



International Metalworkers' Federation

IMF Action Programme

2009-2013

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PREFACE

In the process of developing a new Action Programme we see the strengths of the International Metalworkers' Federation. We find that the things that unite us are much greater than the things that divide us. In the borderless world of today, we share common experiences, challenges and an analysis of the situation facing workers globally.

This common ground helps the IMF family to decide upon the direction we will take in order to tackle the problems metalworkers confront every day.

The fact that this Action Programme was adopted in the midst of a global economic crisis is not insignificant. But we didn't need the global crisis to understand that the neoliberal model that used to dominate the world was destructive to workers' rights and social development.

This IMF Action Programme adopted at the 32nd World Congress puts increased emphasis on concrete action and what IMF affiliates can accomplish together through global solidarity. In order to maximise our influence we need to mobilise the forces of the whole IMF family.

We have to invest more resources in organising everywhere. We will systematically target transnational companies that are reluctant to allow workers to exercise their fundamental rights.

The campaign against precarious employment becomes solidified in this document. The Programme recognises that we need to say and do more on the question of sustainable development and combating global warming.

Building trade union networks in transnational companies offers a possibility for exchange of information and joint action to make sure that enterprises behave well wherever they operate. Union building programmes help us strengthen trade unions where they are weak.

This Action Programme contains exciting and challenging new commitments for IMF affiliates to respond with real and effective action to build stronger unions and when workers' rights are violated. If we work together to implement this Action Programme, we can achieve our mission.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a vertical line on the left, a horizontal line at the bottom, and a diagonal line on the right, with a small loop in the middle.

Jyrki Raina,
IMF General Secretary

June 2009

1. OUR MISSION

The global economy is in the throes of a unique crisis. The ideology that unbridled greed for profits is the driving force behind human progress has been discredited. What we need is a new approach where politics and economics serve the development of society and quality employment. The current crisis is not only the result of misjudgments and misguided developments in the market, or the result of overheating financial markets. It is entirely the result of the ideology of an unrestrained market and economic and political policies directed at maximizing short term profits. On a positive note however, while undoubtedly the next four years of the International Metalworkers' Federation's (IMF) work will be tough and difficult, the current economic situation also provides us with a real opportunity to create a new international development model that rivals that of neoliberalism and is based on regulation, fairness, equality, sustainability and decent trade union and labour rights.

Therefore, the fundamental mission of the trade union movement is more than ever to improve workers' wages, working and living conditions, and to ensure that workers and workers' rights are respected. The mission of the IMF is to work towards the achievement of these goals in metalworking and related industries by working with its affiliates and on the global level.

Today, corporate-led globalisation is still massively infringing on the rights of workers. The policies promoted by employers, most governments and the international institutions they dominate have resulted in increased economic inequality, precarious employment and a reduction in the bargaining power of working people around the world.

Recognizing that union building/organizing and collective bargaining are at the heart of our work, metalworker unions must organize and mobilise union members to challenge the neo-liberal agenda of corporations and most governments, and ensure working people have a fair share in the wealth generated through economic growth.

The goal of the IMF is to support, coordinate and strengthen the activities of its affiliates to:

- Improve workers' wages, working and living conditions;
- Organize new members into democratic workers' unions throughout the world;
- Build and strengthen national metalworking unions;
- Ensure that internationally recognized Core Labour Standards are applied in every country and that national laws are changed to reflect these standards;
- Defend and protect workers' rights;
- Fight for safe and healthy working conditions;
- Make women's rights, interests, and representation one of the highest priorities;
- Struggle for sustainable economic growth that protects the environment and improves social conditions;

- Strengthen the power and unity of trade unions to build a counterweight to the power of transnational corporations (TNCs), including their power over the allocation of employment and investment;
- Struggle for fair trade, social justice and the elimination of poverty; and
- Support and build solidarity with countries and governments who promote progressive policies aimed at delivering fairness, equality and social sustainability.

It is clear that trade unions cannot achieve these goals only at the national level. National initiatives must be complemented with international action in order to be successful

For this reason the role of the IMF is to:

- Unite national metalworking trade unions in a global union structure capable of mobilising its membership in solidarity at all levels wherever and whenever required;
- Bring unions together to share information, overcome conflicts of interest and build common strategies;
- Co ordinate solidarity and support for affiliates during major disputes or when fundamental workers' rights are infringed;
- Provide information on developments that affect the activities of metalworker unions;
- Actively voice the concerns and interests of metalworkers in effective and innovative ways that involve and mobilise trade union members and bring the IMF into the daily activities of affiliate unions;
- Direct resources and solidarity support towards building strong national unions in countries where unions are weak or non-existent;
- Support trade union education that tackles core trade union activities such as organizing, collective bargaining, defending workers' rights and international solidarity;
- Coordinate an international strategy for building unionism in TNCs and their suppliers at the sectoral and enterprise levels. Challenge the power of TNCs by developing the capacity to bargain collectively at the international level – based on a case by case mandate from the affiliates – and by such means as sharing information and experiences among affiliates and building on the work of negotiating, implementing and monitoring International Framework Agreements (IFAs);
- Expose and challenge governments that violate fundamental trade union rights or interfere in the functioning of independent trade union bodies;
- Represent the interests of metalworkers in international bodies which take decisions affecting jobs and employment conditions, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO);
- Work with other Global Union Federations (GUFs), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD to pursue closer cooperation and action in the interests of affiliates; and

- Build, whenever possible, dialogue, alliances and joint actions with appropriate political and social organisations.

Affiliates of the IMF will make significant contributions to the attainment of our goals by:

- Strengthening their political influence, capacities, and resources through organising and collective bargaining at the national level;
- Sharing information and actively communicating with the IMF and other affiliates at the national, regional, and international level;
- Engaging in the regional and global structures of the IMF;
- Supporting each other during disputes or when fundamental workers' rights are violated;
- Participating in international actions and international networks organized through the IMF; and
- Giving visibility to international trade union action by incorporating IMF co-ordinated activities in day-to-day trade union work.

Ultimately, to achieve our goals, the IMF must go beyond simple co ordination and become a truly global trade union organization that is able to counteract social and economic challenges and is based on the principles of independence and democracy following the mandates given by the decision-making bodies.

2. THE WORLD TODAY

Since the IMF Congress in 2005, metalworkers and the whole trade union movement have been confronted with an increasingly hostile political, economic and social environment. Corporations have led globalisation to maximise the global reach and profits of their operations with the support of governments and international institutions by promoting neo-liberal policies, which feature deregulation of capital and labour markets, privatization of public services and assets, a reduction in employment growth in many regions, an erosion of social security systems and the frequent denial of worker and human rights. Even today, a large proportion of the world's metalworkers do not enjoy the fundamental right to have a union.

While the world economy has grown and created vast amounts of wealth, the divide between rich and poor has widened. Ever more workers have been faced with deteriorating working and living conditions, job insecurity and an erosion of their rights. Capital has gained huge profits, while the purchasing power of most workers has fallen or at best stagnated.

