



# International Metalworkers' Federation **Minutes**

31st IMF World Congress, Vienna, Austria, May 2005





International Metalworkers' Federation

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**31<sup>ST</sup> IMF WORLD CONGRESS  
VIENNA, AUSTRIA  
MAY 22-26, 2005**

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**PROPOSED AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Congress by IMF President Jürgen Peters
2. Adoption of Proposed Agenda
3. Obituaries
4. Adoption of Standing Orders
5. Election of Officers/Chairpersons of Congress
6. Confirmation of Committees
  - a. Credentials Committee and Tellers
  - b. Resolutions Committee
  - c. Motions & Rules Committee
  - d. Action Programme Committee
7. Report of the Secretariat
8. Report by Credentials Committee and Tellers
9. Amendments to IMF Rules
10. Statutory Elections
  - a. President
  - b. General Secretary
  - c. Executive Committee members
  - d. Auditing Committee members
11. Action Programme
12. Resolutions
13. Any other business

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**SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2005**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**



The Congress opened with a thrilling musical and dance presentation entitled "A Globalized World" by dance artists and the youth choir of Performing Arts Studios Vienna. A backdrop video on wide-screen media, produced by Manfred Anderle and Peter Heimerl of the Austrian Metal and Textile Workers' Union, depicted a melding of ancient cultures from every continent and the modern world as we know it today. The interlude between each of the four speakers during the Opening Ceremonies consisted of very creative performances by the singers and dancers.

IMF President **Jürgen Peters** welcomed the affiliates to Vienna, extending a warm greeting to special guest Heinz Fischer, the President of the Federal Republic of Austria, who was standing by to offer his own greetings to the delegates. Vienna was a magnificent city with a rich history of social commitment resulting in huge benefits to its citizens. Between the world wars of the last century, representatives of the labour movement in what was then called "Red Vienna" put their ideas about a better standard of living for working people into practice in terms of regional policy, municipal policies which still survive as a model for modern life. Tax revenues on luxury items of the rich paid for services for the poor, including low-income housing, the building of schools, libraries and other community amenities. These achievements were unique for the era of the 1920s and 1930s and represented physical proof of respect for human rights and the worth of workers.

Therefore, Vienna was indeed the perfect city in which to hold IMF's 31<sup>st</sup> Congress and Peters hoped the delegates would be inspired as they took in the incredible architecture, cultural events and other sights Vienna had to offer.

He reminded the affiliates that the last IMF Congress had taken place shortly after the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup> in New York City. Everyone agreed that the terrorist attack on thousands of innocent people that day was a loathsome crime which required that the perpetrators of those attacks be caught and brought to justice. However, the retaliation by the U.S. government was neither successful nor fair; in fact, it was wrong-- wrong for Iraq, wrong for the U.S., and totally against international law. Over the last four years of military engagement, it had not brought peace nor had it made the world a safer place. War was not the answer. History had proven that time and time again.

"In order to crush terrorism we must fight the cause," Peters said. Poverty, despair and the growing gap between the rich and the poor were what fueled the fire of terrorism. The developing countries were the real losers in a world order which encouraged globalization without built-in social standards. Those countries were promised prosperity but shocking statistics proved otherwise. The 48 least developed countries today had only 0.4 percent of world trade. Almost half the population of the world lived on two euros per day, 815 million people were undernourished, and more than 325 million children did not attend school. One-fourth of the world's population did not even have access to clean drinking water. "We have to change that," Peters insisted, but how to go about it was the question. He stressed that the concept of globalization was not the problem in and of itself. It was "globalization without a human face."

The economic interests of capital owners and the industrialized nations had led to neo-liberal philosophies which felt that social regulations were barriers to giving free rein to market forces. However, pure capitalism would fragment society and widen the gap between the rich and the poor. It was up to the trade unions to play a decisive role in ensuring a more sustainable economy by representing the interests of the workers who had a huge stake in the economy. "We have to be a counter force to the supremacy of capital interests," Peters said. The basis for that was solidarity-- joining together in activities to organize and mobilize workers, particularly young members with the goal of becoming an effective force for change. At the national level, unions had enjoyed a margin of success in terms of workers' rights under very difficult circumstances-- through collective bargaining, through the political process and, when necessary, through strikes and solidarity actions. The international union movement must work in a unified fashion to overcome the down side of globalization. The 31<sup>st</sup> Congress and the IMF Action Programme outlined a host of activities which would achieve those goals.

The delegates were entertained by a video/musical rendition by the performers entitled "IMF in Action" in a creative display of dancers doing various metalworking jobs-- hammering and drilling and welding.

General Secretary **Marcello Malentacchi** then addressed the assembly by first thanking the Austrian host union, GMT, for its generous hospitality and a spectacular Congress program. He welcomed the dignitaries present from other international unions, including the EMF and the ICFTU, but saved his warmest greetings to the 130 women delegates in the audience, the largest delegation of women ever to attend an IMF Congress.

"In these troubled times, it is our solidarity that gives us hope," he said, as he explained the common purpose which united all trade unionists-- to provide a better life for workers. Yet, in a world with unchecked global market forces, downsizing, offshoring and

outsourcing, much of the work done by trade unions today was dominated by efforts to simply preserve jobs. Rich multinational companies moved operations to the developing world to employ cheap labor and exploit people in countries which lacked basic workers' rights, trying to pit worker against worker. Governments scrambled to gain favor with these companies in order to avoid losing capital investments which resulted in countries competing with each other in a race to the bottom. But when workers across borders communicated and mobilized against these unfair tactics through union solidarity, much could be achieved in terms of exposing their underlying greed and disrespect for human and workers' rights. He gave examples of successful strikes and other solidarity actions which forced companies to back down. GM workers in Germany and Sweden were supported by GM workers in Brazil; BHP Billiton workers in Australia supported workers of the same company in Mozambique and Peru.

Between 1980 and 2000, the largest MNCs increased sales and profits fourfold, yet increased jobs by only 23 percent. They had enormous bargaining power and exercised that power by threatening to close down plants and move offshore. Workers were intimidated into taking concessions and temporary jobs. Even as the world struggled to meet millennium development goals, inequality increased both between and within countries. Women workers especially were forced to survive in an informal economy. Twenty-seven million workers were employed in Export Processing Zones and suffered state-sanctioned abuse of workers' rights. Ninety percent of EPZ workers were women. In China, abuse of human and trade union rights was widespread and formed the basis of huge challenges for trade unions. In Colombia, hundreds of trade union activists were killed or simply disappeared each year.

Work-related deaths totaled 2.2 million last year, including 100,000 caused by asbestos exposure. Malentacchi pointed out the video monitor on stage which counted the number of asbestos-related deaths which occurred every day. The counter was set at zero at the opening of the Congress and would keep a running tally of deaths which occurred throughout the week. The subject of asbestos was on the Congress agenda including a resolution to be presented and discussed.

With these alarming statistics affecting workers worldwide, Malentacchi said that trade unions were more important now than ever before if there was any hope of securing safe jobs, fair representation, and decent wages and working conditions. Solidarity across borders was the only way to fight exploitation and achieve universal core labour standards, and each and every affiliate was charged with the responsibility of working together to advance IMF's goals.

GMT President **Rudolf Nürnberger** recalled the fact that the IMF Congress had convened in Vienna twice in the past 80 years, in 1924 and 1964, and he was especially pleased to welcome the delegates back again. During those eight decades, the IMF had increased its membership tenfold. The world had survived fascism and a devastating World War; in fact, this week Austrians celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II and a lengthy period of peace. In addition, the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the E.U. last year had finally put an end to political division in Europe. However, not all areas of the world enjoyed the same. Natural disasters, regional wars, and the continued violation of human rights and exploitation of workers remained on the agenda in many areas, particularly in the age of globalization. Therefore, "trade union solidarity and the fight for a fair world are still necessary," **Nürnberger** said.

Exactly what was "globalization?" It was not just an abstract term for something happening far away which did not affect people; on the contrary, workers were affected by

globalization and its international consequences in their daily lives with employers demanding more work for less pay under the guise of "international competitiveness" and workers' rights to fair wages, decent working conditions and core standards were considered an obstruction in the path toward wealth. **Nürnberger** expanded on Malentacchi's comments about the asbestos industry as a clear example of how the "holy grail" of competition was a detriment to workers. With good reason, many industrialized countries had already banned the use and production of asbestos. But that resulted in merely offshoring the work to the developing countries. The fact was that every five minutes a human life was sacrificed in the asbestos industry for the sake of corporate profits. This disgraceful practice could only be stopped by a worldwide ban on asbestos. And no one except the world's trade unions was in a better position to lead that fight.

But national efforts could not succeed alone. Binding global rules of work had to be included in WTO agreements. With the successful conclusion of almost a dozen International Framework Agreements, the IMF had developed a tool which guaranteed respect for basic workers' rights in facilities all across the globe. And this strategy of trade union solidarity on common goals must be continued.

**Nürnberger** concluded his greeting by promising an interesting Congress during the week ahead, and with great pride introduced the final speaker of the evening, a longtime friend and advocate of the GMT, the President of the Federal Republic of Austria, **Heinz Fischer**.

**President Fischer** welcomed the delegation to Austria, a country which traditionally had a strong trade union movement. He described the IMF Congress as "the worldwide general assembly of metalworkers representing 25 million members. A meeting of such scope encompassed the very essence of freedom-- the freedom to assemble and work together to improve workers wages, working conditions and basic freedoms. He was very proud of his close ties to the union movement; in fact, Fischer was a 40-year member of the Austrian Confederation of Trade Unions which supported him during his presidential election campaign. 2005 marked the anniversary of ACTU's re-foundation after the end of World War II and Austria's rebirth as an independent, democratic nation.

There were lots of parallels between a strong trade union movement and a stable democracy. The two were inextricably linked by common goals of human rights and social progress. "Without social justice, you cannot have political stability," Fischer said. His approach to politics was based on his vision of an ideal world-- a world where the worth of each person was equal and had a right to share in the opportunities of life. In reality, however, this was not so. One just had to look at the history of economic development based on a pyramid structure with a large base occupied by the poor and a very narrow top occupied by the wealthy few. It was time to close the gap between the top and bottom, thus the need for strong trade unions which worked to bring about more balance in the economic structure of the world. Governments had a role to play in providing the basic framework in which this concept could develop, but the trade unions were the driving force for social equality as the voice of people who could not stand up for themselves.

Globalization had changed the rules of the game in the competitive environment sweeping the globe. It was dangerous, Fischer said, to allow economic power to be concentrated in just a few hands which had the ability to compromise even democratic governments and make them weaker. That was why governments and trade unionists must take up the challenge to ensure that the human component of society was equal to the economic component. The MNCs must respect international labour standards which banned child labour and slave labor, but also sought to protect the environment which everyone shared.

Governments made excuses by saying they had no money for social protections and advancements, yet somehow they managed to have plenty of money for arms expenditures - an industry which exceeded the trillion-dollar mark last year, half of which was spent in the United States. "Governments need to put their resources to better use," Fischer said.

There was cause for optimism, however. Progress had been made over the last 20 to 30 years since trade unions had enjoyed a resurgence: The Cold War was over; there was virtually no dictatorship left in Europe. Living conditions in hugely-populated countries like China and India had improved. It was his belief that the next 20 to 30 years held even more promise.

The youth choir took the stage in a charming closing musical arrangement, holding hands and singing "We Are The World - We Are The IMF."



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**MONDAY MORNING SESSION**  
**May 23, 2005**

**ITEM 1:     OPENING OF CONGRESS BY IMF PRESIDENT**  
**JÜRGEN PETERS**

The First Plenary Session of the 31<sup>st</sup> IMF World Congress convened on Monday, 23 May, 2005, at 9:08 a.m., President JÜRGEN PETERS presiding. On behalf of all delegations as well as the Secretariat, Peters thanked the Austrian affiliates for their hard work in hosting the Congress and related meetings and activities. Austria was a beautiful venue which offered a wide range of cultural attractions which everyone could enjoy, and the Austrians had not overlooked a single detail in helping the Secretariat prepare for the various events which would take place throughout the week.

The thrust of his opening remarks centered around the rapid changes taking place in the world economy and the emergence of a **"new form of global capitalism"** which was more powerful and more productive than ever before. It was very efficient in terms of the production of goods and services; however, it was a total failure in terms of the just distribution of wealth derived by such increased production. Theoretically, with such massive production levels, people worldwide should have enough to live on in terms of food, clothing, basic housing, schools and medical care. At the same time, enough knowledge was at hand to successfully combine growth with environmental protection. But such was not the case.

Workers were being exploited as was the environment in the quest to make the rich even more prosperous while impoverishing not only the poor but the working class of the world. It was "globalization without a human face," Peters said-- globalization based on the pillar of a neoliberal ideology. Multinationals were calling for deregulation and a reduction in social benefits worldwide. The neoliberal model was being implemented everywhere with MNCs threatening to displace workers and move facilities to countries offering cheap labour, all in the never-ending drive for more profits. Whole sectors of the population were being blackmailed by unscrupulous management tactics. Governments were giving in to the pressure in the form of tax reductions. Countries were beginning to compete with one another in an attempt to bring in more jobs in hopes of boosting their economies. Such policies were misguided because more and more the economic and social foundations of society were being undermined.

"The trade unions must react stronger than ever before to these circumstances," Peters insisted, and action must take place at both the national and international level to remind governments that they existed in order to serve the people, not the bottom lines of corporations and shareholders. It was a primary task of the IMF and other global unions to fight for a better and more human world, both in the developing countries and the industrialized nations. Profits did not symbolize the true wealth of a society; solidarity, respect for workers' rights as well as their skills, and protection of the planet in which we lived-- those were the things which measured the success of a nation. It was the task, indeed the responsibility of the world's trade unions to demand that governments pursue

more democratic and sustainable development. A new architecture in global financial markets was needed, including the writing off of debt for the poorest nations and more control over banks and capital funds, as well as the introduction of a tax on transnational financial flows. More equitable world trade policies needed to be implemented which not only gave developing countries access to the markets of the rich countries but also issued binding core labour standards on the MNCs as well as host governments.

Since the last Central Committee meeting in Cape Town, the Action Programme Committee had striven to integrate **new strategies for an alternative form of globalization** into the IMF's activities. Such strategies would be the focus of the Congress in terms of determining the feasibility of various activities. Topics for debate would include, number one, the implementation of internationally valid social standards. Because social standards were an important part of human rights and trade union rights, it was imperative that the IMF pursue this goal which would help ensure the connection of progress to economic development and also secure humane working and living conditions worldwide.

Demanding core labour standards was an important part of that goal. The ILO had adopted a declaration on the basic principles of what constituted acceptable conditions in 1998. As a result, core labour standards had become part and parcel of universal human rights, including the banning of child labour and forced labour, freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, as well as the principle of nondiscrimination in the workplace. Furthermore, the IMF wanted to include additional demands such as adequate compensation, non-excessive working hours as well as acceptable working conditions, particularly as they relate to occupational health and safety.

Unfortunately, efforts to ensure that ILO standards be included in WTO agreements had failed so far. "But we're not giving up," Peters said. Thus, the concept of **International Framework Agreements** had become a top priority for the IMF because they offered an alternative way of guaranteeing core standards be implemented. If the ILO was hesitant or politically unable or unwilling to broaden the definition of standards, then the drafting of IFAs would accomplish some measure of equality and fairness at least within the world's metal industry. That was a step in the right direction. Negotiating such agreements was not easy, either with companies operating in the developing countries or MNCs operating in more industrialized countries like Germany. Employers were only willing to adopt one-sided but uncontrolled codes of conduct. Such agreements were dubious at best because they left the door wide open for broken promises and were often agreed to just for show. In fact, they rarely included any semblance of core labour standards, particularly when it came to workers' rights to join a union. Therefore, a lot of work still needed to be done to convince people of the need to work within the context of IFAs, even in the industrialized countries where most MNCs had headquarters.

