10 – 11** IMF Executive Committee Meeting, Seville, Spain

NOVEMBER

- 28 – 29** Central Committee, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

Other activities planned for 2007, include:

- Communicators' Forum
- Boeing World Conference
- Mittal World Steel Conference
- GM Action Group Meeting

**For the latest updates, go to:
www.imfmetal.org/events**





METAL WORLD SURVEY

We are conducting a readership survey about Metal World and would like to ask you a few questions. Please complete the following questions as completely and honestly as possible and return the survey to us at:

IMF Metal World, P.O. Box 1516
CH-1227 Geneva, Switzerland
Fax: +41 22 308 5055 Email: news@imfmetal.org
You can also find a copy of the survey at:
www.imfmetal.org/metalworldsurvey

Please put a tick in the box if the statement is correct.

I am?

- I am a trade union member
- I am a trade union official
- I am a trade union organiser
- I am a member of a non-governmental organisation
- I am an academic
- I am a journalist
- Other?

How would you describe Metal World?

- I find the content in Metal World easy to understand
- I find the content in Metal World interesting
- I use Metal World in my work
- Metal World reports on issues that are relevant to me
- Any other comments?

I am?

- Female
- Male

My age is?

- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or above

What do you read in Metal World?

- I usually flick through the magazine
- I read the news pages
- I read features and special reports
- I read company profiles
- I read the people page
- I read interviews with people
- I read Metal World from cover to cover

I am from (country)

My mother-tongue language is

What would you like to see more of in Metal World?

- Reports on trade and development issues
- Information on health and safety
- Company and industry information and analysis
- Investigative journalism on abuse of trade union rights
- Opinion and comment from various IMF affiliates
- Reports on IMF activities
- Any other suggestions?

How often do you receive Metal World?

- This is the first time
- Once a year
- Two or three times a year
- Four times each year

How do you receive Metal World?

- It is mailed to me directly
- A colleague passes it onto me
- I read a copy at my trade union office
- I distribute it at my workplace
- I download it from the IMF website
- Other?

One last thing...

- I regularly visit the IMF website
- I read news on the IMF website
- I receive the IMF NewsBriefs newsletter
- I have participated in an IMF meeting or event