2.1 Profits over people

Financial capital has come to dominate productive capital. Short-term speculative investment has gained the upper hand at the expense of long-term investment in job creation, skills development, research and innovation, and sustainable development. The current food, fuel and financial crises, are neo-liberal policy failures, that have drastic consequences for working people and the poor, and that are now dragging the world economy into a severe recession.

Over the past few years the globalisation of finance has taken on a new dimension with the proliferation of novel speculative products that escape monitoring and regulation. Speculative funds are fed by banks and institutional investors such as insurance companies, mutual funds and pension funds. Some part of private equity assets also come from sovereign wealth funds with huge resources at their disposal, and with a deliberate lack of transparency as to their political and economic objectives, as well as to their practices and investment strategies.

Never before has the influence of private equity and hedge funds on markets and enterprises been so strong. Many of them are located in tax havens, which deals another blow to already declining public income from corporate taxation. The financial economy based on short-termism and high rates of return is increasingly disconnected from the real economy with devastating consequences for workers.

Today, hardly any company is immune from takeover by private equity funds. In most cases, these funds take control of enterprises without any industrial plans, and for the sole objective of boosting share prices and extracting maximum returns over a short period. The potentially high short-term gains attract institutional investors, including pension funds. Thus workers who have put their retirement savings in these pension funds find themselves unwittingly involved in speculative finance that is destroying jobs. Many workers have already watched their savings dissolved by corporate scandals.

The instability of the world's financial markets is not just a problem due to a few speculators - the whole system requires new rules.

2.2 Unemployment and job insecurity

The ILO estimates that the present financial crisis is likely to lead to the loss of some 20 million jobs worldwide and conservatively estimates that the number of working poor living on less than a dollar a day could rise by some 40 million, with those at two dollars a day rising by more than 100 million. Even now, before the full effect of this crisis is known, over one-third of the world's workforce is jobless or underemployed.

The so-called modernisation of labour laws that governments and business interests are seeking to introduce is also part and parcel of the neo-liberal agenda and a direct attack on workers. Not only is there a rise in unemployment worldwide, but also employment creation increasingly comes at the expense of quality jobs. More and more workers are finding the search for full-time, permanent employment a fruitless quest. Precarious work is becoming the norm, spreading in all sectors of the economy including in professional groups. Others find their jobs are outsourced, misclassified, and lack protection from existing labour laws.

In many developing countries, workers have been squeezed out of regular employment into the so-called informal economy due to severe economic crises, widespread privatisation programmes, and the job destruction resulting from economic restructuring. The unregulated economy is expanding and a growing number of people struggle to survive on poverty level wages. Unemployment and poor living conditions spur migration within countries and across national boundaries, creating a multitude of tensions in many parts of the world.

Precariously employed workers face job insecurity and an uncertain future, low wages, limited or no access to social benefits, such as health or pension schemes, and increased health and safety risks at work. Precarious workers are also frequently denied rights at work, such as the right to join a union or bargain collectively. The rise of precarious employment is creating a two-tier workforce, which is undermining social cohesion and weakening trade unions. This is part of a larger union-busting strategy used by employers in their well orchestrated anti-union campaigns.

2.3 Unions under attack

This attack on jobs and the dilution of the employment relationship is also an attack on unions and workers' rights. Employers, in many countries with the full support of governments, are attempting to divide working people. Trade unions are struggling with declining membership and a deteriorating collective bargaining environment. Adverse trends include changes in industries, employment status and industrial relations (including a shift from industry and sector level bargaining to enterprise agreements or even individual contracts) as well as anti-union actions by governments and corporations. In addition, unions have not adequately responded to this adverse environment and to the challenge to renew themselves and organize effectively.

The aggressive anti-union campaigns conducted by employers in certain countries with the help of outside consultants are playing a major role in the sustained assault

on unions and collective bargaining. Such union-busting activities are being exported to other countries and represent a serious threat to the rights of workers all over the world.

2.4 Fundamental workers' rights denied

Millions of workers around the globe continue to face repression, imprisonment, discrimination and all kinds of threats and pressures due to their trade union activities. Trade unionists are killed in the exercise of their rights.

Poor labour standards and lax enforcement of labour legislation are often used as a means to attract much-needed foreign investment as is the case in export processing zones (EPZs). Millions of workers, above all women, are employed today in such zones. Discrimination and abuses are common in EPZs where attempts to form unions and bargain collectively are often met with intimidation, violence, sackings and even death threats.

The policies of international financial institutions have also hurt workers around the world. By imposing conditions designed first and foremost to promote labour market deregulation, privatisation and economic liberalization, these policies have undermined basic workers' rights, exacerbated financial instability, fuelled inequalities, and created serious hardships for workers and their communities.

2.5 Spreading influence of Transnational Corporations

TNCs seek to shift their risks and costs onto workers, often with institutional and government support. In addition, offshoring, outsourcing and subcontracting have become an integral part of corporate cost-reduction strategies and affect not only production work but also increasingly high-skilled and well-paid jobs in design, research and development activities. Relocation as well as a large part of green-field investment takes place in countries where, in many cases, there is a very low rate of unionisation, no democratic unions or no unions at all.

TNCs have provided employment through direct capital investment, while building complex global supply chains and multi-level networks, which reach out to thousands of contractors and suppliers all over the world. These networks have made it possible for companies to source goods and services anywhere, reorganize production lines quickly, forcing workers to adapt constantly to new performance requirements, or to leave the country at a moment's notice if a cheaper and more compliant workforce is available somewhere else.

TNCs have thus significantly altered the industrial structure within and among countries for their own benefits, including by moving decision-making centres and by transforming the employment relationship on which labour protection systems are largely based. While it is abundantly clear that TNCs have a significant influence over the working conditions of millions of workers across the world, they refuse to recognize their influence and they argue that they are not responsible for the workers along the supply chain.

TNCs have created a global labour market in which workers from the same and/or different countries are continuously put into competition with each other. Moreover, the unrestricted mobility of capital allows it to take advantage of differences in

wages, working conditions, and labour legislation. Conflicts of interests are created between groups of workers in different regions, between workers at different worksites, and also within and across countries. Workers are pushed to work faster, cheaper, and for longer hours, which leads to increasing work-related health problems. The TNCs ability to relocate manufacturing and research and development is a threat not only to jobs but also to wages and workers' bargaining power.

To date, trade unions have had limited success in challenging the power of TNCs. The relocation process driven by TNCs is taking a heavy toll on workers and many regions are facing the spectre of de-industrialisation. However, industry is a key component of growth, technological and social development, and balanced trade patterns. It is vital for employment. Government policies are therefore needed to promote equitable and sustainable growth, facilitate the adaptation of traditional industries, and encourage the development of new ones. Unions have a new role to play in this field, linking the social and environmental dimension in their strategy for the benefit of all workers.