Some progress had been made, however, especially in areas where the shop stewards had been brought on board and understood the benefits of IFAs. The IMF had successfully negotiated 11 IFAs and 10 more were in the pipeline, which was twice as many as reported two years ago in Cape Town. It was a never-ending struggle, however, because managements fought such agreements, particularly the requirement that subcontractors and components suppliers be included. They simply refused to accept the responsibility for compliance by such suppliers. But the bottom line for the IMF was that minimum standards be part of every agreement.

To that end, IMF headquarters needed to be kept apprised of all negotiation efforts by the affiliates and better communication was needed in that regard. "Negotiating IFAs is one

thing," said Peters, but implementing and controlling them was quite another. The real work began after the document was signed. Increased monitoring was vital, particularly in terms of keeping track of violations. This necessitated the development of training programs among the affiliates, including shop stewards and the workers themselves. National and regional networks should be put in place to facilitate such training programs, because the more agreements were implemented, the better the chances of creating precedent in the industry.

Another focus of the Congress was **increased trade union representation** of workers--grassroots organizing. The IMF had reported much success with the development of World Councils. However, such councils met on an irregular basis which compromised the effectiveness and continuity of their work. In order to correct the situation, the IMF had formulated a plan to help develop national, regional and international network structures. Better communication could be accomplished through the establishment of full-time as well as part-time trade union officers and representatives who could get together between council meetings. Having more people on the ground to provide training, materials and financial resources would strengthen IMF's image as a global trade union in the eyes of workers seeking more representation in their work environment. This was particularly important in the special economic zones where a lot of multinationals relocated production facilities precisely because trade unions were weak or non-existent. Good structures had already been created in many regions and subregions, but they needed to be put to better use. History had shown that decisions made on the internationally must be related to the rank and file in a way that was both practical and intelligible. Successful networking among and between the affiliates and the IMF was the key to providing future activities to accomplish specific goals in the regions.

Speaking of regions, Peters said that more and more the IMF needed to integrate **China** into the mix. Almost all multinationals had set their sights on China as the next frontier in which to expand production and have a share in the enormous Chinese market. If a domestic market could be developed there, that would be fine. But the goal of these multinationals was not that altruistic; indeed, their goal was to build up capacity in order to export back into the markets of the developed world. This would lead to excess capacity in many industries-- auto, steel, electronics--resulting in cutthroat competition which would lead to massive job losses. The main priority for China should be better living standards and increased purchasing power to mirror economic development. "We need to ensure that China doesn't become just a production facility exporting to the rest of the world," Peters said.

A trade union force was needed to counteract the exploitation of regions like China where authoritarian governments ruled with an iron fist. Official trade unions in China were controlled by the state and did virtually nothing to protect workers' rights. It was necessary for those existing unions to change their role in Chinese society. Progress had begun, in fact, where some trade unions were beginning to reassess their role and demand more autonomy. The IMF should take this opportunity to instill trade union values within those groups and help them develop into a real force for workers. Peters felt that the Executive Committee should try and set up a working group for that purpose which would be the impetus for the initiation of specific activities and information-sharing with the workers in China.

Another important task of the Congress involved two major **changes in the Rules**. First, a proposal had been constructed for a change in the structure of affiliation dues. The second change concerned the addition of six women as members of the Executive Committee. As far as the dues structure was concerned, the goal was to equalize the

influence of affiliates with fewer resources than others. This would give the IMF greater stability and allow it to plan activities more efficiently. The second change regarding additions to the Executive Committee addressed the issue of equal representation of women workers within the IMF leadership. Therefore, one new member per region would be added and that member would be female. "The voice of women workers must be heard," Peters said, if the IMF was to be truly representative of all workers. Indeed, such a move would be extremely valuable in recruiting and mobilizing women workers around the world.

In conclusion, Peters reiterated that it was the task of the trade unions to fight for a more human and better world, to fight for **globalization with a human face**. Together with the ICFTU and the entire worldwide trade union movement, the IMF demanded alternatives to modern globalization as it existed in the world today. In order to be effective, it was necessary to pool resources and knowledge with other global union federations and cooperate across borders. International activities must be linked with day-to-day trade union activities in order to be universally understood and accepted by workers, governments and employers alike. And in order to implement IMF's Action Programme, it was imperative that the affiliates be an integral part of the decisions made on their behalf.

### **INTERVENTION by Fritz VERZETNITSCH, President of the Austrian Trade Union Confederation ÖGB**

Before moving to the next agenda item, Peters introduced a very special guest, Fritz VERZETNITSCH, President of the Austrian Trade Union Confederation, who welcomed the affiliates to Vienna on behalf of the Austrian metalworkers' unions. Actually, 2005 represented the third time Austria had had the privilege of hosting an IMF Congress, starting in 1924, then again in 1964 and now in 2005.

The Congress was taking place as the world celebrated the end of World War II and the fall of the Nazi regime in 1945. That was when the free trade union movement really began to grow. History had proven that it was essential that every social movement and political party be assessed according to what it was prepared to do for democracy and for working people. He felt that "Advancing Workers' Rights" was an appropriate theme for the Congress and pointed out that the number of unemployed workers in Europe was the same as IMF's total membership-- 25 million people. Therefore, first and foremost, the biggest challenge for unionists today was to ensure that everybody had a decent-paying job.

Employers were always looking to cut production costs and the first target was the workers who were played one against another in a bid for higher profit margins. But these companies must be held accountable in terms of social standards, workers' rights, and environmental protections. That was the job of the WTO. And if the WTO did not bring pressure to bear on the MNCs who violated global standards, then it was up to the trade unions to do so. He quoted from a recent study which compared the wages of an Austrian politician to those of a politician in the Ukraine. A member of parliament in Austria grossed about 7,000 Euros while a Ukrainian politician at the same level received about 100 Euros. Huge inequities existed, yet companies were still crying for cheaper and cheaper wage costs.

And where did the governments stand in the equation? Why were they so eager to finance war but not the eradication of poverty, Verzetnitsch asked. People did not want war; they wanted to see their hopes come to fruition and their children succeed. That was why social justice worldwide must be the goal of the trade unions because "without us, the voices of the oppressed will never be heard." He said that trade unions were one of the last

remaining institutions to strive for participation for all and the exclusion of no one. Corporate social responsibility was not just a buzz word but a goal which we must all strive to achieve. Human dignity was more important than corporate interest. He pointed to the campaign against the use of asbestos in the workplace as a perfect example of an issue which was now being brought to the world's attention. This was a project which each affiliate could be proactive about, first within his or her own country and then throughout the world in the spirit of solidarity.

He concluded by again thanking the IMF for choosing Vienna as the venue for the Congress and expressed his wish for a successful week.

## **ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AGENDA**

There being no additions or comments, the Proposed Agenda for the Congress **was adopted**.

## **ITEM 3: OBITUARIES**

The delegates arose and observed a moment of silent tribute to the memory of their fallen colleagues as the names were shown on the video monitors as follows:

Dan Benedict, IMF and CAW, Canada  
Karl Casserini, IMF, Switzerland  
Han Dekker, CNV Bedrijvenbond, Netherlands  
Inge Granqvist, SIF, Sweden  
Dennis McDermott, CAW and Canadian Labour Congress, Canada  
Costica Mivu, U-Metal, Romania  
Mahmood Ahmed Qureshi, Pakistan Automobile Engineering and Metalworkers' Federation, Pakistan  
Sohan Lal Passey, Tata Workers' Union and Indian National Trade Union Congress, India  
Claudio Sabattini, FIOM-CGIL Italy  
Agostino Tarabusi, SMUV/FTMH/UNIA, Switzerland  
Henry Van Sichem, Curaçao Federation of Workers, Curaçao  
Fausto Vigevani, FIOM-CGIL, Italy  
Stephen P. Yokich, UAW, USA  
Frank Souza, IAM, USA  
Jan-Åke Olsson, Svenska Metall, Sweden  
Walter Weigl, GMT, Austria  
Karl Gärtner, IMF (IMF chief interpreter), Switzerland  
R. K. Samantrai, SMEWFI, India  
Victor Reuther, UAW, USA  
Dorel Racolta, U-Metal, Romania  
Muhammad Sharif, AEMF, Pakistan  
Nazim Tur, Dok Gemi-Is, Turkey  
José Domingos Cardoso, CNM/CUT, Brazil  
Leonard Woodcock, UAW, USA  
John Christensen, UAW, USA  
Yurii THYKHONOV (President), Ukrainian Shipbuilding Trade Union - USTU, Ukraine  
Yuly NOVIKOV (former President), Automobile & Farm Machinery Workers' Union - AFW, Russia  
Ron TODD, General Secretary of the T&G, Great Britain

#### **ITEM 4: ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS**

President Peters pointed out that the Standing Orders contained in the delegate packets were the rules by which the Congress would be governed. **So adopted.**

#### **ITEM 5: ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF CONGRESS**

It was **agreed** that chairmanship of the various sessions of Congress would alternate between the following individuals:

Monday Afternoon - Rudi Nürnbergger (GMT - Austria)  
Tuesday Morning - Fernando Lopez (CNM/CUT - Brazil)  
Tuesday Afternoon - Tom Buffenbarger (IAMAW - USA)  
Wednesday Morning - Michael Leahy (General Sec'y-Community)  
Wednesday Afternoon - Rudi **Nürnbergger** will conclude.

#### **ITEM 6: CONFIRMATION OF CONGRESS COMMITTEES**

The composition of the four working committees of Congress was determined according to IMF Rules. The individuals assigned to fill those slots on the committee were **confirmed** as follows:

**(a) Credentials Committee:**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Belgium | Marc DeWilde, CCMB                                 |
| Malta   | Charles Agius, General Workers' Union              |
| Kenya   | Charles Natili, Kenya Engineering Workers' Union   |
| Sweden  | Margareta Zanden, Sif                              |
| Russia  | Andrey Chekmenev, Russian Defense Industry Workers |
| USA     | Gerry Fernandez, USWA                              |

**(b) Resolutions Committee:**

|         |                                  |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| Canada  | Carol Phillips, CAW              |
| Ghana   | Napoleon D.K. Kpoh, ICU          |
| U.K.    | Michael Walsh, Community         |
| India   | Sarde Sudharshan Rao, SMEWFI     |
| Italy   | Alessandra Mecozzi, FLM          |
| Norway  | Atle Hoie, FF                    |
| Ukraine | Anatoliy Taranchuk, "Machmetall" |

**(c) Motions and Rules Committee:**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Australia    | Julius Roe, AMWU                            |
| Brazil       | Antonio Goncalves, CNTM                     |
| Canada       | Carol Phillips, CAW                         |
| Czech Rep.   | Lucie Studnicna, MFCR                       |
| Denmark      | Jens Bundvad, Co-industri                   |
| Germany      | Michael Sunnus, IG Metall                   |
| Japan        | Hisashige Danno, IMF-JC                     |
| Singapore    | Cyrille Tan Soo Leng, IMF Singapore Council |
| South Africa | Hlokoza Motau, NUMSA                        |
| Spain        | Javier Urbina, MCA-UGT                      |
| USA          | Owen Herrstadt, IAMAW                       |

**(d) Action Programme Committee:**

|              |                                |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Austria      | Manfred Anderle, GMT           |
| Brazil       | Fernando Lopes, CNM-CUT        |
| France       | Christian Pilichowski, FTM-CGT |
| Germany      | Claudia Rahman, IG Metall      |
| India        | Ramasamy Kuchelan, WPTUC       |
| Japan        | Hisashige, IMF-JC              |
| Russia       | Gennady Trudov, STCM/EWU       |
| South Africa | Hlokoza Motau, NUMSA           |
| Sweden       | Jyrki Raina, Nordic Metal      |
| USA          | Steve Beckman, UAW             |

## **ITEM 7: REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT**

General Secretary Marcello MALENTACCHI began his report on the activities of the IMF by first thanking the Austrian affiliates, the GMT, for hosting the Congress, which had convened in Vienna every 40 years since 1924, and expressed his hope that future generations of metalworkers would also be invited back again to enjoy the many beautiful sights Vienna had to offer.

Since the last Congress in Sydney, many parts of the world had faced some bleak realities: terrorist attacks, war, economic crises, environmental catastrophes and social unrest. Neoliberal globalization had swept the globe and continued to dominate. Organized labour, once a symbol of democracy and collective interests, was under attack. People seeking a fairer and more inclusive society were increasingly frustrated by the lack of realistic alternatives. Young people felt more and more disenfranchised leaving them with a sense of insecurity about the future.

The IMF Congress was designed to be a venue wherein discussion and debate could take place which led to concrete plans which would move labour's agenda forward in an attempt to address these problems and create a better life for the metalworkers of the world. "But the Congress is not the end of the road," Malentacchi said. It was a time to regroup, to focus, to gain new impetus through the sharing of experiences, to recommit one's efforts help each other. And as the 31<sup>st</sup> Congress convened, Malentacchi reflected upon the last four years and what had and had not been accomplished. The printed Report of the Secretariat provided a detailed account of the work undertaken by the IMF since the last meeting in terms of implementing IMF's Action Programme, and he wanted to highlight some of the more salient points covered in the report.

First of all, the concept of **International Framework Agreements** (IFAs), which had been identified as a top priority for the IMF as far back as the San Francisco Congress, had been a major area of work for the IMF in recent years. He reported that eleven IFAs had been signed by major employers thus far, which exceeded the number signed by any other Global Union Federation. This was no small achievement. However, all eleven agreements covered companies within Western Europe, which meant that all affiliates needed to redouble their efforts in seeking IFAs within their own countries, especially in the U.S. and Japan where many of the largest transnationals in the metal industry were based.

There was also a lot more work to be done in the implementation and monitoring of the agreements in order to really be effective in protecting workers' rights, but they had provided some measure of success. For example, at a DITAS plant in Turkey in 2003 and a Mahle plant in Brazil in 2004, IFAs were used to resolve violations of workers' rights to

freedom of association. Model agreements were available which outlined the fundamental principles which should be included in IFAs. Education, training and special negotiators were also readily available. The Africa Regional Office had conducted a workshop on IFAs just last year which was attended by shop stewards from European companies operating in the region. Similar efforts were undertaken in India, South Korea, Brazil, Japan and Germany. "In today's global economy, we need to intensify our work in this area," Malentacchi said, which would require more commitment from IMF affiliates in pursuing IFAs.

A second priority set by the last Congress was to improve the **representation of women in IMF structures**. In the 112-year history of the IMF, there had never been a woman on the Executive Committee. This imbalance mirrored the fact that women were similarly under-represented in the affiliated unions, a point which was illustrated in a 2002 survey conducted by the IMF Equal Rights Department. Considering the appalling plight of women workers throughout regions such as the maquiladoras in Mexico, it was clear that more focus was needed on women's rights, starting with their right to be equally represented within their own unions as well as within the IMF. The reinstatement of the IMF Women's Committee was a good start. The Women's Conference held this week addressed the impact of globalization on women. In preparation for the Congress, the IMF had set a goal of 20 percent participation by women. For the record, Malentacchi announced that 136 women out of 660 delegates were in attendance and he hoped there would be more at the next Congress. Proposed Rules changes which would ensure that women had a seat at the table were on the agenda and would be brought before the Congress later in the week. For the first time ever, women would be elected to the Executive Committee of the IMF.

**Organizing and union-building** were also an integral part of IMF activities. Many projects aimed at organizing metalworkers and strengthening solidarity were underway throughout the world in places like India, Swaziland, the Philippines, Russia, Peru, Tanzania, Zambia, Indonesia, Mexico and Thailand. Other projects were recently completed throughout South and Central America and North Africa. A wide range of seminars and training events on organizing had also been conducted in various parts of the world, including organizing of non-manual workers who accounted for a growing share of the labour force especially among young people. In addition, the annual IMF Summer School specifically targeted young union activists and emerging leaders to familiarize them with the challenges facing unions on the global level. Malentacchi thanked the IMF affiliates in the Nordic countries as well as the CAW who were directly involved in such training activities and had provided funding and personnel to make these sessions successful. Union-building activities were also coordinated through IMF's regional and project offices which played a vital role in providing resources for their unions in an effort to create stronger links across national and regional borders.