2.6 World trade system in disarray

Too often governments prioritise the interests of TNCs over the interests of workers, which is particularly apparent when it comes to questions of trade. Not surprisingly the current world trading system continues to demonstrate its inability to tackle the issue of sustainable development and address the needs of workers worldwide. Trade unions energetically oppose the current proposals for further liberalisation of trade in manufactured goods, because these would undermine prospects for progress in many developing economies and weaken labour relative to multinational capital in developing and developed economies. While multilateralism is in crisis, there is a proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements that, in most cases, have been negotiated without any trade union consultation and input.

Unfair trade practices and the resistance of governments to incorporating core labour standards in an enforceable manner in trade and investment agreements are intensifying current strains in the multilateral system. Trade can be an engine for economic and social development, but for this to happen current policies and practices must be fundamentally changed. Violations of core labour standards are not only an affront to human rights, but also an economic distortion. They are no different than the distortions caused by unfair subsidies or violations of intellectual property rights, which are subject to WTO sanctions.

China's growing participation in international trade has increased competitive pressures on workers in both developed and developing countries, and breaches of core labour standards. In particular, the development impact of China's involvement in Africa and Latin America, driven by a need to access energy and mineral resources to feed its rapid industrialisation, has become a major source of concern, as has its currency policy.

2.7 An unsustainable future

A globalised economy could benefit workers throughout the world and improve prospects for social progress and sustainable development. However this will not happen by following a deregulation agenda. The growing inequalities between and

within countries generated by neo-liberal policies and free trade show that workers are not receiving an equitable share of the wealth they create in society. Unsustainable commercial and production practices, spurred on by unregulated globalisation, have caused risks posed by industry, public health concerns, environmental preservation, and climate change to move to centre stage.

Climate change is a threat to sustainable development and will affect human well-being, industrial activities, and employment. It is not just a concern for the developed countries, which still account for most greenhouse gas pollutants. The rapid, energy-intensive growth in China, India and other fast-moving industrialising economies is also contributing to the increase in green-house gas emissions.

Global warming is now widely acknowledged to be the most critical environmental issue facing humanity. There is strong scientific evidence that most of the warming observed is attributable to unregulated economic activities and consumption based on a massive and excessive exploitation of natural resources, which also results in widespread industrial pollution. Fast growing emissions caused by transport, industries, and fossil fuel power plants are made possible by a globalisation that is promoted by neo-liberal policies, including a huge increase in free trade and the associated transportation costs. Production regardless of costs to the environment and the costs of recycling and disposal is prevalent. There is a scientific consensus that immediate measures such as cuts in emissions of greenhouse gases, a stop to the destruction of forests (especially rain forests), and a change in agricultural production towards biologically-based systems is essential.

Furthermore, trade in dangerous wastes such as chemical and other industrial residues including nuclear power stations must either be strictly regulated, or should be stopped. Today, such wastes are often dumped by industrialised countries in developing countries. The latter accept these practices for the short term and minimal income they provide. There is much evidence that the receiving countries often cannot handle the wastes in a safe and proper manner. Frequently, they are stocked in open spaces where children and poor women go in search of the wherewithal for survival.

The global fight for environmental protection must take employment implications and opportunities fully into consideration. Whilst environmental protection has a cost, there is a huge potential for job creation in metal industries, particularly in those related to alternative energies, construction, and fuel-efficient transportation. Creation of stable, safe, and good jobs must be put at centre of the response to the environmental crisis. These jobs must be based on production of goods and services that are useful and accessible to everyone in the community. Because many environmental problems have their roots in the workplace, workers are in a unique position to contribute to solutions. Moreover, the role of trade unions, especially industrial unions, needs to be strong at the sectoral level where special attention must be given to auto, steel, aluminium, aerospace and power generation, which are all fundamental for the future of our economy. Finally, these positive developments will only happen if trade unions all around the world and their allies fight against neo-liberalism and for effective national industrial development policies.

Globalisation and its social impact is an important factor in the spread of HIV/AIDS and other new epidemics. As a result, these epidemics cannot be addressed as an isolated issue, but only in the context of trade, investments, the employment relationship, and social protection. Less developed countries with high

levels of poverty and inequality are especially vulnerable. As a result of the policy pressures from international financial institutions, poverty amongst the most economically marginalized groups is deepening. This affects both the spread and the response to the epidemics. Unions are key actors at the workplace; they can protect workers and develop agreements with employers to promote access to care and treatment, and to prevent discrimination. Trade unions also play a wider social and political role within civil society, which seeks to alleviate poverty and deprivation by raising wages, living and social standards.

A global arms race, which stirs up tensions and conflicts across the world, also threatens a sustainable future. World military spending has increased by 45 per cent since 1998. The struggle to secure access to vital supplies of energy and other raw materials is a major factor contributing to this military build-up. At the same time these limited resources are depleted by wasteful and unnecessary production and growing populations. On the other hand, investment in much-needed education and health programmes, and in official development assistance has lagged behind.

2.8 Alliances, resistance and opportunities

Throughout the world, people are meeting and mobilising against the destructive effect of unbridled capitalism, all-out deregulation and corporate abuses; they call for the promotion of democracy, human rights, and social justice. Various social and political movements have rejected the neo-liberal consensus and are following a different path. The World Social Forum process that started in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil is still the largest and most inclusive space where alliances can be built and joint initiatives taken with different social actors. In the last decade, real political change has taken place in some countries, most notably in Latin America, where democratic and progressive governments have come to power and have challenged the neo-liberal economic model by renationalizing their key natural resources and using its profits to benefit the many and not just the few. Numerous movements and networks that play an important role in local and global politics have emerged, creating spaces of dialogue and common action, and building broad-based coalitions.

There is now a window of opportunity for the world's progressive social forces to get together and come up with alternatives to neo-liberal policies. Alternatives dedicated to sustainable development, human rights, gender equity and the protection of individual and collective rights in the economy offer opportunities for solidarity and alliances for working people everywhere.

3. GLOBAL SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

3.1 Build strong national trade unions

The IMF will only be as strong as its affiliates and will only have the power its affiliates give to it. Therefore, our priority is building strong national trade unions that, in a permanent democratic relationship with workers, are capable of achieving real gains through collective bargaining, by organizing the unorganized, striving for trade union unity at the national level and building unions through training, education and effective exchange of information.

3.1.1 Organize the unorganized

Given the enormous challenges working people face in today's globalised economy, organizing remains a basic task for all trade unions and organizing drives should be carried out by IMF affiliates themselves.

The shift from secure to insecure forms of employment, the attacks on trade union rights and the fragmentation of collective bargaining systems has seriously eroded our capacity to organize and effectively represent the interests of workers. In addition to that the structural change in employment, in particular in the developed countries has resulted in a decline in the proportion of blue-collar workers who are traditionally well organized and an increase in the proportion of highly educated and non-manual workers. The trade unions have found it more difficult to organize these workers.