The General Secretary then turned to the **Regions** and described some of their special challenges and areas of particular concern. In **Africa**, workers and unions were faced with incredible social and economic problems, including the HIV/AIDS pandemic and a severe lack of resources. External debt had placed a huge financial burden on the economies in the region. Unemployment was skyrocketing and exceeded 50 percent in some countries. The trade union work in Africa was focused on implementing the IMF Action Programme.

In **Central and Eastern Europe**, the relocation of the IMF project office from Budapest to Moscow had been successful. The region, however, during its transition to a market economy, presented enormous challenges to the unions. The IMF had geared activities toward training, education, and building strong regional and sub-regional structures. With

the increasing integration into the E.U., Central Europe could expect even more challenges ahead.

Trade union unity was the emphasis of IMF's work in **Latin America and the Caribbean**. Organizing efforts were ongoing, particularly in Export Processing Zones and small- to medium-sized enterprises. Several unions were in the process of merger talks. Even more significant, metalworkers around the world rejoiced in 2002 when a special friend of workers, Lula, was elected President of Brazil.

The regional office in East Asia was closed in 2002. In the **Asia and the Pacific** region, top agenda items included representation of women, China, and atypical work. The IMF had also expanded a project aimed at organizing shipbreaking workers in India by addressing the workers' health and safety needs. The project had proven to be one of the first successful attempts at organizing this sector in the region. On a sad note, the **tsunami disaster** which struck vast areas of the region in December had precipitated an IMF mission to Indonesia and Sri Lanka, led by Brother Fred Van Leeuwen of Education International, in order to assess the damage and identify ways in which the entire international labour movement could assist the affiliates and their families with what would probably be a long-term union rebuilding project.

Discussion on this region also brought into focus the debate on the role of **China** as it became a major player in the global economy. Despite clear breaches of fundamental human rights-- rights it had freely ratified in early 2001-- China was officially accepted as a member of the WTO in November that same year. Today, at least 40 labour activists remained in prison, some of whom had been detained since 1989. The state-controlled All-China Federation of Trade Unions was not based on IMF's definition of democratic principles of trade unionism. And even though each region, indeed, each affiliate had different ideas on how to respond to the issue of China, it was clear that it should not be a divisive issue; on the contrary, the IMF needed to respond as a united force. "We must listen carefully to each other and map out the common territory for action," Malentacchi said.

The issue of China was also high on the agenda last year's World Auto Council held in Dearborn, Michigan, USA, which launched its World Auto Report providing a detailed analysis of China's role and influence on emerging trends in the Auto sector. The goal of such **world conferences** was to ensure that strong links were made and maintained between unions operating in the same industrial sectors. For example, in June 2002 a World Conference for the Aerospace industry was held. Delegates from all over the world discussed developments in the industry such as working time, and devised union responses to the challenges within the industry in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Sectoral meetings were also held in the regions to ensure that joint strategies were implemented in order to be consistent throughout the industry.

While the IMF Congress brought people together to discuss overall strategies and activities on a global scale, it was also a time to share experiences and build **international solidarity** around specific issues. One such issue concerned the arrest and imprisonment of Brother Mun, President of the Korean Metalworkers' Federation, as he returned home from the Congress in Sydney. He was charged with leading strikes and causing public disorder. This blatant abuse of his fundamental human rights became the focus of a major campaign. In conjunction with other GUFs, the IMF held two international days of action where affiliates from 65 countries got involved by writing letters protesting Brother Mun's treatment. He was eventually released, but many other trade unionists still remained behind bars in Korea. Then earlier this month, Brother Mun's union, KMWF, wrote to the

IMF to say that, although it didn't have a lot of money, the union had decided for the first time to start setting aside money to help workers in crisis in other countries. This was a direct result of the solidarity shown Brother Mun's during his ordeal.

Today in **South Korea**, both the employers and the government repeatedly violated workers' rights to freedom of assembly, forming and joining unions and collective bargaining. Subcontracted atypical workers were paid half wages and had been struggling for several months at the Hynix MagnaChip Semiconductor plant in Cheongju City. In October of last year, they finally did form a union and the 180 workers who joined were promptly fired. The picketing workers were subjected to police violence as they protested in front of the plant. The IMF demanded that the international community continue to put pressure on the Korean government to respect workers' rights in Korea. Malentacchi appealed to all IMF affiliates to join in solidarity and support not only in Korea but indeed in all parts of the world where workers struggle for basic human rights.

In **Jakarta**, 368 employees were dismissed by Honda Prospect Indonesia in March 2002 for participating in a legal strike. The IMF launched a campaign seeking international solidarity for their reinstatement. Unfortunately, those efforts were not very successful. Honda closed the factory and moved to another part of Jakarta and workers were offered new jobs.

One campaign that was highly successful was the James Hardie campaign initiated by the **Australian** affiliates, AMWU, which fought to ensure justice for thousands of victims of asbestos-related diseases faced with the loss of their right to fair compensation. Protests were held in Australia, the Netherlands and the United States. Though not formally finalized, the unions and the asbestos groups had secured an agreement whereby the company would compensate the victims.

The IMF regularly received requests for solidarity support from all over the world, but its ability to respond was dependent upon the affiliates. Writing letters, organizing demonstrations, even sending money was one thing. But how much stronger could IMF's response be if one day millions of workers across borders went on strike in support of workers in another country? The level of solidarity the IMF could devote to any request was determined by the amount of support each affiliate was willing to give.

Challenging the policies and actions of **international institutions** continued to be disappointing. The International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization continually failed to include fundamental workers' rights in trade agreements, failed to set employment targets, and failed to define strategies for job creation. They ignored the notion that improving wages and conditions was a way to reduce poverty, leaving many developing countries with few prospects for sustainable growth and condemning millions to hunger and despair.

One positive area of work on the global scene, however, was the building of social alliances with groups who shared IMF's goals, particularly through the **World Social Forum** which brought together various segments of civil society who sought to create balance in the economic power in the hands of a few. After trying for two years to be included in the World Social Forum, in 2003 the IMF claimed a seat at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum held in Porto Alegre and seized every opportunity to discuss its alternative economic programme and to promote fundamental labour rights through International Framework Agreements. A year later in 2004, with the support of a number of participating affiliates, the IMF led a debate at the Forum in Mumbai on the role of employment as a key factor for genuine development. In Porto Alegre earlier this year, the IMF focused its efforts on attending

non-union events to build relationships with other social movements and hosted a march for employment. The valuable links established in these venues would open doors of opportunity for joint activities on social issues in the future.

The last topic Malentacchi wanted to share with the affiliates concerned changes and discussions taking place within the **global union movement**. The ICFTU had held its World Congress in Japan at the end of 2004. One of the key issues debated was the creation of a new international trade union confederation aimed at strengthening the movement and bringing its various organizations closer together. He felt this was a positive development and supported the work that the ICFTU was doing; however, just how such a new organization would be structured was subject to debate. Also he questioned how this would influence the relationship between the new international confederation and the Global Union Federations, GUFs. He feared that overall the proposal was likely to produce bureaucratic structures without any mandate which would only weaken both the ICFTU and the global unions and make collaboration more difficult.

In conclusion, Malentacchi said he remained optimistic about the role unions could play in advancing workers' rights and in so doing protect human rights, decent work, and sustainable development. By involving more women and young people in the activities of the IMF, "we get closer to achieving justice, opportunity and equality in the world," he said. The **Action Programme** which outlined specific strategies, such as pursuing IFAs, strengthening solidarity across national borders, fighting for fundamental human rights, and organizing the unorganized, formed the road map for the IMF to help make the world better for all.

He posed two questions as food for thought over the course of the Congress: "How can we build our union structures at the local, national and global level to be better able to face the challenges ahead? And how can we strengthen our international solidarity with one another?" He asked that the affiliates keep those questions in mind as they responded to his report.

M. RHAMAN BHUIYAN (BML-Bangladesh) was impressed with the amount of progress the IMF had made since the last Congress as described in the report of the Secretariat. However, many areas had seen little or no progress, and it was important to share that information because obviously more work needed to be done. He was grateful for the increased activities being undertaken in Bangladesh, especially with regard to organizing and the integration of women into leadership positions within unions. He invited the General Secretary to visit his country very soon.

Bhuiyan wanted to bring to the attention of the Congress the appalling and inhuman conditions of workers in the **shipbreaking** industry where ten workers had been killed during 2004. Workers were forced to work 14 to 18 hours a day in conditions resembling concentration camps. Though the ILO had conducted an investigation on the shipbreaking companies and several newspapers had featured articles highlighting the miseries of the whole industry, the abuse continued. "As metalworkers in Bangladesh, it would be a grave sin to just close our eyes to this barbaric situation," he said, as he asked for the IMF's help. The financial resources and manpower of his union were limited, not to mention the fact that the employers had hired local hoodlums to intimidate both the workers and those who tried to help them. As the Congress debated the advancement of workers' rights, the shipbreaking industry in Bangladesh was a good place to start.

Herwig JORISSEN (CMB-Belgium) talked about the fact that over the past four years unbridled **globalization** had spread throughout the world and workers and their unions

were confronted with the consequences. In the name of profit, the world had been turned into one huge market where trade had no limits which was why globalization was the challenge for the future. He fully supported the Action Programme's analyses and strategies; however, globalization affected different regions in different ways. As was testified earlier, sweatshops and forced labor still existed in many parts of the world. "We must be strong and unified in our efforts to eradicate this type of exploitation," Herwig said. Therefore, no single answer was appropriate for everyone. He endorsed the idea of pooling the experiences of all the regions in order to effectively deal with the injustice of globalization.

In dealing with **IMF structures**, Herwig said that promoting women to leadership positions within the Executive was not only fair but necessary. It showed very forward-thinking on the part of the Secretariat, something that was not even done in the more developed countries. However, in terms of the proposed dues and voting structure, Herwig emphasized that it must mirror the IMF's own principles of equality. The CMB delegation believed in the philosophy of "one man, one vote." In a democracy, votes could not be purchased with affiliation fees. Everyone should be entitled to vote and express his or her opinion.

The current economic situation not only threatened workers but also represented a danger to the planet. Action Programme effectively dealt with health and safety issues, "but these issues don't stop at the gates of companies," he said. And neither did **environmental protection** did not stop at national borders. Human rights included the ability of everyone to live in a healthy world both now and in the future.

Lastly, Herwig believed that **communication technologies** should be expanded. The IMF website was excellently put together and had a very professional look. It provided electronic news bulletins and other reports. He felt it could also be used to promote international action events going on in the different regions. Older technologies were still relevant, however, since many workers of the world-- even in Belgium-- did not have computers.

Yuji KATO (IMF-Japan) commented on the portion of the report regarding **regional structures**. Since the late '90s globalization had expanded rapidly throughout the world. Prior to that time, the concept of globalization simply meant cooperation between developed countries and the undeveloped countries. Now, however, economic gaps had widened between both regions and countries. Some regions, particularly in Asia, were overwhelmed by huge diversities in political systems, varying degrees of democratization, and also different historical and cultural backgrounds. He pointed to the ICFTU World Congress which was held in Japan last December. The Secretariat had planned to change its structure into a more centralized one. However, before the Congress began, those plans were changed to instead focus on regional characteristics as requested by the Asian regions. He believed that in the future the IMF would need to reconsider its organizational structure, especially with regard to the regional offices. He asked that a study be undertaken before the next Congress on this issue.

Georgio CAPRIOLI (FLM-Italy) pointed out the positive developments that had taken place since the last Congress. Both the introduction by President Peters and the report of the Secretariat focused on concrete actions appropriate for trade unions. In Sydney, a great deal of time had been spent talking about IMF's interaction with international organizations, whereas this Congress focused more on specific campaigns, such as securing core labour standards with the use of IFAs. That sent out a strong message. The Secretariat's report mentioned the prospect of the unification of **ICFTU** and the World

Confederation of Labour. Caprioli felt that a more detailed discussion should take place regarding the role of the IMF in this context because this merger presented an opportunity to gain more cooperation between the industrial unions and the international movement. Regarding Malentacchi's statement that "actions vis-à-vis the international institutions hadn't really produced great benefits," Caprioli felt that perhaps closer coordination with the work being done by the ICFTU was needed. "Of course, we need our own programs specifically designed for metalworkers," he said, but IMF's role within the ICFTU and other international groups should be strengthened.

The other main topic Caprioli wanted to comment on concerned **International Framework Agreements** and codes of conduct. The IMF had accomplished a great deal in this area over the last four years, but the fact remained that all the IFAs in effect to date were in Europe. He suggested that more training within the unions in the negotiation of IFAs was needed. Perhaps certain companies could be targeted where the IMF could coordinate training with shop stewards so they could effectively put pressure on the employers from within. He stressed the need to develop a database or a list of multinationals on IMF's website, which included both companies which were prepared to have constructive dialogue with the trade unions and those which were not. In some countries, such as Italy, the idea of "corporate social responsibility" had become a hot topic within industry, the new buzz word. Companies wanted to get on the bandwagon and use the phrase as a marketing tool of sorts. Of course, they were not really interested in protecting workers' rights, but the IMF should take advantage of the public awareness being generated by directing campaigns at these companies and call their bluff.

His last comment was with regard to **international solidarity** actions. Many affiliates had benefited directly by IMF's efforts in this area. Caprioli felt, however, that "we need to be a bit more courageous," especially in situations which were extremely dramatic. The various global unions should consider strong measures such as boycotts of companies whose behavior was totally unacceptable. For instance, in Italy the Coca Cola company was being boycotted at the request of the Colombian affiliates. Such actions were controversial, but he felt it should be considered. The coordination of a "World Action Day" for all metalworkers which would unite whole regions of workers on specific issues was another good example of international solidarity, something which the IMF had already done in Europe. He hoped that would be on the agenda at the next Central Committee meeting.

Mikhail TARASSENKO (MMWU-GMPR-Russia) reported that some interesting developments had taken place in Russia over the past four years. Most significantly, wages had increased by 1.7 percent; however, when one realized the **low wage levels** to begin with, they were still well below those of other countries. Therefore, wages were still a top priority in Russia. He appreciated having access to IMF's wages and purchasing power statistics and comparisons, and encouraged the affiliates to readily provide such information so it could be used to improve the collective bargaining efforts of other affiliates. In addition, the government should step up to the plate and be more proactive in the development of Russia's economy. The developing countries should be able to draw on the experiences of the industrialized world in order to grow. He thanked the affiliates from Austria and the Netherlands for their help and solidarity in sharing their experiences.

The Russian metalworkers were confronted with the restructuring of their industry. Older companies were going bankrupt and new independent enterprises from the West were emerging. Instead of traditional production methods within the metalurgy industry, these enterprises brought in their own processes which spilled over into other sectors. It was the goal of the MMWU to keep those jobs within the purview of the metal industry. But more

importantly, these capitalist enterprises made huge profits which should be shared by those whose efforts created those profits-- the workers. He reiterated that even though higher wages was a top priority, the **fair distribution of wealth** and pension benefits was equally important. Another problem with these new companies was the fact that they wanted nothing to do with trade unions in Russia. The IMF should target its **organizing** efforts at these companies to prevent the emergence of so-called "yellow" trade unions which were mere puppets of either the company or the government. He concluded by saying that, "If we fight, we may lose; but if we don't fight, we are lost already."

Buzz HARGROVE (CAW-Canada) began by thanking Marcello for his tireless energy and commitment to working people around the world. He felt the report of the Secretariat covered every aspect of the IMF's work and contained a good analysis of the issues currently confronting trade unions in terms of both the challenges and opportunities. "**Globalization** is about corporate power," he said which perpetuated attacks on social standards and workers' rights across the globe. Over the past decade as globalization had affected almost every country, unprecedented productivity had been achieved; however, the wealth generated by that productivity had transferred from the poorest nations to the richest. Workers were pitted against other workers, both within national borders and across oceans. Workers were intimidated and coerced by threats of plant closings into taking concessions and wage cuts even though their wages were at poverty levels.