To win and defend metalworkers' rights, we need strong, national unions in all countries. Therefore, one of the key objectives of the IMF is to encourage workers to build independent, democratic and representative national unions that are autonomous from employers, political parties and governments. This includes overcoming weaknesses in existing unions and, where required, building new unions capable of tackling the challenges of today.

However, it is not only a question of what unions do. In some countries, such as Belarus, Colombia, Thailand and the Philippines, governments and companies actively work to eliminate trade union structures, murder and intimidate activists or alternatively to fragment union structures and encourage enterprise level unionism, which seriously undermines the possibility for trade union strength. All workers, regardless of their status, must have the right to organize. The IMF and its affiliates must fight for legislation that allows workers to make their own decisions regarding their representative structures, and will pressure companies to always respect workers' decisions instead of hiding behind national laws when these do not conform to internationally recognized labour rights.

IMF affiliates will:

- Prioritise organizing as a key means of building union strength at the national level;
- Utilise organizing strategies at the sectoral level and in key TNCs;

- Provide practical solidarity support to unions attempting to organize workers anywhere, particularly along the supply chain of TNCs, and including in the affiliate's home country;
- Fight to remove legal barriers which prevent precarious workers from joining national unions;
- Step-up organizing of non-manual workers, who account for a growing part of the workforce, to build greater solidarity and bargaining strength; and
- Push for the elimination of legal restrictions on the right to organize for non-manual workers.

To assist affiliates in organizing, the IMF will:

- Support unions in developing their own organizing campaigns and strategies, particularly for organizing women, migrants, youth, and workers in precarious employment;
- Strengthen its efforts to raise awareness about organizing non-manual workers' in all regions, promote the exchange of information and experiences on organizing tools and policies, and address topics of special relevance to non-manual workers;
- Identify and develop union organizing opportunities with affiliates, especially where TNC investments create new or growing concentrations of workers. The IMF Executive Committee, informed by the Regions, will prioritise the countries which should be the focus of this work. This will include countries such as China where the IMF currently has no affiliates;
- Utilise IFAs or other means to develop cross-border organizing campaigns;
- Co-ordinate organizing activities:
 - throughout supply chains by targetting contractors and workers in different forms of precarious employment;
 - in EPZs, where workers' rights are ignored and exploited; and
 - wherever multi-company, or multi-plant organising campaigns could be co-ordinated;
- Provide forums for the exchange of information and experiences;
- Provide training on issues relevant for organizing and keeping members; and
- Support national efforts to bring about changes in legislation to protect the right to organize and bargaining collectively by working together with other GUFs, the ITUC, the TUAC to the OECD, and the ILO.

IMF will provide assistance to trade unions that:

- are committed to activities leading to self-reliance;
- have established their own priorities and identified their needs;
- are working in accordance with the IMF Action Programme;
- are building union structures that respond to workers' needs locally and internationally and that include women at all levels;
- are able to organize activities or are prepared to closely co-operate with the appropriate IMF regional office;

- are building union structures that are democratic, and independent of political parties and employers;
- are ready to co-operate with other IMF affiliates at local, national and international level; and
- are confronting and fighting repressive governments.

3.1.2 Strive for trade union unity at the national level

In countries where national unions are vulnerable or enterprise unions predominate, the IMF will work with affiliates to promote national unity and strengthened national structures. This includes developing strategies to prevent workers' organisations from being played off against one another or becoming dependent on management. Using tools such as Country Councils, the IMF will work to avoid competition and encourage co-operation and solidarity between workers.

Given that strong national unions are often born out of different historical backgrounds, it is necessary to seek unity of action even when unification into a single national union is not realistic. The IMF will focus its attention on ensuring that the unions we support have the capacity to organize, bargain and prioritise work on a national level, and that different unions within a country work in concert in the interests of all metalworkers.

In countries where labour legislation does not permit national unions, the IMF will work with national centres, other global unions, and the ITUC to assist workers and their unions in overturning laws that prevent workers from forming national unions.

To assist affiliates in achieving unity at the national level, the IMF will:

- Utilise IMF Country Council structures to build greater unity and solidarity in action; and
- Focus its union building activities in countries where affiliates are predominantly enterprise-level unions in TNC's on the strengthening of national structures, and on building unity among unions by encouraging changes in union structures.

IMF affiliates will:

- Work with other affiliates at the national level to build common positions and platforms on issues affecting metalworkers, particularly collective bargaining.

3.1.3 Build unions through education, training and effective exchange of information

Training and Education

Where appropriate, the IMF will cooperate with the ITUC, TUAC, the ILO and union-friendly partner organisations to organize and provide education and training aimed at building strong national unions. The IMF Secretariat, with advice from the Executive Committee and the Regions, will prioritise this work to best meet the Action Programme objectives. Where there is cooperation with donor organisations,

the primacy of the IMF objectives and the independence of the IMF will always be maintained.

Education and training for union building will include topics such as:

- Globalisation, the rise of corporate power and challenging neoliberalism;
- Organizing;
- Collective bargaining policies and effective collective bargaining skills and structures;
- Health and safety issues;
- Equal rights;
- Introduction of new technologies;
- Skills development and life long learning;
- Internal and external communication strategies;
- Financial union management (including effective collection of membership dues and appropriate and transparent expenditures);
- Implementation, monitoring and enforcement of IFAs; and
- Other trade union topics that are of interest and concern.

Consistent with the principles outlined above in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, the IMF will provide resources for union building projects on the condition that they:

- Build organisations independent of employer and government control;
- Enhance democracy within the organisation and encourage and enable members, particularly youth and women, to take part in the activities of the organisation. Projects should contribute to eliminating political, racial and gender discrimination;
- Increase the capacity of the organisation to carry out its own core union activities, building self-reliance, particularly in the area of education;
- Strengthen solidarity within the organisation, among unions in the country and/or region, and inside the IMF; and
- Support independent trade unions confronting and fighting repressive governments.

Information

Information on the work of the IMF and its affiliates needs to be more systematically communicated. This information can help affiliates in the different regions to learn from one another and build up their strength.

The IMF will:

- Work towards establishing a more effective internal information system, using the IMF website, newsletters, the quarterly journal and other means of communication.

IMF affiliates will:

- Inform the secretariat about what type of information they are interested in; and
- Provide the IMF with information about their activities.

3.2 Strengthening collective bargaining

Achieving and strengthening collective bargaining is the core activity of trade unions and remains the best instrument for improving wages and conditions, regulating the relationship between employers and workers and solving problems at the workplace. Its impact goes beyond the workplace and affects the living conditions and development prospects of communities. Collective bargaining should be increasingly used as a tool for trade unions to engage with communities and promote the broader interests of workers as citizens and consumers.