**Free trade agreements**-- which were not about trade but about the transfer of power-- had been signed by governments who turned a blind eye to the fact that workers' rights and environmental rights and social standards were being undermined. Free trade was not fair trade. Highly industrialized countries were shipping goods like automobiles and aerospace parts which led to market closures in whole regions. This was an issue which should be addressed by the IMF and also by the ICFTU. "We cannot save jobs by cutting standards," Hargrove said. Jobs would continue to be dispersed around the world until trade policies were regulated. The corporate agenda could only be stopped by regulation of capital and trade policy.

The process of globalization could and should be used to enrich the world and its people, not the bank accounts of corporations. "We have to fight back," he said, as he shared an example of how NAFTA had failed. An Ontario-based truck plant decided to take advantage of the globalization trend and move its facilities to Mexico after operating in a small community for over 60 years. They wanted the workers to agree to wage cuts and benefits for two years until the plant was finally shut down. The CAW decided it was time to fight back and organized a strike at the plant. And for the first time in the history of Canada, a major manufacturer decided to hire non-union scabs to replace the workers. The union picketed in front of the plant gates and also the roads leading to the plant to stop the scabs from entering the premises. The union succeeded, but not without sacrifice. A hoodlum hired by the company to intimidate the strikers deliberately drove into a group of picketers, injuring five of them, including Don Milner who had to undergo 40 surgeries to try to correct the damage. But the struggle drew the attention of the Canadian government which got involved, and at the end of the day the corporation decided to keep the plant in Canada.

He concluded by saying, "There is no other organization-- not political parties, not governments-- that can defend the interests of working people like the trade union movement." Politicians tended to bend to the agendas of the corporations. Therefore, unions must remain diligent and ready to stand guard and fight back.

Julius ROE (AMWU-Australia) welcomed the Secretariat's report which provided practical and effective actions to counteract the challenges workers face in coping with the increased power of multinationals, the lack of courage of governments to defend workers against neoliberalism, and the policies of world institutions such as the WTO and the International Monetary Fund. Despite those challenges, the IMF had made a great deal of progress, most notably the successful negotiation of 11 **International Framework Agreements** which would certainly serve as a powerful organizing tool. However, care must be taken to ensure more inclusiveness in IFAs and also make sure such agreements were effective. This required more involvement by the affiliates in both the negotiation of IFAs and in monitoring them. He felt that the issue of the role of MNCs in China could act as a real test of whether companies which had signed agreements would follow through with the terms, and also a test of whether the IMF and/or governments involved could effectively enforce them.

Regarding the **Days of Action** in support of IMF's Korean affiliate who had been jailed upon returning home from the last Congress in Sydney, Roe welcomed not only its effectiveness but the reciprocation of that solidarity in some of Australia's own battles, particularly the James Hardie dispute. He felt sure his delegation would be calling for more assistance from the affiliates in the future because the Australian government was on the verge of introducing more **anti-union legislation** designed to destroy the trade union movement in Australia. The legislation being proposed would provide that even where collective bargaining agreements existed, workers could be forced into individual contracts. Secondly, industrial actions-- strikes-- would be illegal and subject to enormous penalties against unions. Thirdly, minimum standards which were already below ILO conventions would be lowered. That would be a death blow to the Australian trade union movement.

Roe agreed with Brother Caprioli that "we need to be more bold and ambitious" in our approach to solidarity actions. In the **Southern Asia and Pacific** region, multinationals routinely refused to recognize unions even in countries where collective bargaining rights are supposedly secure. The MNCs also interfered in the internal policies of union business and tried to create their own company unions which could be molded to their interests. During the last regional meeting, the delegates unanimously recognized that weak, enterprise-based unions were not the way of the future; they were simply a way in which the companies could maintain control. He was therefore concerned about the issue surrounding the dispute with Honda PT in Indonesia where, despite the attempts of the IMF and the affiliates, effective solidarity could not be provided for those workers. "We've even been slower than the ILO," he said, in dealing with the ongoing Toyota dispute in the Philippines. At least the ILO had found clear evidence that the union should be recognized and negotiations should commence.

Finally, Roe felt the IMF needed to be more effective in dealing with what he called the "exploitation olympics" going on in his region where the MNCs actually set up games among the different plants in the region to find out which workers could perform certain tasks the fastest. This was disgraceful and the IMF must challenge such practices, which could only be done through effective solidarity actions carried out by all the affiliates.

Alex BUKHVOSTAU (REPAM-Belarus) appreciated the hard work that had gone into the preparation of the Secretariat's report and other Congress materials. As a member of the Executive Committee, he knew first-hand that an enormous amount of work had been carried out in the last four years. "We know we have to advance workers' rights," he said, but unfortunately in many countries workers had no rights at all. They were repressed by dictatorial regimes. This applied not only to Belarus but other countries where no **autonomous trade unions** existed; in fact, they were prohibited in some countries. The

ILO could not solve the problem. Complaints to the ILO on abuse of workers' rights went unanswered.

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, trade unions were repressed and operated like underground movements. Bukhvostau was very impressed by Austrian President Heinz Fischer's speech and how he valued the trade unions. Contrary to common belief, dictatorships did exist in Europe. One just had to look at Belarus where unions are nothing more than state structures where workers were laid off because of their trade union activities. Soon the workers would reach the breaking point and revolt. When that time came, he hoped his brother and sister affiliates would rise with them as they attempted to fight back.

Bukhvostau expressed his thanks to the affiliates of Canada, Holland, Sweden and Germany in addition to the IMF who had stood by his union in its fight against the state. **International solidarity** provided the moral support necessary to continue the fight and not give up. Trade unions were the only true democratic force left in the world, but they could only survive and grow if the state was democratic as well. Then and only then could the forces of capital be made to respect labour and adopt core labour standards, and perhaps then globalization with a human face would become a reality.

Erika FORSTINGER (GMT-Austria) was extremely pleased with the decision to expand the Executive Committee with the addition of **women**. In fact, it was high time that the potential of women be recognized and utilized in the fight for equal rights for all workers, both men and women. Incredibly, even in Austria women did not receive **equal pay for equal work**. Women made an average of 36 percent less than their male colleagues with the same job. Austria had the largest gap between the sexes in the entire E.U. Fortunately, the GMT enjoys the benefit of collective bargaining rights and the union did place equal pay high on its list of priorities. A recent world study on women workers revealed that of the 58 countries within the survey, Austria placed 28 in terms of equal opportunities for women-- a rather unsatisfactory state of affairs, considering that women played a large role in politics, in the economy and in the workforce. Politicians always had some excuse for this. The GMT pressed for immediate measures to alleviate the situation, such as changes in laws relative to women returning to the workplace after maternity leave. She characterized the priorities of politicians very succinctly by describing the fact that 3 million euros from the national budget had been earmarked for the creation of a database on sheep, whereas only 3.5 million was allotted for projects which had to do with opportunities for young women. So even in an advanced country like Austria, there was still a lot of work to be done.

A. SERDAROGLU (BMI-Turkey) brought greetings from his union, Birleski Metal, and expressed his thanks to the host of the Congress, GMT, for a wonderful opening ceremony. He began his remarks with an analysis of the **growing influence of international capital** on the working people of the world and the fact that globalization had created a bi-polar society consisting of the wealthy and the impoverished. The increasing number within the proletariat-- the working class-- constituted the vast majority of the population. It was the task, therefore, of the democratic trade unions to limit the power of capital in the international arena, and not just within the sphere of the economy but in all phases of life.

Over the last few decades, Turkey had become a converging point for many multinational companies. Because of its rich oil reserves, cheap labour and unorganized working class, the imperialist powers, particularly the United States, were attracted to the region. The fluidity of international capital had lured even the democratic states in the region to vie for

foreign investment by decreasing social standards. The government of Turkey, for instance, recently declared that Free Zones needed to be more free.

"International capital must be fought with concrete forms of **international solidarity**," he said, and was pleased that this topic was emphasized in the Action Programme. Indeed, solidarity had been the driving force behind the successful workers' movements in Brazil, South Africa, South Korea and India. There were many examples of the important role international solidarity could play in achieving trade union goals across borders. For instance, with the help of the IMF, an International Framework Agreement with Daimler-Chrysler signed in 2003, was used to put pressure on the company DITAS in Turkey. Successful organizing drives had been conducted at LISI, a French firm, with the help of CGT. IG-Metall had offered strong support in the union's efforts at Grammer, a German-owned firm. They had even succeeded in electing a workers' representative for the European Work Council with the help of the EMF. There was no doubt that international solidarity was the key to making trade unions stronger and this must be continued at the national and company levels as well, from the top of the production chain down to the shop floor. The old slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all," was still the watchword for trade unions.

Heidelinde FROST (GMT-Austria) - "Increased rights for **women workers**" was the theme of Frost's remarks. The political and economic climate of the world was increasingly plagued with anti-union attitudes which undermined workers' rights, and these anti-union forces particularly affected women workers in the EP Zones. The IMF needed to work more intensively with the various players in the realm of economic policy-making to ensure better opportunities for women workers instead of marginal, low-paying jobs. This type of casual work offered no opportunity for job security or leave time, much less pensions, health insurance or other long-term benefits. As part of the workforce, women should be able to enjoy the same right to minimum wages, freedom of association and independent income as their male counterparts. From the IMF's perspective, Frost felt it was important to develop education and training programs specifically targeted at women workers. More work needed to be done to encourage women to assume leadership roles within their unions. In closing, she asked the delegates to join her in applauding all trade unionists, both men and women, who risked their lives every day doing trade union work.

F. GUTIERREZ (UOM-Argentina), the final speaker on this Agenda item, brought greetings from Argentina's National Council of FITIM, which included all the metal and mining unions, and SMATA which represented the auto workers. He wanted to comment on a few points contained in the Secretariat's report which had also arisen during the Regional Conference in Chile. He recognized that in his country the issue of having women in leadership roles within unions reflected a new awareness within Latin America and that more work needed to be done in the region to achieve greater participation of **women in trade union structures** and other labor sectors as well. Not only women but young people had been excluded at the national and international levels and should be included in those efforts.

Secondly, Gutierrez commented on the proposed **rules changes**, specifically as they related to the dues structure. He cautioned that care must be taken so as not to discourage the participation of affiliates because of economic crises which may arise within their countries or within their unions. The Argentine affiliates knew only too well based on their experience of trying to exist for two years under a dictatorship that **oppressed unions** needed more participation, more solidarity than ever during a financial crisis, not less. Fortunately, there was new hope for Latin America with the election of President Lula who had proved to be a well-respected and progressive leader. Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and

Colombia were still struggling under oppressive governments. Trade union activists in Colombia were routinely murdered or simply disappeared, some of whom were currently living in exile in Argentina and Chile because of death threats. He hoped that the proposed **merger of the WCL and the ICFTU** would provide combined strength and unity in the continued fight for human and trade union rights around the world.

He congratulated the Secretariat on its successful conclusion of 11 **International Framework Agreements**. In light of increased globalization and the concentration of wealth and power, IFAs represented a counterbalance of power on the side of unions in terms of securing minimum labour standards for workers. He agreed with Malentacchi's comment that IFAs should be a major goal for the individual regions outside Europe as well. Even if agreements could not be accomplished throughout entire regions, then perhaps the regions should try to get them within economic groupings like the Mercosur in his region, for example. IFAs could keep **globalization** as practiced by the Washington Consensus in check. The Western model was a total failure. The main goal for the future must be to find ways to turn globalization into an economic panacea that would allow all the workers of the world to live better lives.

General Secretary MALENTACCHI responded briefly to the discussion by first of all assuring Brother Rhaman that the trade unions in Bangladesh had the full support of the IMF in its efforts to organize the shipbreaking workers. Similar projects had already been carried out in India and he was confident that the same efforts could be applied to bring about success. He also promised a personal visit in the near future.

To Brother Kato's remarks regarding regional structures, he responded that this was definitely one area which needed close examination. Malentacchi was not sure if duplicating the ICFTU structure was the appropriate answer since, as Kato had pointed out, the character of each region was unique. It had been ten years since the IMF had initiated its ambitious program of creating regional structures and for the most part it had succeeded in bringing the affiliates together to discuss regional matters in the broader context of the IMF. However, he stated that, "We cannot have a separate discussion about the regions without having discussions in a global context," and agreed that a lot more work needed to be done with regard to restructuring.

Further discussions were also planned concerning the merger process within the ICFTU and the WCL. The IMF was in favor of the process, it was just a question of determining where the practical work would be done on issues the IMF had in common with other GUFs. That was an area of concern and where discussions should start.

There being no further comments on the Report of the Secretariat, the Congress recessed for lunch at 12:30 p.m.

## **MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **May 23, 2005**

The Congress reconvened at 2:00 p.m., chaired by Rudi Nürnberger, President of the GMT-Austria.

#### **ITEM 8: REPORT BY CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE AND TELLERS**

On behalf of the Credentials Committee and Tellers, Margareta ZANDEN (Sif-Sweden), Committee Chair, gave the following interim report: There were a total of 656 delegates representing 130 unions from 82 countries in attendance, plus 32 observers and guests. The number of women delegates totaled 136, representing 21 percent of the total delegates. In terms of affiliation fees paid or treated as such, except for five organizations, all affiliates in attendance had fulfilled their dues obligations and were qualified to participate and vote in the proceedings. The five organizations whose dues were in arrears were: HFCEO-Greece; NSZZ-Poland; IMF-ROC-Taiwan; CONSFETEMA-Chile; and FKMTU-Korea, which had paid a portion of their fees and were entitled to partial voting rights. **So accepted.**

#### **INTERVENTION by Peter SCHERRER, General Secretary of the European Metalworkers Federation**

Before continuing with the Agenda, the Chair introduced guest speaker **Peter Scherrer**, General Secretary of the European Metalworkers Federation, an organization with which the IMF shared common goals. He appreciated the timeliness of IMF's Congress theme, "Advancing Workers' Rights," and said that workers' rights, which were under constant threat, must be guaranteed and advanced everywhere in the world. The whole purpose of the trade union movement was to secure a minimum standard of individual and collective rights at the workplace and in society in general. Even in Europe, workers' rights were under pressure. Increasing globalization was often used as an argument to justify what employers called "flexible regulations." "We all know what that means," he said-- cutting workers' and trade union rights.

In Europe, the fight for workers' rights had the longstanding tradition of being the foundation for the European social model. Each country employed certain social systems such as welfare or social security. But what they all had in common was that workers' rights were guaranteed and each person had access to minimum standard of social services. Scherrer quoted Austrian President Heinz Fischer's remarks during the opening of the Congress that "there can be no political stability without social justice." Those words were never more true than they were today. Politicians and managers were putting political stability at risk by undermining the basic principles of social justice. So-called "reforms" in many European countries were simply a neoliberal approach to economic development which shifted the burden onto the shoulders of the workers, the unemployed and the poor and resulted in a widening gap between the rich and the poor and increasing social imbalance.

The European social model was far from perfect, Scherrer said, but it did show that economies could be successful and provide guarantees for decent working and living conditions at the same time. In a world where unbridled globalization determined the working conditions of all workers, strategies for the protection of workers' rights were needed more than ever before. International Framework Agreements represented one of

those strategies by providing a tool which could help support the fight against the violation of human and workers' rights. The EMF and the IMF together must work to ensure that substantive social and workers' rights applied not only in Europe but to every single worker in the multinational companies regardless of their location. In closing, Scherrer pledged that the European Metalworkers' Federation would always work side-by-side with other international organizations in providing its assistance.

## **ITEM 9: AMENDMENTS TO IMF RULES**

Jens BUNDVAD (CO-industri-Denmark) of the Motions and Rules Committee introduced Agenda Item 9 which dealt with amendments to IMF Rules. The report represented the culmination of a lengthy and complicated process which began with the creation of a Working Group on IMF Structures several years ago. Any changes to the Statutes which served as the basis for the rules of conduct within the IMF were, by their very nature, difficult to agree on 100 percent, and the proposals before the delegates at this Congress represented what the committee felt was a good compromise. There were three main points affecting the Rules:

(1) **A new fee system.** This was an issue which had been debated within the IMF for many years. It became very clear after the last Congress that the fee system under which the IMF operated was, indeed, not a system at all. Fees were set arbitrarily and varied from country to country. Poor countries paid more fees than rich countries in some cases. A very clear mandate was issued to the Secretariat to try to find a way to ensure that affiliation fees corresponded to the financial abilities of the affiliates. Many different models were examined, such as wage structures, but the only one which seemed fair and practical was a formula based on gross national product as the basis for categorizing affiliate groups and setting fees accordingly.