Over the past decade the trade union movement has been attacked by employers, governments and their allies who are determined to weaken collective bargaining, thereby weakening the union movement. In particular, employers are eager to eradicate national, sectoral, and sometimes even enterprise-wide collective bargaining. Using the threat of outsourcing production and services, they push for more flexibility and other concessions. New forms of employment and work practices are imposed on employees, increasing stress and insecurity. In developing countries, foreign investors in particular demand deregulation of labour law and other regulatory changes, which have negative impacts on the development opportunities for these countries. The IMF will work with affiliates to ensure that collective agreements continue to provide a framework for intervening on all work issues including decent wages and working conditions, including working time, work organisation, pace of work and health and safety.

In the long-term, and as companies increasingly operate globally, collective bargaining at the international level, while respecting the rights of national unions, must be the goal of the IMF. As a first step, an information and coordination system should be established.

To develop and strengthen global and national collective bargaining efforts, the IMF will:

- Develop ways to exchange information on collective bargaining that build on the experiences gained at the regional level in Europe and elsewhere;
- Build commonality for bargaining among affiliates at the global level, e.g. by developing global union positions on issues such as precarious employment and training;

- Conduct cross-border negotiations with TNCs with the involvement of functioning global union networks and an IMF coordinator, based on clear case by case mandates from affiliates. In order to have a framework of action for these cross-border negotiations, the IMF Executive Committee will develop IMF guidelines with the support of the Secretariat, which will also describe the roles of the IMF coordinators. Not only may IFAs be negotiated, but also topics such as health and safety and training; access to information and other issues of common interest; and
- Assist affiliates in building collective bargaining capacity at the national level.

IMF affiliates shall:

- Provide information on collective bargaining experiences to others; and
- Strive to remove legal obstacles to collective bargaining at the national and sectoral level.

3.3 Defend and protect workers' rights

3.3.1 Fight for trade union rights

The universal and fundamental right of workers to form and join independent trade unions and to bargain collectively with their employers is the basis of trade union organisation. The IMF has always given the highest priority to fighting against the repression of trade unions and the violations of workers' and human rights. Binding intergovernmental rules in order to implement the core labour standards remain a fundamental demand of the IMF. The core labour standards of the ILO must be integrated both into the agreements of the WTO and in bi- and multilateral trade and investment agreements. In order to monitor the ILO standards in the WTO agreements, the existing ILO monitoring mechanisms need to be strengthened and extended, as demanded in 2008 in the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. These demands will require stronger efforts from the IMF and its affiliates, together with other GUFs, the ITUC and TUAC. We have to become more visible, particularly in voicing our support of trade unionists who face grave risks including intimidation, assault, abduction, imprisonment, and even murder.

It is the main responsibility of the community of states and national governments to finally put into practice binding and sanctionable intergovernmental rules in order to enforce and implement a social dimension of globalization. Commitment of companies, such as IFAs, may represent an additional protection for workers.

In the age of globalisation, not only has the opportunity for international solidarity action increased, but its role in the fight for the advancement of trade union rights has become much more critical. Solidarity action is only as powerful as the collective force behind it. To be effective, it requires a two-pronged strategy, on one hand to put pressure on governments that systematically violate trade union and human rights, and on the other to take action against the anti-union behaviour of companies. For this purpose, it is particularly important to put pressure on employers along the companies' supply chain.

Furthermore, employers must not be allowed to profit from labour laws that render them immune from prosecution for violations of fundamental rights, as is the case in the Republic of Korea, where the criminal code also allows companies to sue unions and seek incarceration of union leaders under the charge of “obstruction of business”. Such situations require carefully designed actions based on a systematic and close collaboration between the IMF, its affiliates, the other GUFs, TUAC and ITUC. Most important, however, is international workers’ solidarity with a strongly committed organisation at the local level, failing which, no international solidarity action can be effective.

The IMF and its affiliates must go beyond mere coordination. Campaigns to effectively respond to violations of workers’ rights by TNCs or certain countries and regions must be promoted and led by the IMF. To make this possible, affiliates must be fully committed to mobilising their members and be capable of implementing common strategies in the context of their respective countries, which includes ensuring a communication flow to their members to support their mobilisation efforts. We can only respond to rights violations as soon as they arise if we have an effective system and membership support and understanding.

IMF will collaborate with its affiliates and with other GUFs, TUAC, ITUC and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) to:

- Enforce the protection of worker and trade union rights through IFAs, OECD guidelines, ILO instruments, and trade agreements that include the ILO core labour standards and social minimum standards as well as sanctions in case of non-compliance to complement mobilisation efforts on the ground;
- Develop strategies and promote joint actions to achieve binding intergovernmental regulations on the enforcement of minimum social standards. This will include mobilizing and additional efforts at international and national levels to promote the universal respect in law and practice of the ILO’s fundamental Conventions;
- Expose governments and companies that exploit workers and violate trade union rights, and develop issue-specific solidarity actions to reduce precarious work, subcontracting, two-tier wage systems, and legislative initiatives that seek to undermine workers’ rights;
- Disseminate information about trade union rights abuses immediately and effectively through a rapid response system;
- Establish solidarity networks locally, regionally and internationally;
- Establish a solidarity page on the IMF website to serve as a resource for solidarity action and information, including ILO complaint guidelines and campaign status updates, news and other materials; and
- Provide affiliates and partners with information on actions, outcomes, evaluations of achievements, and strategies for future work regarding the advancement of trade union rights.

IMF will assist its affiliates to ensure that:

- Rapid response is organized to any TNC attack on workers' rights through information and mobilisation of the employees of the same company in all its countries of operations, and united action is taken while also pursuing cooperation among the IMF affiliates in these countries.

IMF affiliates will:

- Mobilise their members in support of unions fighting company-sponsored unions, anti-union legislation, union-busting tactics and industrial relations disputes;
- Ensure that immediate information on rights violations is fed into the IMF's rapid response system, and that there are timely updates on developments and local actions;
- Commit themselves to actively participate in campaigns developed by the IMF and take joint actions with other national unions and other like-minded social actors;
- Include rights issues in training and educational materials to ensure that solidarity actions and rights awareness reach the shop-floor;
- Publicize rights abuses, solidarity efforts and action taken internationally; and
- Ensure that no benefit guaranteed to the employees of a TNC in one country is based on an attack on the rights of its employees in another country.