(2) **Women on the Executive.** Another mandate given to the Working Group was the representation of women on the Executive Committee. Therefore, a proposal had been put forth to add one more seat from each of the regions to the Executive, and that seat would be filled by a woman. That was not to say those six would be the only women on the Executive; permanent positions within the Executive were also be open to women. Two other changes to the Executive Committee were proposed: one concerned the need to increase the number of representatives from Central and Eastern Europe by one seat; and the other dealt with a proposal to add another appointed position to the Executive, that of a Vice President, who would assume the duties of President in the event of his or her absence.

(3) **Voting rights.** One of the concerns raised by the committee on this issue was the idea that a large and possibly new affiliate with a lot of members, China for example, could unduly influence the decisions of the IMF and skew the voting process. Discussions were focused on ways to avoid that and ensure that smaller affiliates also have their guaranteed democratic right to have input into IMF decisions. Again, several models were discussed, including the tying together of voting to affiliation fees and a consideration of how other GUFs structured their voting rights. The result of those discussions were contained in the proposal before the Congress. Basically, the new voting system stated that for the first 200,000 members, affiliates had voting rights according to their membership. For membership levels above 200,000, voting rights would be calculated using the subscription ratio paid according to the GNP groupings.

Chair Bundvad appealed to the delegates to review the proposal, keeping in mind the tremendous work that had been put into its preparation and the fact that the committee felt it was the best possible compromise to ensure fairness.

General Secretary MALENTACCHI, in a follow-up explanation, pointed out that the proposed changes were important steps toward achieving three main goals for the IMF. (1) improved representation of women within IMF structures; (2) increased fairness and transparency of the annual subscription and voting systems; and (3) a more secure financial future for the IMF. The expansion of the Executive from 18 to 25 members would ensure a more balanced committee representative of the proportion of not only male and female members, but also of the membership within the six regions. In addition, it went without saying that in an organization the size and scope of the IMF, having a position of Vice President to act in the absence of the President was appropriate.

In terms of the dues structure, the new model places affiliates in one of six groups based on their country's GNP, as follows:

| Group | GNP per capita<br>(in US\$) | Subscription<br>Ratio | Amount per member<br>per year (in CHF) |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1     | Over 10,000                 | 100%                  | 1.100                                  |
| 2     | 5,001 - 10,000              | 60%                   | 0.660                                  |
| 3     | 2,501 - 5,000               | 30%                   | 0.330                                  |
| 4     | 1,001 - 2,500               | 15%                   | 0.165                                  |
| 5     | 501 - 1,000                 | 5%                    | 0.055                                  |
| 6     | Less than 500               | 2%                    | 0.022                                  |

Depending on which group an affiliate belongs, affiliates will pay a percentage of the base rate per member. He reminded the delegates that the base rate of 1.10 CHF had not risen in 15 years. A minimum annual subscription of no less than 250 Swiss francs per affiliate was also proposed. In the future, exoneration of dues would only be granted by the Executive Committee in extraordinary cases such as civil war or repression of workers' rights. Analysis had shown that not much change would result to the total annual income for the IMF under the new model; however, it would be more fair.

Turning to the third major change, Malentacchi explained how the proposed new voting system would work. Under the new system, affiliates had full voting rights for the first 200,000 members. For membership above 200,000, voting rights were proportionate to the subscription ratio paid, as shown in the above chart. For example:

| Affiliate               | Group | Percent | No. of<br>members | Calculation<br>of votes              | Total No.<br>of votes |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| IG Metall<br>(Germany)  | 1     | 100%    | 2,000,000         | 1st 200,000<br>Plus 1,800,000 x 100% | 2,000,000             |
| OS KOVO<br>(Czech Rep.) | 2     | 60%     | 343,510           | 1st 200,000<br>Plus 143,510 x 60%    | 286,160               |
| CNM/ CUT<br>(Brazil)    | 3     | 30%     | 688,000           | 1st 200,000<br>Plus 488,000 x 30%    | 346,400               |
| MMWU<br>(Russia)        | 4     | 15%     | 1,100,000         | 1st 200,000<br>Plus 900,000 x 15%    | 335,000               |

The proposed changes in the Rules were the result of two years of intense and difficult work involving careful analysis, debate and discussion by the Rules Committee made up of members from all regions of the IMF. He invited the delegates to comment on the presentation.

Hugo BIANCHI (UNTMRA-Uruguay) expressed his view that the proper role of trade unions was to advance workers' rights and prevent the type of globalization now encompassing the globe which was aimed at servicing the few. Globalization had the potential of being of service to all of humankind. To achieve that goal required the participation of not only the citizens of the world and international institutions but, more importantly, trade union activists. He agreed with the expansion of the role of women in the IMF but not the proposals on dues and voting structure. "What does GNP have to do with participation," he asked, or need or having the passion to work for trade union rights? Changing the dues structure would not solve the primary problems of the world. He asked the delegates to keep in mind that most of the struggles for human and trade union rights were won by affiliates in the developing countries at great risk to their very lives, and should not be penalized because of financial difficulties. Membership numbers were not as important as new ideas, international solidarity and collective action in solving the problems of globalization.

Marcel GRIGNARD (FGMM-CFDT-France), speaking on behalf of the Belgian, Dutch, and Spanish affiliates as well as the French, said that he supported the amendments to the Rules and realized what a difficult task the Committee had been assigned. First of all, with regard to the addition of women on the Executive Committee, he felt that the IMF was paving the way to providing more balance in the decision-making bodies of the organization. "We have to be willing to apply to ourselves that which we demand in other spheres of life," he said, namely, gender equality, more participation, and workers' rights. Secondly, with regard to the fee structure, it was far from perfect, yet he felt it was a step in the right direction in terms of having a more democratic and less arbitrary way of calculating fees. However, he was concerned about the link established between membership size and voting rights. The result of the proposal would mean that voting rights of affiliates with over 200,000 members would be reduced. They would end up paying less than 100 percent. He felt this method went against the basic principle of one member - one vote. Equality with regard to voting rights had been a hard-won victory in many countries, even in Europe where the right to vote had for many years been linked to economic status. He felt this proposal should be further revisited at the next Executive Committee meeting, particularly with regard to its effect on possible new members.

Nair GOULART (CNTM-Brazil) was proud to be attending her first IMF Congress as a woman with 20 years experience in the metal industry. She addressed her remarks to the issue of women and families vis-à-vis the labour market. According the U.N., 1.2 billion people lived below the poverty line. In many parts of the world, entire families lived on less than one dollar per day. Of those, many millions suffered from malnutrition. And 70 percent of the poorest people in the world were women. Every 24 hours, 100,000 died of hunger, 30,000 of whom were children under the age of five. Given these terrifying statistics, trade unions must look at the status of working women in the labour force. Latin America had seen an enormous increase in the female workforce who currently represented almost 50 percent. Unfortunately, working conditions had not kept up with that progress. Women were subjected to precarious casual work, workplace violence and harassment, and the lack of adequate child care. Yet they earned 70 percent less than men. Therefore, changing the IMF Rules to increase the participation of women was appropriate and necessary.

However, "real changes don't happen from the top down," Goulart said. She stressed the need for more organizing, training and education for working women because only they knew best where the problems existed and were better equipped to mobilize other women workers. It wasn't just a matter of introducing women on the Executive, but the need for real changes in attitudes towards women in the workplace. More positive and more inclusive activities at the grassroots level were necessary to convince women of the benefits of trade unions in their daily lives. The IMF, by its actions, had proven to be a leader among the global unions to take this giant step on behalf of women workers, and it would be interesting to assess how much progress would be made over the next four years when hopefully even more women would have the opportunity and the confidence to attend Congress.

S. NONDWANGU (NUMSA-South Africa) considered the proposed changes a very sensitive matter which required a great deal of thought. It was inarguable that the IMF must have the resources in order to implement its own Action Programme. The Working Group on Changes to the Rules, which was made up of members from every region within the IMF, had convened seven times over the last four years but each time were unable to reach a unanimous consensus. Therefore, the proposals put forth represented a compromise which everyone at least felt they could live with. If the Action Programme was a top priority for the affiliates, then in order to implement it and carry out the activities outlined within the document, the IMF needed financial muscle. Each region had special needs. And in order to be responsive to the many requests for service and activities and solidarity actions, the IMF must be secure in the knowledge that it was a viable organization which was ready, willing and financially able to commit itself to those requests. Therefore, the adjustment in dues was crucial. The issue of voting rights was not necessarily that critical, Nondwangu said, because the affiliates with less than 200,000 members would not be seriously affected. In addition, historically the actual voting process-- the casting of ballots and counting the votes-- was rarely needed within the IMF.

Sarde S. RAO (SMEWFI-India) was concerned about the future functioning of the affiliates in India with regard to the dues subscription proposal. Since the implementation of the new economic policy by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank since 1991, both GNP and GDP in India had improved. But the gap between the rich and poor had widened even more. Much of the work in the public sector as well as the private sector had shifted to the informal sector. The number of workers in the informal sector had increased phenomenally. The criteria of applying GNP to the calculation of fees did not reflect the realities on the ground in India where membership fees also had to be paid at the local level, the state level, and at the national level in addition to fees which were paid to the Metalworkers' Federation. Though he would vote for the proposal, he asked that the IMF provide some help during the transition period to ensure that the affiliates were not overburdened.

Fernando LOPEZ (CNM-CUT-Brazil), as part of the Working Group which had deliberated over the issue of fees for many years, summed up the discussion by saying that the entire committee was of the opinion that the proposal represented a minimum compromise which would enable the IMF to enjoy future growth.

Assistant General Secretary Brian FREDRICKS appealed to the affiliates to view the Rules changes as a tool which would help the IMF go forward in its activities. The wide range of opinions expressed by the affiliates was no surprise to the Secretariat and reflected the same passion for the issues displayed within the Working Group itself. He agreed that some countries would be affected; however, the issue of compromise was not about taking votes away from anyone, but rather one of building solidarity, building toward the very

issue of what the IMF stands for. Current dues were inadequate not because of the funds, but because of the challenges faced by affiliates in today's world. It wasn't a question of equality, but a question of being able to build more powerful union structures by implementing the Action Programme. He echoed the point made by Brother Nondwangu regarding the fact that changes in voting system were practically irrelevant because throughout his history with the IMF only voice votes were taken, not written ballots, which was a perfect example of how solidarity always prevailed within the IMF. He hoped such would be the case in the vote on the proposed Rules.

Committee Chair Jens BUNDVAD said that the debate on this issue had mirrored almost exactly the debate which took place within the committee itself. He noted that there had been no comments against the Rules change which added women to the Executive. He also sympathized very deeply with Brother Bianchi's heartfelt comments because it was true that the IMF as an organization was nothing if it did not have the compassion, the willingness, and the strength to reach out in brotherhood to help alleviate the plight of workers everywhere. But it was his solemn belief that the new Rules would enable the IMF to do exactly that. "We make compromises every day on issues and this is the best possible compromise for the future of the IMF," he said, as he formally moved for the adoption of the proposed Rules.

Chair NÜRNBERGER announced that a quorum was present and that a two-thirds majority vote would be necessary to pass the new Rules. He delineated each Article wherein changes were proposed and asked for a show of hands in favor of approval, the results of which were as follows:

- Article 3 - Structure of the Federation - unanimously approved
- Article 4 - Duties of Officers - unanimously approved
- Article 6 - Admissions/Resignations/Expulsions - unanimously approved
- Article 7 - Annual Subscriptions - approved
- Article 8 (New) - Subscriptions in Arrears & Exonerations - approved

The Rules in their entirety were **approved**.

## **ITEM 10: STATUTORY ELECTIONS**

**a) President** - The Executive Committee as well as the Central Committee had unanimously approved the nomination of **Jürgen Peters** (IG Metall) re-election as President of the IMF. There being no other candidates, Peters was unanimously elected. President Peters thanked the Congress for its vote of confidence.

**b) General Secretary** - Marcello Malentacchi, having been selected as the candidate for re-election as IMF General Secretary, was also unanimously elected. Marcello pledged his commitment to continue to do his very best to advance the goals of the IMF for another four years.

**c) Executive Committee Members** - The following candidates from the six regions of the IMF were elected, **including eight women**, an historical achievement in the annals of the IMF:

- Africa** - Silumko Nondwangu - NUMSA, South Africa
- Selina Tyikwe - NUMSA, South Africa
- Nkakatsi Boniface - TUICO, Tanzania
- Mohamed Nsiri - FGME-UGTT, Tunisia

**Asia & Pacific -** Jessie Yeo Hong Cheng - IMF-SC, Singapore  
Julius Roe - AMWU, Australia  
G. Sanjeeva Reddy, INMF, India  
Nobuaki Koga - IMF-JC, Japan

**Latin American  
& Caribbean -** Emilia Santana Valente - CNM-CUT, Brazil  
Nair Goulart - CNTM - Brazil  
Napoleon Gomez - SNTMMS, Mexico  
Francisco Gutierrez - UOM, Argentina (rotation)

**Central &  
Eastern Europe -** Michael Tarassenko - MMWU, Russia  
Lucie Studnicna - OS Kovo, Czech Republic  
Mare Anceva - SMER, Macedonia

**North America -** Leo Gerard - USWA, USA  
R. Thomas Buffenbarger - IAMAW, USA  
Ron Gettelfinger - UAW, USA  
Carol Landry - USWA, Canada

**Western Europe -** Mari-Ann Krantz - Sif, Sweden  
Gianni Rinaldini - FLM, Italy  
Herwig Jorissen - CMB, Belgium  
Jürgen Peters - IG Metall, Germany  
Derek Simpson - IMF British Section – GB  
Kjell Bjorndalen - FF, Norway

**d) Auditing Committee Members -** The following candidates for the Auditing Committee were **elected**:

Håkan Arnelid, Svenska Metall, Sweden  
Werner Funk, SMUV, Switzerland  
Owen Herrstadt, IAM, USA  
Eberhard Vetter, IG Metall, Germany

Before recessing for the day, President PETERS resumed the Chair in order to recognize special guest, Max BAEHRING, who retired in 2003 after 12 years as President of Dansk Metall. He had also served a term as President of Nordic Metall and therefore was a former member of the IMF Executive. In recognition of his reputation as one of the most internationally-minded trade unionists within the entire movement, Peters thanked Brother Baehring and wished him a pleasant retirement, and presented him with a parting gift.

Thereupon, the Congress recessed for the day at 3:45 p.m.

## **TUESDAY MORNING SESSION**

### **24 May 2005**

The Congress reconvened at 9:08 a.m., **Chair Fernando LOPES** (CNM-CUT-Brazil) presiding. Warm greetings were extended to several close friends of the IMF who were in attendance, including Jim Baker, who represented the ILO, and Salvador Castro, President of IMF affiliate CONFETEMA of Chile, who had been a delegate at the 1964 Congress in Vienna. He presented Marcello with a souvenir copy of the Minutes of that Congress. IMF veterans Klaus Zwickel, former President, and David Fowler, former Assistant General Secretary, were also in attendance. Thanks and appreciation were also extended to retirees Michel Huc of France and George Kourpias of the USA.

#### **INTERVENTION by Dr. Alfred GUSENBAUER, the leader of the Social Democratic Party of Austria**

Chair Lopes introduced guest speaker **Dr. Alfred GUSENBAUER**, the leader of the Social Democratic Party in Austria since 2000. He began his remarks by announcing that he was a proud member of the Austrian Metal and Textile Workers Union, which each year managed to negotiate excellent collective agreements both in securing wages and benefits for workers, as well as achieving economic and social progress in Austria.