3.3.2 Fight for Equal Rights

All workers should enjoy equal rights irrespective of their sex, age, nationality, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion. Yet metal industry employers in many countries, including highly industrialised ones, continue to discriminate with impunity against workers precisely on those grounds. The IMF will work with its affiliates to eliminate discrimination in the workplace in all its forms. Many workers throughout the world are subjected to discrimination that deprives them of their rights to freedom of association and collective bargain. That is why IMF will focus its efforts on assisting affiliates to develop specific organizing strategies, e.g. to improve unionisation rates among women, migrant and young workers, particularly in EPZs, where labour rights continue to be abused and trade unionism is repressed. There is a clear and urgent need for unions to assess whether new approaches must be adopted to meet the needs and aspirations of women, young people, and migrant workers - groups that are underrepresented in metal unions, but that are entering the industry at an increasing rate. Changes need to be made to union structures, cultures and practices that discourage such workers from becoming union members to ensure that equal rights are extended to all workers.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, discrimination occurs if persons with disabilities cannot participate as fully-fledged members in society and if their human and workers' rights are violated. In particular, with respect to elderly workers, many countries need to intensify their struggle against discrimination and social exclusion of older, disabled and health-impaired workers from the labour market and further training.

Discrimination also means that women, migrant and young workers are over-represented in precarious employment. This reaches extreme levels in the case of migrant workers, particularly when dramatic poverty leaves them without protection against unprincipled and sometimes criminal organisations that exploit their vulnerability. The IMF will encourage affiliates to share strategies for making contact with and organizing migrant workers, and improving their working conditions by including them in collective bargaining.

The double burden of domestic work that is placed on women can force them into precarious employment situations, with adverse consequences for themselves, their families and communities. The IMF will give priority to highlighting the disproportionate impact precarious work has on women workers and to encouraging measures to address it, focusing in particular on the gender pay gap and the gender segmentation that leads to women being denied access to better jobs.

Women's representation at all levels of trade union organisation is still too low. Efforts by unions to organize women workers are hampered by structures that do not include women as leaders. The IMF will continue to work with its affiliates to redress this imbalance and assist them to remove barriers to women's representation in their union structures and electoral processes. An emphasis will be put on the need to encourage greater participation by young workers in union structures.

The IMF will:

- Assist its affiliates in leading the fight in the workplace against discrimination in all its forms;
- Support organizing activities of affiliates in EPZs and encourage the exchange of successful experiences between them;
- Cooperate with ITUC and other GUFs, particularly International Textile, Garment & Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF), in addressing the lack of union organisation in EPZs;
- Assist its affiliates in eliminating constraints that hinder persons with disabilities to get equal opportunities at the workplace. The IMF will also support programs that focus on issues concerning people with disabilities in all trade union and ILO activities;
- Assist affiliates to identify and remove barriers to women's equal participation and representation in their unions;
- Monitor and report on the impact of precarious work on women, migrant and young workers including encouraging affiliates to do their own gender analysis of precarious work and to take action to reduce the double burden of domestic work on women;
- Ensure that measures taken to improve conditions for precarious workers take particular account of the needs of women, migrant, and young workers;
- Provide opportunities for affiliates to share experiences and strategies for making contact with and organizing both internal and external migrant workers; and

- Raise awareness of the difficulties faced by young people in finding secure employment with good pay and working conditions, and support efforts by affiliates to respond.

3.3.3 Fight for safe workplaces

Every year more than two million people die from occupational accidents or work-related diseases. The safety of work varies enormously between countries, economic sectors and social groups. Deaths and injuries take a particularly heavy toll in developing nations. Downsizing, outsourcing, sub-contracting and temporary labour create bad working conditions. Although the physical workplace environment has improved considerably during the course of the last decades, millions of men and women around the world are still working in hazardous conditions. Therefore, based on the primacy of prevention, defending and promoting health and safety at work is a fundamental trade union task that all IMF affiliates should prioritise.

Alongside the difficulties to ban well-known hazards, such as asbestos, the introduction of new chemicals and new technologies, without sufficient research, constitutes new threats to the health and well-being of workers. The precautionary principle should also apply to nanomaterials, the hazardous nature of which has become more apparent in the light of many recent studies. Such precaution is all the more urgent because of the fact that these materials are used in many products, including clothes, cosmetics, composites, automobiles, spectacles, paint etc.

Occupational cancer is by far the most common work-related cause of death. It is a problem that does not ring alarm bells for corporate executives who only answer to shareholders at annual general meetings. Causes are covered up, bodies are buried, companies evade legal liabilities, and the killing continues as a result of preventable and predictable work-place exposures.

The IMF and affiliates must increase efforts to stop this from happening. It is essential to have effective health and safety committees in every workplace with knowledge of the workplace-specific hazards. Preventive actions must be based on research, evidence and strong health and safety laws that are properly promoted and enforced. Health and safety is a very important issue for trade unions. In general, organized workplaces are safer workplaces with better working conditions.

The international trade union movement must work in order to ensure that ILO conventions and codes of practice are incorporated into national legislation and collective bargaining agreements, and are respected in practice.

The IMF will encourage affiliates to develop organising strategies around safer and better workplaces. Such strategies can be linked to the campaign for decent work. The campaign for decent work should be extended to include the pursuit of fixed wages and permanent employment contracts, healthy and family-friendly working hours, protection against excessive demands on performance, the preservation of the workers' employability, preventive and participatory health and safety, and training and development.

The IMF will:

- Co-operate with ITUC, TUAC and GUFs to ensure that the ILO assists governments, employers and trade unions to improve knowledge and information about existing legislation on health and safety at work;
- Address occupational health and safety at regional, sectoral and company meetings;
- Continue to build the campaign for Zero Occupational Cancer;
- Keep campaigning for an international ban on the production, import, export and use of asbestos; and
- Continue to put pressure on national governments to implement transition programmes for workers displaced by the banning of asbestos, and to ensure that the treatment and compensation costs of workers suffering from asbestos-related diseases are borne by employers.

The IMF will assist the affiliates to:

- Inform and educate instructors on basic workplace health and safety, who will then teach and train stewards at plant level;
- Ensure that effective health and safety committees are set up in all workplaces;
- Use health and safety as a tool for organizing workers and building strong unions; and
- Develop strategies around HIV/Aids and other new epidemics.

3.4 Build a counterweight to the power of transnational corporations

TNCs, in their pursuit of profits, exert enormous pressure on workers with little regard for democratic, labour and social rights. Employers, supported by many governments and institutions of international governance, seek to shift business risks onto workers and reduce their social, economic, and environmental obligations.

To date trade unions have struggled to act as a counterweight to the enormous economic power and sophistication of TNCs. Cost reductions sought by TNCs frequently include a shift from secure to insecure forms of employment, fragmentation of collective bargaining, corporate restructuring, and abuse of human and workers' rights. This serves to heighten competition between workers and communities within and across nations and triggers a race to the bottom in standards.

There is an urgent need for more effective international solidarity and cooperation among metalworkers in TNC and along the TNC supply chains to reverse these trends. The IMF has considerable scope to challenge this situation and a range of experiences to draw on, including strategies and activities to strengthen the solidarity between workers across sectors and TNCs. Nevertheless, better tools, a better

exchange of information, and more mutual trust between workers need to be promoted by the IMF and its affiliates. This must be built on a critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of union organisation and corresponding networks, councils, and the resources available in each of the major TNCs. This analysis will be undertaken by the IMF Executive Committee, informed by the IMF regional and sectoral structures.