Earlier in the week, Austria celebrated a number of important milestones, most notably the end of World War II 60 years ago, and also the establishment of the Second Republic. Over the past six decades Austrians had enjoyed years of social and economic advancement, achieved largely due to the efforts of the Austrian trade union movement. Trade unions-- and the metal industries in particular-- deserved congratulations for the role they had played in those successes.

Since the mid-1980s, trade unions, states and whole societies had felt the effects of a difficult international climate characterized by the so-called "Washington Consensus" and by neo-liberal policies based largely upon one single premise: the enhancement of corporate profits together with the lowering of corporate taxes so that capital investments could be used to create new jobs which would supposedly increase the income and purchasing power of the working population. This had been the core of the neo-liberal ideology. However, at least as far as Europe was concerned, it had failed all along the line. Although profits had been much higher than ever before and taxes on those profits were at an all-time low, unemployment had actually increased, and the workers' share had decreased from year to year. In fact, neo-liberalism had achieved exactly the opposite of its stated goals. This accounted for a great deal of unrest among workers because, number one, they were frightened of losing their jobs, and secondly, workers felt they were under more and more pressure to constantly work faster and more efficiently with no additional pay. In fact, their paychecks tended to become smaller and smaller.

The solution lie in overcoming the neo-liberalist system and the establishment of new policies which did not measure the goals in life simply by abstract profits but rather on the quality of life and the earnings of working people. A new economic paradigm geared toward creating jobs and securing the income of the population was necessary. These ideas were sweeping across Europe as evidenced by more and more protests being aimed at political leaders against unbridled profits. People had become dissatisfied with the neo-liberal system and questioned what the future held for them and what the alternatives were.

Both the Social Democratic Party and the unions in Austria believed the country's priorities had to ensure that policies promoted economic growth. They wanted investment in public

infrastructure such as roadways, railroads, the internet, investments in knowledge and research. They wanted a tax policy which offered incentives to real investment and also imposed an appropriate tax on all profit-making enterprises. The financing of public projects should not be borne only by working people and consumers. Companies had to accept their responsibility by contributing to the tax base of governments. In some cases, the workers of some international companies paid more than the company itself in taxes, providing further proof of social irresponsibility.

This was where the European Union had a role to play. Where consumers were concerned, taxes for individuals such as the Value Added Tax were differentiated according to one's expenditures on certain items. However, taxes on corporate profits were completely arbitrary and resulted in a reduction in taxes year in and year out. This was completely misguided. It had been proven, at least in Europe, that those countries which did not participate in tax dumping but continued to impose taxes on profits were precisely the countries which had the highest growth rate and the best development in terms of the labour market. Therefore, in order to combat neo-liberalism in Europe, one of the first tasks was to have tax harmonization for corporations and put an end to tax competition.

On the political scene, the Social Democratic Movement in Austria was in the minority at the moment, and elections were scheduled for the early fall of 2006. They were optimistic about winning because they were the only party that understood that the population wanted to see changes in basic economic and social policies. The SDP considered itself part of a European and international project which aimed to correct the failures of neo-liberalism and produce the proper balance between labour and capital. Their goal was to have sufficient work for everybody and a living wage for those who did the work.

### **INTERVENTION by Sharan BURROW, President of ICFTU**

Chair Lopes then introduced ICFTU President **Sharan BURROW**, former Vice President of Education International, who said that her presence at the Congress was her first official duty as ICFTU President since her recent election, and she looked forward to working closely with the IMF in the years to come.

Unions throughout history had been central to democratic struggles and the quest for peace, bread and freedom, which still remained the goal of organized labor today. Workers in Belarus, Burma, Colombia, Zimbabwe and many others struggled for political stability and fundamental rights, while others paid the price for corporate globalization based on the mobility of capital and production. The IMF held a strong tradition of solidarity which empowered it to fight for peace and development for others, things which could only be achieved through partnership, solidarity and political action. "Labour is not merely a commodity," she said, as she described the challenge for the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the establishment of global rules of law which guaranteed respect for the rights of workers, without whom the global economy would collapse. The violation of trade union rights by the multinationals in many countries amounted to crimes against humanity, while world governments turned a blind eye to the plight of their own citizens.

Instead of being able to embrace globalization as a means of improving the lives of workers and their families, unions were fighting against corporate greed which was out of control. The MNCs concerned themselves only with profits at the expense of wages, safety in the workplace, decent conditions and entitlements for workers. For example, Australia had recently published its list of the top 100 companies listing the salaries for corporate CEOs. While big business campaigned for lower taxes and more corporate subsidies, the CEO of one major financial institution had received a 47 percent bonus on top of his

salary, adding up to an obscene six million euro in one year. The measure was approved almost without comment by the board of directors. Yet business leaders had backed an attack by the Australian government to reduce minimum wages and destroy collective bargaining rights. Two billion people were living on less than two dollars (US) per day, 187 million were unemployed, and around 2.2 million died either at work or as a result of a work-related injury.

Without global rules to protect the rights of workers and the environment, the dislocation of jobs and the increasing gap between the rich and the poor would continue to grow. This required both union and political action on a global scale to ensure legal entitlements. The ICFTU was committed to work with the IMF and other Global Union Federations in demanding respect for workers' rights by the MNCs as well as their supply chains. Organizing was necessary within and across borders. In addition, politicians must be held accountable for breaches of citizens' rights.

A framework for fair trade also required reform of the UN, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and, of course, the WTO. Without equivalent global rules and laws, workers were more easily victimized. This necessitated a stronger role for the ILO in terms of processing complaints and prosecuting abuses. The IMF had asked that the issue of employment be at the heart of the WTO ministerial conference to be held in Hong Kong. Trade had an enormous impact on the level and quality of employment, living standards and social development; yet the consequences of unregulated free trade were neglected. Therefore, any trade deals on products, skills and services should promote both development and employment goals.

"Our call to action against poverty is just the beginning," she said, as she described how new alliances with NGOs was aimed at gaining more influence in politics. The right-wing governments of the world were seduced by corporate boards and intimidated by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the OECD. Therefore, achieving IMF's ambitions for "globalization with a human face" required building union strength as well as increased political action. Only unions and civil society supporting labour-friendly political leaders could overcome the swing to the far right that had taken place. Therefore, the challenge for this year was to mobilize and let national governments know that democracy extended beyond the ballot box.

She referred to the solidarity demonstrations during Australia's Day of Mourning in April which paid tribute to workers who had lost their lives due to job-related incidents, and thanked the IMF, particularly those affiliates in the Netherlands and the USA, for their solidarity in the fight for just compensation for the James Hardie asbestos victims. The ILO's plan to launch a project calling for a global ban of this killer product was entirely justified and necessary. Far-reaching campaigns such as this required unity of spirit, oneness of heart, and global union strength. "We cannot indulge in isolationism," she said. While national structures and traditions were important, trade unions must recognize that the priorities of the international trade union movement were intertwined. GUFs and national centers needed to work seamlessly with the ICFTU to tackle the obvious challenges of bringing about increased organizing, corporate campaigning, shareholder activism, consumer power and political clout for improved labor and corporate laws.

The real challenge was the urgent need for agreed-upon priorities within the framework of a "new internationalism." The upcoming ICFTU Executive meeting would focus on five key areas for unions as the critical first steps: (1) a political project on globalization; (2) the global call to action against poverty; (3) enterprise processing zones; (4) migrant workers; and (5) China. The issue was how to build and measure success. Only acting in concert

could such goals be achieved. “We have to identify the areas, go after them, and stay at them collectively until we succeed,” she insisted. The central challenge was to demand respect for women’s rights and migrant workers. “Unions need women and women need unions.” She commended the IMF for its election of eight women to the Executive. Common humanity called upon all trade unions to fight for the human and labor rights of migrant workers as well. Employment without exploitation was the only sustainable solution to poverty.

“We share a common struggle,” Burrow said-- for core labour standards and sustainable development in the developing world; respect and support for the efforts of countries in transition; and the maintenance and strengthening of achievements in developed nations. The common aspirations for a decent life were peace, bread and freedom. And history would show that the unions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were united in solidarity to build a just global world.

General Secretary MALENTACCHI thanked Sister Burrow for her interesting and challenging keynote address and pledged the IMF's support for the ICFIU's ambitious endeavors of building a new “world labour movement.”

## **ITEM 11: ACTION PROGRAMME**

Malentacchi echoed Burrow’s point that, despite all the different cultures and countries the IMF affiliates represented, the fight was the same. Globalization had attempted to undo the achievements of the labour movement over the past 100 years. Unions were confronted with great difficulties and methods which were successful in the past were no longer effective in the current economic environment. Neo-liberal globalization influenced the economy, politics and development in every country of the world. Different strategies and tactics were needed but must be planned and implemented in a unified manner. The IMF Action Programme was an international plan, a global plan designed to improve the lives of workers in the global economy.

The Action Programme for 2005 to 2009 was the fourth one developed by the IMF, and was the result of a one-year process that involved the collaboration of representatives from all the affiliates. It contained strategies for achievable goals, recognizing that linking local, national and international unions was paramount in order to be effective. The program’s three sections included (1) an analysis of the impact of globalization, particularly on workers and the world of work; (2) the IMF Mission Statement which laid down the IMF’s basic values and principles; and (3) strategies and proposals for action to be undertaken to effectively challenge the forces of global capital.

In order to facilitate the discussion, each chapter would be introduced by a speaker, followed by a roundtable discussion which focused on one particular element of the Action Programme. Robert Taylor, a journalist from the UK, would act as the moderator of the roundtable discussions, each consisting of a four-member panel selected from among the affiliates. The proposals would then be open for plenary discussion, after which there would be a summary of the discussion and a motion for adoption of those chapters. In addition, proposed resolutions would be dealt with at the relevant times during the debate. Any outstanding resolutions would be dealt with on Wednesday afternoon.

**Chapter 1** of the Action Program provided an analysis of the impact of globalization, particularly on workers and the world of work. It made clear that globalization had the potential to benefit workers, particularly in developing countries. However, thus far it had

not resulted in improved prospects for social advances and sustainable development. Indeed, globalization had brought about the elimination of protective laws for labor, consumers and the environment. Market forces ruled the global economy without any regard for the consequences. The situation of underemployed or unemployed workers made no economic sense and was neither politically or socially sustainable. Political organizations originally founded to represent workers' interests had moved away from those goals and looked for support from capital. Consequently, the labor movement needed to develop the means to influence the political process more directly and effectively.

Restrictive laws had been passed to challenge workers' rights. The liberalization of financial markets had worsened the situation by creating a destabilizing effect on the world economy. The world trading system was in crisis and the WTO's rules were geared towards the interests of rich countries and multinational corporations. Core labor standards and workers' rights were violated by governments in trade and investment agreements. Trade had the potential to contribute to development and reduce poverty, but new policies and practices needed to be developed first.

In this era of worldwide unbridled capitalism, many organizations which shared the same common concerns as the IMF had emerged. Throughout the world, people had mobilized against corporate abuses and deregulation. Some organizations, such as the World Social Forum, had developed into a valuable platform for those looking for alternatives to the neo-liberal agenda. IMF should form stronger links with these organizations, and the Mission Statement in **Chapter 2** made it very clear that IMF's fundamental mission was to improve metalworkers' wages, working and living conditions, and to ensure that workers' rights were respected. The challenge was to make economic globalization serve the people of the world.

Global organization was needed. Capital had managed to transcend national borders, but unions by and large still operated within countries. It was imperative to build a global union structure capable of coordinating and implementing actions at all levels anywhere in the world. The ability to understand and communicate critical issues was necessary. It was important to strengthen existing trade unions through organizing, unify the metalworkers' movement, expand the rights of women workers and advance workers' rights. Alliances with political and social organizations that shared IMF's objectives had to be built. Fair trade, social justice and the elimination of poverty had to be promoted. To accomplish these goals unions needed an international focus.

The mobility of capital and competition among countries to attract investment created tensions between and within countries. There was a race to the bottom for lower wages and less social security which only benefited the interests of capital and undermined labor standards. In order to advance workers' rights, international solidarity had to be the modus operandi of each and every union that made up the IMF.

General Secretary MALENTACCHI moved adoption of Chapters 1 and 2 of the Action Programme.

Stephen LOFVEN (Svenska Metall-Sweden) discussed the **political work** of trade unions on a worldwide scale. Modern technology made it possible to communicate quickly across the globe, to move capital, and to change aspects of production very quickly. He recounted the history of labour over the past 100 years and the way trade unions had changed society. Even Sweden practiced free trade in order to sell its products, which made them prosperous even a century ago. But nothing was said about the distribution of the profits.

Workers had very poor conditions, low wages, long working hours, no social security, and were banned from joining unions or becoming involved in politics. Eventually, the workers adopted a trade union strategy and joined together to enable themselves to participate in collective bargaining as their primary function.

The other dimension to trade unions was uniting in political work for the good of society, so the right political decisions could be made in a democratic manner. In today's economic society, globalization had the possibility of increasing prosperity all over the world. However, exploitation of workers in the developing countries such as child labor and slave labor could not be condoned. "We need to learn the lessons of the past," he said. Unions needed to join together in global trade union activities and at the same time remain a significant force within their own national and local trade unions as well. He underscored the importance of political work and the value of forming alliances with social movements in shaping public opinion. Pressure must be put on the political parties who made legislative decisions affecting workers.

Daniel SANCHEZ (FTM-CGT-France) said that the effects of **globalization** on the rights of workers, whether in the developing or the industrialized nations, was always the same: shareholders' dividends came first. Employers demanded increased productivity requiring longer working time in order to boost profits in the financial centers. Governments said it was inevitable and "part of progress." The capitalist model had forced trade unions to accept unfair concessions and reduce their demands. Globalization had spread the crisis worldwide, which demanded even greater responsibility on the part of the trade unions and the GUFs.

The Action Programme as presented was the basis of strategies to meet the challenges facing trade unions in the 21st Century. The question was how to defend labor rights and build social progress based on solidarity. Trade unions had to become more visible. Worldwide solidarity was needed in order to defend the achievements and social benefits earned by unions for their members in the hope those benefits would be shared by all workers in the world some day. He suggested the possibility of establishing an International Action Day of all metalworkers for the defense of workers' rights. A show of strength and solidarity such as this would convey a message to workers that trade unions were relevant and had an important role to play in shaping the future of globalization and its effect on workers.

Renate BLAUENSTEINER (GMT-Austria) agreed that globalization as it existed today always favored capital without regard to social responsibility or labour rights. Jobs were being relocated and moved offshore to countries where rights for workers were practically non-existent for both men and women, although **women** were the hardest hit. Women had less social benefits and tended to earn as much as 70 percent less than men. In Austria, due to the efforts of strong trade unions, they had been able to attenuate the effects of globalization somewhat; however, they had not yet reached the level of other countries. More women were being given casual jobs. In Austria they demanded human rights and social standards, such as equal pay for equal work, as well as maternity leave provisions. The Action Programme activities should not remain just something on paper but should be implemented and expanded in order to strengthen the world community.

N. GOMEZ URRUTIA (SNTMMS-Mexico) expressed his view that over the next four years labor unions faced many challenges. Unions were confronted by multinational companies and their allied governments which acted in concert against freedom of association and workers' rights. They promoted **casual labor** and **outsourcing** which weakened the unions and resulted in decreased membership. The National Mining Union

in Mexico had tried to promote a policy to reverse or at least control the level of outsourcing. Outsourcing posed a permanent threat, a cancer which was decimating the unions. Their union had made a firm decision to fight these abuses and had created a monitoring system on the multinationals.

To fight the challenges ahead, it was necessary to establish an effective global union strategy to fight the negative effects of globalization and the market penetration of the multinationals, a strategy geared toward strengthening unity in order to achieve power. Opportunistic attitudes and betrayals by governments and MNCs could not be tolerated. Modern unions must work with more intelligence and with greater commitment in the social struggle. This required aggressive organizing. It was also important to remain independent and autonomous in order to resist threats from the multinationals. A new philosophy had to be adopted which placed more importance on labor and work. Greater solidarity should be used as a practical tool to act on behalf of any social struggle or the interest of workers on a global scale.