3.4.1 Strengthening union solidarity and cooperation across sectors and TNCs

A key role of the IMF is to build effective solidarity and cooperation among affiliated unions present in metalworking TNCs to ensure an equal playing field for workers, which goes far beyond minimum standards. To achieve this, the IMF and its affiliates must actively engage workers in TNCs and their supply chains and give them an opportunity to actively participate in day-to-day trade union work and cross-border activities.

Building relationships and strengthening solidarity on an ongoing basis with trade union representatives from different countries enhances the affiliates' ability to act jointly in crises, such as when the rights of workers are violated, during collective bargaining negotiations, when mass layoffs are carried out, or in the event of restructuring to prevent workers being played off against each other. The IMF uses global union networks and the IMF world company councils to build greater capacity for working together in defence of workers' interests across national boundaries.

Whenever a TNC announces redundancies or a decrease in working conditions in a given country and the workers and their unions directly affected are actively resisting these changes, the IMF will coordinate solidarity actions involving all countries where that TNC operates. Solidarity actions will include among other initiatives: information campaigns targeting workers and the society at large; the commitment by all unions not to accept the transfer of production from the country in conflict to another one; protest demonstrations in the different countries of operation of the TNC, and wherever possible interruption of production and/or of supplies. In those solidarity campaigns a decisive role will be played by the home country trade union

This is particularly important to build solidarity with workers in countries like China, where they strive for workers' rights and independent and democratic unions. In this context, it is also important to engage with non-IMF organisations such as the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) and its metal industry-organisations.

Another step is to institutionalise networks and IMF-world company councils in order to create representative, functioning, financially viable and organised global structures of workers' representation. In this respect, the IMF will resort to the experience made with company-related international cooperation in all regions.

The IMF continues to seek to establish IMF world company councils in TNCs. Whenever possible, financing of such councils will be negotiated with TNC management without compromising union inclusion and control. Management should play a role in these councils through regular meetings and providing information about the company's situation, policy and investment.

These IMF-world company councils shall be underpinned by union networks made up of the responsible trade union coordinators from different countries and / or local areas in which plants of the TNC are located. These networks shall assure that all unions can be part of the information exchange process.

At companies such as Volkswagen, Daimler, SKF and Rolls Royce world employee representations/world works councils have already been established, which consist of employee representatives. They were negotiated with and are funded by the respective company. Trade unions may be involved through an agreement or supportive trade union networks. IMF affiliates seek to engage with those councils to pursue IMF policies.

The most important benefit of this company-related, national, regional and international cooperation is the fact that trade union representatives from the company level can exchange information and reach agreed positions. In so doing, activities of national or local workers' representations may be coordinated internationally. Thus, the networks, world works councils and IMF-world company councils are a way of building solidarity and overcoming competition between workers in different plants of the same company.

The IMF will support and organise training measures that equip union representatives at company level and union officers in charge of TNC with international and intercultural competences. Here, the goal is to efficiently foster cooperation at the company level. The communication between company union representatives and their national trade union must be organised according to the practices in the respective country (e.g. by union officers in charge of certain sectors or companies).

Trade union networks, world employee councils/world works councils and IMF world company councils have the potential to develop into negotiating bodies. The IMF can support this where there is sufficient trade union strength and provided that it is mandated by the trade unions and trade unions are involved and clear IMF guidelines are adhered to. Building on previous experiences and debates, guidelines for the work of company networks need to be discussed and defined by the IMF. Consideration should be given to focusing resources and efforts in a number of key companies balanced across different sectors and countries.

Trade union networks, world works councils and IMF world company councils work within the broader context of IMF sectoral activities and must take into account the varying structures of production chains, and competition in the metal industries. Sectoral work brings together workers from companies that compete with one another to discuss developments and seek shared positions and joint strategies. These strategies should address management attempts to create competition between workers in the sector.

The IMF's regional sector-based meetings improve coordination by combining company and sector-level forums for workers, in support of global level activities. Developing sectoral and regional work around consistent responses to the challenges facing the industry's workers will be facilitated when it is done in concert with strengthening trade union links at the enterprise-level, based on an evaluation of the work done already.

In some countries, potential leverage to engage TNCs is available to unions through workers' capital in the form of pension and retirement funds. IMF affiliates, particularly those in TNC home countries also have a variety of national means to influence corporate governance. These tools can be used to promote and protect worker and trade union rights across global production chains, to fight corporate corruption, and to push for greater social accountability by corporations.

Global campaigns against TNCs that consistently violate worker and trade unions rights are essential to furthering the interests of workers. This requires the support of IMF affiliates, world councils, actions groups and networks, and making use of possible workers' capital and communication strategies.

To achieve strengthened union solidarity and cooperation across sectors and TNCs the IMF will:

- Pressure TNCs to take responsibility for working conditions in their operations and in their supply chains and to remove barriers to freedom of association;
- Build mutual understanding among affiliated unions present in metalworking TNCs to ensure an equal and level playing field for workers that goes far beyond minimum standards;
- Develop a TNC network strategy, working methods and tools, based on a critical analysis of the current networks, councils and available resources in each of the major TNCs. The strategy will include guidelines, to be developed by the Executive Committee, for the work of company networks. These will cover the roles of home country unions, IMF and other affiliates, avoiding co-optation by the companies, building the role of national unions, and tools/protocols for communication and action. The strategy will focus resources and efforts on a number of key companies that are distributed across different sectors and countries;
- Assist affiliates to form and coordinate global union networks at TNCs and/or the sectoral level through which employee representatives from the plant level and national unions can engage in a cross-border exchange of information and consultation on a regular basis;
- Coordinate activities and develop training and information material to build mutual trust and solidarity under the motto "United we stand – divided we fall!";
- Develop networks for information exchange and action that aim to be efficient, timely, accurate and accessible;
- Gather, analyse and distribute information on the metalworking industries, with particular focus on companies and industrial sectors where workers and members are concentrated, covering collective bargaining, technological changes, innovations on how production is organized, working time, pay and classification systems, and industrial actions;
- Work through TUAC and the ITUC to further strengthen mechanisms to influence corporate governance and socially responsible investment plans of pensions and retirement funds; and
- Work jointly with other GUFs, the ITUC, and TUAC to have structures of union representation in companies at the global level, together with rights to

consultation and information, explicitly recognised by the ILO and in international laws and regulations.

IMF affiliates will:

- Provide technical and political support to build and strengthen networks and for successful international coordination of information coming from the national and regional levels; and
- Engage members at the national level to build mutual trust and solidarity to ensure an international approach towards worker and trade union rights when confronting corporate strategies including during transnational restructuring processes.