The challenge for the next few years was to have a concrete action strategy which demonstrated trade union presence and strength, as well as their philosophy of international brotherhood dedicated to improving working conditions and defending the dignity of workers. He presented a position paper to the Secretariat as the commitment of Mexico's views on this subject.

Inge ADAM (GMT-Austria) stated that more and more **women** were forced to switch from full-time jobs to part-time jobs and casual jobs with less pay. Women were the first in line to be made redundant in the event of layoffs. Many of these women were single mothers. More and more women had fallen below the poverty line and depended on social welfare. Older women often could not get jobs at all because employers argued that apparently they were too expensive and fell ill too often. In addition, women in the workplace were often sexually harassed and bullied by their male colleagues. They often suffered from depression and some even attempted suicide. The list of abuses against women went on and on. She urged the unions to work together and fight for justice for women workers and equal pay because, as she pointed out, "human rights also included women's rights."

Tam MITCHELL (ICU-Great Britain) talked about his union's involvement in recent activities. In the summer of 2004, in conjunction with an organization called "Action for **Southern Africa**," they had launched a campaign called "Africa Matters" which brought attention to the situation in the Sub-Sahara African region and the issues of aid, trade and debt in their domestic and national agenda. Although the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer had not always been supportive of trade union campaigns, he had been extremely helpful in the launching and promotion of this program. The campaign was a huge success, and ICU had already hosted events for awareness in the beginning of 2005 where they had raised enough money to hold regional seminars to make their own members more aware of the situation in Africa and the reasons they had tackled the problems in Africa. It was not only for charitable reasons. They were playing a key role in organizing demonstrations before the leaders of the G-8 governments who were holding their conference in Scotland in July. They were keeping the pressure on the UK government to make Africa a key part of the agenda when it hosted the EU conference later this year.

Sarde S. RAO (INMWFI-India) acknowledged that the Action Programme was an important document which would no doubt be taken very seriously by all IMF affiliates. Therefore, its contents should be more reflective of the realities and necessities of workers all over the world. He felt it did not emphasize from an economic point of view the unique

historical, political and social context of some countries, and feared this might be misleading.

Concerning the role of international financial institutions discussed on Pages 6 and 7, the document indicated they did a good job in the reconstruction of the world economies after World War II, but in the present context they had a different job altogether. He declared that since the mid 1940s, especially in the Third World and the developing countries, it was all about land reform, self-reliance, state capitalism, and import substitution. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the **role of the IFIs** had come back into prominence. The idea that globalization could benefit the people provided it adopted a deregulation agenda was very unlikely. That was not the nature of the beast. The misguided rules of the IFIs had created havoc in the world and should be addressed within the document in its proper perspective. The document also stated that foreign direct investment was essential for economic development. This was true; however, much of the direct investment flowing into the developing countries had conditions attached to it that were not in the best interests of the nation states.

With regard to Section 1.9 about the **World Social Forum**, the document stressed it was a platform for those seeking alternatives to the neo-liberal agenda, and therefore the IMF should support its agenda. This subject had been discussed among the unions in India and the consensus was that the World Social Forum was not a dedicated “movement,” but a forum which appeared only once in four years and then disappeared. Rao cautioned that many of the participants in the World Social Forum were NGOs with special interests which did not include improving the lot of the working class. At best, the World Social Forum should be considered a platform for free thinkers. He felt that these aspects of the Action Programme needed to be readdressed in order to really win the fight against globalization and secure justice for all working people throughout the world.

Erika NUSSGRABER (GMT-Austria) commented that financial institutions and our own economies had become more and more interconnected, a trend which led to more uncertainty for workers and a weakening of solidarity for the trade union movement. This created a challenge for the IMF because globalization for workers meant the loss of secure jobs and an increase in more casual employment, loss of earnings, and more discrimination against women. It was heartening to see that since the Congress in Sydney women had become much more involved in the IMF structures and were now included in the Executive Committee. In fact, Chapter 2 of the Action Programme, clearly indicated that the IMF had placed the rights of women workers at the top of its list of priorities. The issue of **women’s rights** also encompassed the need for reform in areas such as employment and health policy, social security, equal opportunity and treatment, and reconciling family and work.

Two resolutions had been presented to the Congress regarding women, one concerning a declaration on gender equality, and the other dealing with women at work in globalized conditions. Women needed to be involved more in their trade union work; therefore, it was essential that the elements of the Action Programme and the resolutions be implemented in order to appeal to women and bring them into the IMF family.

Erik LINDFORS (ML-Finland) said that the present challenge for the trade union movement was to develop better international cooperation, which did not happen through making speeches at congresses and seminars but by participating in everyday activities in the spirit of comradeship. The MNCs were moving capital and jobs from one country to another in efforts to achieve greater profits. Rapid technical advancements had hastened the global changes in terms of liberalization of world trade. The accession of the

developing countries to the growing world economy was a positive phenomenon. Labor unions were not only critics of the wave of **globalization**; they were also serious and constructive negotiating partners for companies and authorities. They demanded that when companies introduced structural changes globally they would apply decent standards and adhere to certain codes of conduct. In addition, operations must be carefully monitored because capital could not be allowed to operate freely. Major companies exploited the workers in developing countries, which was a direct violation of the basic goals of the trade union movement. The workers in the industrialized nations were also fighting to keep jobs from being moved offshore. The goal was to create a more fair world economy and to see that rules were established for world trade.

On another topic, Lindfors reported that, unfortunately, the protocol of the Kyoto Convention would probably not come to fruition since so many industrialized nations had not signed it, nor would it affect the newly emerging economic powers. All countries should take part in this environmental goal with equal commitment in order to **reduce emission levels** as prescribed by the UN.

He reported the **shipbuilding** industry was booming and probably would continue to grow, despite some difficulties in a few European shipyards. Complaints had been lodged that some countries used state aid to support their shipbuilding industry, but these complaints took a long time to deal with in the World Trade Organization. Therefore, the OECD recommended a new international convention which banned subsidies which had the effect of distorting the market. The EMF supported that position. Even though the industry was stable at the moment, there were still problems in the industry where workers did not have basic rights to organize, to negotiate, or to have decent working conditions. Industrial accidents were common due to the lack of safety standards. The worst of these deplorable conditions were found in the **shipbreaking** industry where men worked in their bare feet. The international trade union movement should work to ensure that when new countries joined the WTO they made a commitment to adhere to the ILO's minimum standards.

In closing, Lindfors said that in 2004 the Finish affiliates had decided to organize a social forum in 2006 to be held in conjunction with the **AFIM Summit** in Finland. Discussions on human rights, trade union rights and workers' rights would be the focus. The idea was to then secure an international agreement at the AFIM Summit which would guarantee workers' rights to join unions and to negotiate independent collective agreements. If the WTO adopted such an agreement, the ILO would then have the right to step into the picture every time a member country of the World Trade Organization violated the agreement.

Nair GOULART (CNTM-Brazil) commended the IMF for the preparation of a comprehensive Action Programme which embraced practically all the concerns of workers in today's economy. She referred to her experience over the past 20 years as an employee of General Electric in Rio de Janeiro where a workforce of 4,000 had dwindled to a mere 600. The company had outsourced most of its production, and her job as a quality inspector had been made redundant. In 1981, there were 400,000 metalworkers working in 11,000 companies in Sao Paulo, as compared to 280,000 workers today. About 150,000 workers had lost their jobs, and about 2,000 companies had disappeared as well. Back in the '80s, the workers had fought against the military dictatorship and had finally achieved a new democratic constitution guaranteeing direct elections for state governors and for the president of the republic. The Brazilians celebrated 20 years of democracy, the longest period of democracy they had ever enjoyed.

The country was not without problems, however. Unemployment in Brazil ran about 12%. Another 60% were underemployed working in the informal sector. Despite the advances made by the government, the ILO and several NGOs, there were more than two million **children in the workforce**. Slave labor accounted for another 600,000 workers. Ten percent of the population living in the cities did not have basic sanitation or minimum healthcare. Only 25% of the homes had sewage systems. **Women** in the workplace, particularly black women, were subject to both sexual and racial discrimination and received the lowest wages. Both black and white women had the highest level of unemployment. Women workers in Brazil wanted to have a voice in policy-making in order to attain equal opportunities in employment and in society, as well as equal pay for equal work and the sharing of family responsibilities and child care. Women could not be excluded from unions and governments, nor from social organizations in general. Women trade unionists wanted women's rights and human rights to be recognized in order to transform the society they wished to have in their country.

Mija JO (KMWF-Korea) expressed her satisfaction at being able to experience the international solidarity of the IMF Congress and to see greater opportunities for women become a reality. She called for even greater participation by women and the need to organize women workers whose labor rights were suppressed. Fighting for increased women's rights was one of the most practical ways to fight against the capitalist agenda. Globalization had allowed the multinationals to go anywhere in the world and do whatever they wanted. They had succeeded in wiping out hard-won workers' rights.

Currently, about 180 **subcontract workers** in Korea were on strike against Hynix MagnaChip, which was owned by Lone Star. They were fired from the company because they attempted to organize into a union. The three leaders of these workers were subject to arrest. A similar situation had happened in the Philippines where 230 workers of Philippine Toyota were fired simply because of their organizing activities, although the ILO had recommended their reinstatement. The groups most affected by the effects of globalization were the female migrant workers and the female temporary workers. The Korean government had been given authority in 1997 from the International Monetary Fund to hire and fire workers and carry out restructuring as they saw fit. The largest group laid off permanently were the married female workers. Those who were retained received only half their original wages. Of the total labor force in Korea, about 58% were temporary workers, 70% of whom were women. An organizing movement was needed so that full-time workers could not be replaced by temporary workers. The workers had to fight against the government's promotion of neo-liberalism and struggled to gain women's rights. International solidarity was a valuable asset in this struggle and the unions could not sit idly by and let the WTO decide the fate of the workers.

## **INTERVENTION by Adrie PAPMA of OXFAM**

Discussion on the Action Program was suspended temporarily in order to allow guest speaker Adrie PAPMA, Director of Oxfam, an international alliance-building organization, address the Congress.

Papma explained that Oxfam was a confederation of 12 development agencies around the world which acknowledged the vital importance of advocacy and campaigning on global issues. The organization had shifted from being a donor and humanitarian aid organization to one which played a strategic role in changing global policies, rules, and opinions which stood in the way of advancing the global fight against poverty. In order to achieve that goal, Oxfam had developed closer links with the world's trade union movement. They campaigned on issues of importance to workers, which included fighting exploitation and

abuse in the supply chains of multinational companies. They sought joint approaches to issues of common concern, such as making trade more fair and achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals.

Oxfam had launched a campaign which showed the complete lack of corporate social responsibility policies of MNCs to improve the lives of supply chain workers. Due to their efforts, anti-worker legislation had been blocked in one country and in another a pay raise had been achieved for the workers. Companies were failing, in spite of ethical policies, to reform their purchasing practices which squeezed workers hard at the bottom of the global supply chains, particularly those working in export processing zones. Many companies were now taking a far more serious attitude to working with trade union organizations to address these criticisms.

As an example, a high profile alliance had been established between the ICFTU, the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation, and the Clean Clothes Campaign, to pressure the sportswear industry to respect the rights of its workers. The campaign involved trade unions and NGOs working together in 30 countries and assured that the industry could no longer avoid taking action by playing off trade unions against NGOs as they had done in the past. Resources could be pooled to complement each others' strengths. Their combined networks had increased their reach dramatically. By working together, they had mobilized the biggest anti-sweatshop campaign in ten years and made significant gains in putting a stop to abuse and exploitation across that industry. The campaign had led to some positive changes for workers as well as building trust and mutual respect between the campaign allies. Their victory illustrated what could be done by working together. Ms. Pampa indicated that running international campaigns on workers' rights required new approaches and greater capacity. It also required added pressure from outside the traditional system of industrial relations and industrial action. Oxfam used its leverage with consumers and the media to inform the public that companies were abusing their corporate muscle in exploiting supply chain workers.

Building alliances with unions had been a rewarding experience for Oxfam. They shared IMF's mission to promote fair trade and poverty eradication. Their work with the trade union movement on those issues had grown as they became more active in union conferences and forums. Oxfam echoed the IMF belief that more attention had to be paid to workers in EPZs, which were under-represented by trade unions. Oxfam welcomed the IMF challenge to build alliances with social organizations in order to weaken the power of transnationals and looked forward to working with the IMF in the future.

The discussion on Chapters 1 and 2 continued with Francisco GUTIERREZ (UOM-Argentina) who stated that the Action Program was a document which helped analyze and understand developments in the world economy. It described the impact of globalization on economies, on human rights, the environment and sustainable development. "The economic model as it exists today is a disease," he said-- a cancer which had tragic consequences for all humankind. It had led to problems such as unemployment, malnutrition and child labor. The trade unions' objective was to find a remedy to solve that situation. It was important to start with national trade union experiences in each country in order to find common denominators which led to the establishment of an overall strategy at the world level in order to correct globalization policies.

Gutierrez recounted the history of Argentina over the past four years as the government had applied neo-liberal policies in support of the large multinationals, the World Bank and the WTO. Rejection of those policies by the workers and the people of Argentina led to strikes and trade union resistance. The workers fought for jobs because factory after

factory had closed down. Two hundred factories were taken over and managed by the workers. Fifty percent of the people worked under the poverty line, unemployment and under-employment soared, and the external debt reached \$180 billion.

In 2001 the **neo-liberal model** imploded and the financial system collapsed; banks and industry were paralyzed, unemployment increased, and a two-day strike was called. People called for more work. The president and the corrupt government were criticized. Argentina had five presidents elected and rejected in one week because those elected wanted to continue with the neo-liberal model, but the people rebelled and prevailed. A new government was elected, one that respected the mandate of the people and ran counter to the neo-liberal model. This was achieved by workers uniting with other social groups and communities who demanded a better economic model.

The efforts of President Lula and President Kirchner helped bring about a change in economic strategy. Negotiations had begun with the International Monetary Fund to change its rules and forgive the indebtedness of Argentina in order to stimulate development. The IMF had brought pressure to bear against Argentina to reopen negotiations and force them to pay their debts. Gutierrez suggested that the section of the Action Programme which referred to **debt forgiveness** be taken up by the entire trade union movement. Development of the emerging countries was necessary for the sustainable growth of the developed countries, and this necessitated a solution to the debt problem.

Dimas RANGEL (SITIMM-Mexico) discussed the current problems in the auto industry in Mexico. Huge reductions in the production of new cars as well as car parts had impacted the workforce. Together with other union leaders in the auto industry, complaints had been lodged with federal authorities and the labor ministry about the situation. Working with each other and with the IMF, they developed a policy to assist the car parts and car assembly plants and initiated collective bargaining negotiations with the companies. During negotiations, the companies proposed a 4% wage reduction which the unions rejected. In the end, workers received an increase of 5.5%, a tremendous achievement. Their celebration was short-lived, however, when the members of the negotiating committee were laid off and 90 workers were dismissed. The other workers were threatened with dismissal if they continued to protest.

The union presented its case to the Mexican Confederation and requested support from the IMF, asking the region to discuss this problem in an upcoming meeting in San Paulo. They felt the company had attempted to undermine the organization and had conspired with other companies to prevent the workers from getting work. The union members were still fighting and were determined to take part in all the programs approved in the Congress in order to push forward trade union rights. With the support of the Mexican Confederation and the IMF, they hoped to withstand the attacks made by these automobile companies. He appealed for better strategies to stop the injustices on workers and unions.

General Secretary MALENTACCHI, before commenting on the remarks of the various participants, welcomed Anita Normark, the only female General Secretary of a GUF, the IFBWW, who had their offices in the same building as the IMF in Geneva.

Malentacchi thanked the delegates for an informative discussion. As Brother Lofven had stated, in the past a lot of good things had been achieved through alliances with various political parties backed by the working class. But a few of those parties were beginning to move in another direction. There was the risk that if these parties swung further to the

right, those relationships might not exist in the future. The IMF had to abide by its principles and work only with those political parties that shares IMF's fundamental values.