3.4.2 Advance fundamental rights through International Framework Agreements

The IMF will seek to challenge TNCs and their supply chains by using IFAs, ILO instruments, OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, increased union cooperation and, in addition to international solidarity, cooperation with NGOs that share our aims to protect and promote worker and trade union rights. Trade union organization of worksites is an essential precondition to monitor and implement workers' rights. IFAs, however, do not replace the need for binding inter-governmental regulations to enforce core labour standards, or the need for national laws to enforce labour standards and to regulate the activities of the TNCs more effectively.

As instruments negotiated at the international level by GUFs in cooperation with their affiliates on one side and a TNC on the other, IFAs are important tools that the IMF and its affiliates can use to establish minimum labour standards across the operations of TNCs and their supply chains. The IMF has adopted a model International Framework Agreement along with policy recommendations covering four key areas: improving the content, initiating, negotiating, and implementation and enforcement.

Drawing on the experiences of the IFAs already negotiated with TNCs, the IMF will:

- Strengthen implementation, monitoring and enforcement through IMF structures and regional offices, and by training and involvement of affiliates with the aim of achieving best practices across TNCs that have signed framework agreements;
- After consultation with unions covered by the agreements, identify opportunities to strengthen existing agreements, and the options and means that are optimal for pursuing improvements of their content;
- Coordinate the involvement of affiliates in negotiating additional IFAs;
- Explore possible strategies to encourage resisting TNCs to negotiate, implement, and comply with IFAs; and
- Implement a training programme on IFAs, including a guide, to help affiliates use these instruments in accordance with IMF policy.

Cooperation of affiliates, particularly those in the home country of a TNC, is instrumental to such efforts.

3.5 Fight for sustainable trade, development and employment

At its Central Committee in 2003, the IMF adopted a policy stating that equitable and sustainable growth and development must be based on the following four pillars:

- Job creation and purchasing power;
- Re-regulation of the global financial market, including among other instruments a Tobin Tax;
- Debt cancellation; and
- Reform of the WTO and international financial institutions.

Today more than ever, these are the indispensable components of a development agenda based on social justice, an adequate strategy of fighting against poverty, fair international rules to regulate trade and investments, and an effective multilateral system. This is what the IMF will continue to pursue together with its affiliates, other international trade union organisations, and like-minded social and political organisations.

It has to be recognized that very little has been achieved by the international trade union movement since our last Congress in terms of democratic world governance, respect of human and workers' rights, and the fight against poverty and workers' exploitation. This applies in particular to trade negotiations: governments give no consideration to workers and pay no more than lip service to employment and development concerns.

Even if the joint efforts of trade unions internationally have achieved some progress, like the integration of social standards into the principles of the World Bank's International Finance Corporation, it is difficult to see any positive concrete implementation. In practice, the International Monetary Fund continues to advocate deregulatory policies that undermine labour rights. The International Metalworkers' Federation strongly reiterates the trade unions' demand to incorporate fundamental labour rights in bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. This however is not enough without effective enforcement mechanisms that take into account the particular situation of countries with poor legal protection for the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively.

The opening of markets should be an instrument for sustainable development. For this to be possible, industrial policies that promote employment are indispensable. In fact, the fundamental link between market opening and sustainable growth is still missing. That link is jobs, good jobs for all, and a fair distribution of the wealth for the workers who create it.

In its actions on trade, the IMF working with its affiliates will focus on employment and economic development and search for fairness by taking into account possible conflict of interests between workers caused by market opening. Creating quality employment for all to generate wealth and redistributing income to reduce

inequalities is an objective that is equally important for industrialised and developing countries. The IMF will coordinate its affiliates' efforts to make this the priority in the trade policies of all governments. The sustainable growth we stand for cannot happen at the expenses of others, and we will fight for balanced solutions that do not damage weaker parties. It is the role of the IMF, particularly through its Working Party on Trade, Employment and Development, to build a solidarity strategy to help harmonize the legitimate interests of workers in the North and the South. The IMF will continue promoting a transparent debate among its affiliates to address the concerns arising from trade liberalisation that may impact negatively on jobs and rights in some countries while protecting employment in others.

Governments have to include development and labour rights issues in trade negotiations. These must include explicit consideration of the expected employment repercussions of trade liberalisation. Together with its affiliates the IMF will continue to demand that governments give serious estimates of potential new jobs generated by market opening and foreign direct investment agreements. This is indispensable to avoid ungrounded or misleading evaluations of the impact of increased trade

The IMF, in close collaboration with other GUFs, the ITUC and TUAC, will work to influence international institutions to adopt a democratic system of multilaterally agreed rules that fairly take into account the different needs and conditions of countries, and of different groups within countries. The lack of a real development agenda has made any progress in the Doha Round negotiations impossible, while bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) increasingly promote the interests of corporations and their allies at the expense of workers and citizens. Since the last IMF Congress there has been successful resistance often led by trade unions to some of the proposed agreements. These struggles, are important examples of unity and solidarity between workers in different regions on which the IMF can build future actions.

Sustainable development should be a key objective in the strategies of developing countries for attracting foreign investments. It should also be an indicator of success, along with the creation of quality employment and of a fair system of public social protection. The IMF will coordinate joint action and promote solidarity between its affiliates in developing and industrialised countries against the establishment of special economic zones where the incentives granted to TNCs cause the suppression of fundamental human and worker rights and make workers' living and employment conditions extremely precarious.

The IMF will work in close collaboration with other GUFs, TUAC and ITUC, and other like-minded social movements to ensure that:

- Global financial markets are regulated, including as an initial step better disclosure of transactions, strengthened monitoring schemes and regulation of leveraging;
- Sustainable development be brought into trade and investment deals, access to markets be fair and balanced, and transparent monitoring mechanisms of already signed agreements be put in place;
- Impact and sustainability assessments along the social and economic development dimension of possible trade agreements be carried out prior to the conclusion of negotiations;

- Employment repercussions of trade liberalisation be considered by governments in the negotiations of multilateral and bilateral trade agreements and assessed with full involvement of trade unions; and
- Universal respect of fundamental workers' and trade union rights as set out in the ILO 1998 Declaration be included in all bilateral and multilateral agreements on trade and investments along with effective enforcement mechanisms.

The IMF and its affiliates will work together to:

- Unite metalworkers at the regional and international level in the search for fair solutions to conflicts of interests in trade liberalisation that would damage weaker parties;
- Build solidarity among affiliates against the possible negative effects of market opening on employment in developing as well as industrialised countries;
- Challenge government resistance to transparently assess, together with social partners, the potential employment impact of trade deals; and
- Promote information and awareness raising campaigns among workers and citizens on the economic advantages that companies, as well as the countries where they operate, can get from the respect of fundamental workers' rights everywhere.

The IMF will assist its affiliates in:

- Monitoring the impact of FTAs on employment and working conditions in metal working industries;
- Mobilising their memberships, in cooperation with their respective national centres, and like-minded political parties and social movements, against proposed FTAs that would undermine development, workers rights, good jobs and public services for working families; and
- Fighting against precarious employment conditions caused by foreign investments.

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