Brother Sanchez had repeated the call made by Giorgio Caprioli for an International Day of Action by the IMF and its affiliates. This had been discussed in previous Congresses and perhaps it was time to take action. May Day was the traditional time when all workers reaffirmed their principles and perhaps that could be the day when the IMF mobilized for their demands. On the other hand, it might be more appropriate to set aside a special day just for metalworkers alone. He promised that the proposal would be discussed in more detail at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Responding to the suggestion made by Brother Rao, he agreed that the translation of the document itself was very important. The Information and Communication Department would determine how it should be disseminated throughout the organization. Nair Goulart had mentioned incorporating the Action Program into the day-to-day work of the affiliates. This was another aspect of the translation and distribution process.

Rao had also spoken of working together with some NGOs in India. In the World Social Forum, there were NGOs with which the IMF could work, and there were others who did not share the same fundamental ideals and principles. The IMF had to be very selective about which organizations it worked with in different parts of the world. Sometimes an NGO acted differently at the global than the national level, so it had to be viewed on an individual basis.

Ms. Mija Jo was concerned about workers who had been dismissed for their union activities during the recent strikes in Korea and the Philippines. The IMF supported these workers 100 percent and would do everything it could to put pressure on the two companies mentioned to force them into compliance with the ILO conventions.

Malentacchi thanked the delegates again for the debate and submitted the two sections for approval. Having been put to a vote, Chapters 1 and 2 of the Action Programme were **adopted unanimously**.

Silumko NONDWANGU (NUMSA-South Africa) presented Proposed Resolution No. 6.

**RESOLUTION No. 6**  
**ERADICATING POVERTY THROUGH DECENT WORK,**  
**FAIR TRADE, AND DEVELOPMENT**

(Submitted by NUMSA, South Africa, and IMF British Section)

The 31<sup>st</sup> Congress, representing women and men working in the metal working industries in all regions of the world:

Convinced that the persistence of poverty anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere and is a source of the denial of basic human rights, and that integral human development requires governments to respect fully trade union and other fundamental democratic rights;

Appalled that poverty in developing countries still claims the lives of 30,000 children every day through hunger or preventable disease;

Noting the recent Commission on Africa Report to the G8 countries is an urgent call to action to end world poverty;

Noting further the ILO World Commission conclusion that globalization in its present form is not sustainable and that policies for so-called free trade advanced by some rich countries are a source of continuing human suffering on an immense scale.

CONVINCED THAT:

The majority of people who experience the worst forms of poverty today are workers and rural peasant populations in developing countries, women in particular;

The present global order in which the majority of the Earth's people are poor while a small fraction is rich is unsustainable;

In developing countries, especially in Africa, poverty is growing in inverse proportion to the growth of productive forces in the world, while many women and men have no jobs, or have poor paid and increasingly casual and unprotected ones;

The eradication of poverty requires, among other global measures, the mobilization of global workers' solidarity;

RECOGNIZES THAT:

Increased aid and credit will not be sufficient to open opportunities to developing countries to sustain industrial development and raise family incomes;

The current trade policies of the most powerful trade blocs-- in particular the heavy subsidies paid to farmers-- restrict access to northern markets and perpetuate poverty and acute suffering;

All the unpayable debt of the world's poorest countries must be wiped out.

The promotion of fair trade, and particularly the elimination of agricultural export subsidies are indispensable so that developing countries can share in the benefits of international trade and investment.

The unprecedented global growth of forces of production offers today the greatest possibility of spreading the benefits of just incomes and eliminating the scourge of mass unemployment in developing countries.

The creation of decent work must be the central priority of governments, and the main element of a truly development-focused round of trade negotiations. Trade should be an important factor in the attainment of development and the creation of decent work, but for many workers the international trading system is either irrelevant or, worse, is undermining this objective. In developing countries and industrialized countries alike, agriculture, job security and decent livelihoods are seen to be menaced rather than enhanced by trade, while multinational companies threaten to shift production to where workers' rights are denied and labor is cheap.

Expansive promises about the potential of trade liberalization through the WTO have failed to materialize in terms of more and better jobs and higher growth either worldwide or in developing countries. Indeed, many developing countries that undertook trade liberalization in line with the policies recommended by the WTO, as well as by the international financial institutions, found de-industrialization to be the outcome as their domestic industries collapsed in consequence.

Employment must be at the center of the agenda in the preparation for the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial. The impact trade has on the level and quality of employment determines whether trade contributes to or detracts from raising living standards, achieving development and eliminating poverty. Yet the employment consequences of trade are virtually always neglected in trade negotiations, despite these self-evident linkages.

This situation needs to change fundamentally so that trade negotiations take place on the basis of a comprehensive ex ante assessment of their impact on the level and stability of employment (particularly in labor-intensive sectors), respect for fundamental workers' rights, equality between women and men, good working conditions, social protection, as well as food security and access to quality public services.

The challenges facing developing and least developed countries are even more acute in the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations. At both multilateral and national levels, a rigorous assessment needs to be conducted of the impact of NAMA negotiations on development, decent work and people living in poverty. Governments should not make deals in such negotiations except on the basis of a clear picture of the likely repercussions on their ability to implement industrial policies to attain their development and employment goals.

The provision of national and international funding is needed to support employment adjustment assistance when jobs are lost as a result of trade liberalization.

Both developing and industrialized countries need to have the policy space to undertake legitimate domestically-based industrial development strategies. NAMA negotiations should not overly restrict and flexibility. A clause is needed that would enable any developing countries (particularly least developed countries) that do bind their tariffs, to be able to alter that commitment on grounds of justified social and development purposes. They should have the right to retain higher tariffs if they so wish, in line with the principle of "less than full reciprocity" contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration.

Congress declares the full backing for the Global Call to Action Against Poverty and urges the affiliates to mobilize their membership to:

- demand of their national Governments that the creation of decent work be at the center of their agenda, particularly in trade liberalization negotiations.
- call on G8 countries at their meeting in June to introduce effective policies against poverty.

THE IMF SHALL:

- continue working in close collaboration with the other Global Union partners and with like-minded social movements for the attainment of the goals indicated above
- in particular, build the capacity of affiliates to effectively influence their governments' policies on trade, aid and development
- use IFAs as a tool to strengthen worker's rights to information and education on the above issues.

Nondwangu briefly summarized the contents of Resolution 6, which spoke to the essence of what brought 25 million metalworkers into the IMF, which was basically solidarity. It acknowledged the adverse effect neo-liberalism had on the developing countries and pointed out the existing gap between the countries of the north and the south. The conclusions of the ILO Commission with regard to globalization in its present form and the fact that it was unsustainable were also contained in the resolution. Affiliates of the IMF were called upon to take concrete steps and join other social movements around the globe with regard to campaigns on issues of fair trade for countries of the south. Closer cooperation between global trade unions and social movements was urged. It called upon the IMF to build capacity in unions situated in the south so they could be empowered to engage their own governments on issues regarding trade. Lastly, the resolution called for the inclusion in the international framework agreements of issues related to information and education. He called upon Congress to endorse this resolution.

Michael LEAHY (C.U.-British Section) supported the adoption of Resolution 6. The wretched and lingering deaths of thousands of people due to poverty should have brought shame and remorse to the leaders of the world because each of these deaths was preventable. Clean water, basic food supply and elementary medical care could have saved all of those lives cruelly cut short. People in rich countries had not given the solidarity needed to end this terrible injustice and destruction of human life. He declared the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO were major accessories in crimes against humanity when they failed to act. The world presently had an opportunity to eradicate global poverty. In the UK's recent elections, all the parties had devoted one day and dedicated themselves to beating poverty in the developing countries. The conservative governments in England in the past had denied aid and debt relief to the poorest who needed to lift themselves out of poverty. The new labor government would have the opportunity to lead the G8 countries and the EU Summit to take decisive action to make poverty history. They had set a timetable to achieve the UN goal of .7% of GDP for development aid.

The governments of the European Union should abandon subsidies which paid \$2.00 a day for every European cow. Three billion people in Africa, Asia, Latin America existed on less than that. The export subsidies should be discontinued because they undermined and starved farmers. The G8 governments should push for the forgiveness of the debts of the developing nations, which the poor of the earth had no part in borrowing. The unfair trade rules policed by the WTO took \$2 billion out of developing countries every day. Globalization should serve human needs and not the greed of the rich.

Eradicating poverty would lead to genuine peace and international cooperation. Industrialized countries would benefit because their manufacturing sectors would gain from the massive markets which would grow in Africa, Latin America and the poor countries of Asia. Massive arms expenditures and armed conflicts were inexcusable when people were dying of hunger. Trade union development was the most cost effective way of promoting development and democratically accountable and just governance. All unions were called upon to back the international fight against poverty and injustice.

Resolution 6 was **unanimously adopted**.

### **RESOLUTION No. 3 AGAINST WAR**

(Presented by Alessandra MECOZZI - FLM, Italy)

The right to peace is a fundamental right of every human being: the struggle to fully achieve it is linked to the struggle for economic, social, civil and trade union rights of metalworkers, for sustainable and equal development between the North and the South in which the IMF is involved.

Millions of workers, citizens of the world, have demonstrated against the wars which are causing thousands of civilian victims and bring only death, destruction and hatred. The IMF and its affiliates must express their own opposition to the strategy of “preventive war,” to military occupations, as well as to all forms of terrorism.

The IMF must intensify its efforts to curb the uncontrolled dissemination of arms around the world, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the exponential increase in military expenditures. To that end the IMF and its affiliates support the “Control Arms” campaign promoted at the international level by the non-governmental organizations Amnesty, IANSA (International Action Network against Small Arms) and Oxfam, and to that end they support the nuclear weapons convention and the “Abolition Now” campaign. We cannot forget that, despite the silence surrounding them, over 50 states in the world are at war or experiencing situations of armed conflict. Conflicts often caused or encouraged by unscrupulous multinationals and by the sales of arms despite prohibitions and embargoes imposed at the national and international levels.

With regard to the conflict in Iraq, the IMF considers that the United Nations must play a central role in the new political phase after the elections, in which the Iraqi people have the chance to determine their own future.

In this area the IMF, together with the entire world labor movement, could also play a key role, helping and cooperating with the free Iraqi trade unions in economic reconstruction and social cohesion, struggling to ensure respect for human rights and in particular for the rights of the working class, as a basis for a true democratic society.

Ms. Mecozzi spoke about the unfortunate situation of wars, which affected millions of workers throughout the world. Workers were the first victims of wars, and the IMF and other trade unions should be in the forefront of the fight for a world of peace without war.

Resolution No. 3 was **adopted**.

#### **INTERVENTION by Fred van LEEUWEN, General Secretary of Education International**

Fred van LEEUWEN, General Secretary of Education International, addressed Congress and extended greetings from his organization. Globalization had a great impact on union members everywhere and the global union movement faced serious challenges. Unions needed to fight against poverty, exploitation and oppression as well as to protect democracy. The IMF Mission Statement stated very clearly, “Today, the trade union challenge is to make economic globalization serve the people of the world.” This could only be accomplished by working with other union organizations to build a stronger labor movement by developing global structures. The ICFTU Congress last December was committed to building a new Global Trade Union Center and working closely with the ten

GUFs to turn ideals into realities. The IMF, with its strength and values, had a crucial role to play in accomplishing this goal.

A quality education for all people was the key to progress and justice for working people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The IMF and the entire labor movement supported this important Millennium Goal. In the face of today's global challenges, solidarity was the very foundation of the trade union movement. The values of solidarity had to be given new life in the hearts and minds of future generations.

Brother van Leeuwen paid a personal tribute to Marcello Malentacchi as one of the great figures of the global union movement and had truly made an important contribution. He commended the IMF for its support in the effort to reconstruct schools in the devastated zones of Sumatra and Sri Lanka in the wake of the tsunami disaster. The importance of promoting and protecting democracy could not be overstated. Trade unions could not exist without democracy, and vice versa. The global, regional, national and local activists in the labor movement had to be linked together to meet the challenge of defending democracy throughout the world. He concluded his remarks by wishing the IMF a successful Congress and pledged the continued solidarity and support of the Global Federations.

Congress recessed for lunch at 12:50 p.m.

## **TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **May 24**

The Congress reconvened at 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 24, 2005, **Thomas R. BUFFENBARGER** (IAMAW-USA) presiding. A warm welcome was extended to Garrett Davis, a member of the ISTC, who worked with the National League of the Blind and Disabled, which sought to address the concerns and issues that faced disabled people worldwide.

Mari-Ann KRANTZ (SIF-Sweden; President, Non-Manual Workers Department) introduced **Chapters 3.1 and 3.2** of the Action Programme entitled "Global Structures to Meet Global Challenges." International cooperation was the key to deal with the effects of globalization. New ideas and new solutions needed to be adopted by Congress which could be implemented immediately. It was important to be courageous and try innovative approaches to age-old problems. The IMF needed to find answers to the following questions: (1) How could the structures of the IMF be further improved to address the challenges facing the trade union movement? (2) How could a close and clear link be established between international cooperation and grassroots trade union work? And (3) Which players could the IMF cooperate with in the most fruitful way?

The Action Programme suggested that the IMF should build up a global trade union structure capable of coordinating and implementing action at all levels throughout the world, wherever and whenever it was required. This meant continuing to cooperate with other trade union organizations, such as the ICFTU, the OECD Trade Union Advisory Committee, TUAC, and other GUFs. With rapid changes in industry taking place amidst shifting power relationships involving transnational capital, it was necessary for the trade unions to review ways to ensure that our global cooperation was even more effective.

The Action Program outlined various areas for cooperation, including information and communications technologies, TNC-related actions, core labor standards, common union-building projects, analysis of trade and investment agreements, and the consequences of governments' negotiating positions for the workers. More unity was necessary at the local level, and that could be facilitated by forming country councils whose job would be to stimulate cooperation in important areas such as recruiting unorganized workers, collective bargaining, training, and education. The need for information networks linking the affiliates was also underscored in the Action Programme. Information could be disseminated on the economy, corporate structures and industrial relations, and anything else which might result in improved cooperation.

Without a firm base at the local level, international work would be inhibited. Legitimacy could only be gained through trade union members and elected representatives at all levels. Communication channels had to work well. The IMF had to continue the development of its website and make proper use of e-mail. Countries which did not yet have access to the internet, however, should not be put at a disadvantage, therefore traditional channels of communication should be kept open.

Globalization had caused myriad problems for workers. Factories were closed down, jobs were moved to countries where production processes were cheaper and where trade unions were weaker or even banned, production plants were played off against each other by MNCs seeking the cheapest wages. Unions were blackmailed in attempts to undermine agreements that were already in effect in terms of employment and social security. The question was how to handle these threats to security and prosperity in a spirit of solidarity.

"How do we form a united and powerful front while promoting the development of the labor market and the involvement of the workers?" she asked.

Section 3.2 of the Action Programme focused on strategies which could be used to engage transnational companies. International Framework Agreements (IFAs) were important instruments in this area. Companies would not act in the best interests of workers unless forced to. This called for the establishment of legally binding rules for transnational companies, including the possibility of applying sanctions against wrongdoers. The IFAs which had been negotiated and signed by transnational companies had proven to be powerful tools in joint efforts to improve trade union rights and recruit more members. They in no way replaced collective agreements at local or national level, but they guaranteed respect for fundamental labor laws and the provisions enshrined therein.

More could be done to increase awareness and knowledge of how these tools could be used. If the IMF succeeded in getting global companies and their suppliers to respect core labor standards in plants throughout the world, this would obviously increase trade union clout in terms of negotiations. So far, the IMF had negotiated eleven International Framework Agreements. Further agreements were in the pipeline and hopefully they would be able to keep up this good trend. Krantz underlined the need for the IMF to cooperate with other global organizations in this area.

All IFAs needed to be monitored and implemented, however, not just on paper. If negotiations were done properly, there was a good chance of success in implementation. These agreements had been used to solve disputes in at least two countries so far, Turkey and Brazil. Correct implementation demanded a great deal in terms of resources and commitment by the IMF's members. The IMF had suggested (1) further negotiations to get more IFAs, especially outside Europe; (2) identifying opportunities for improving existing agreements; and (3) further development of mechanisms for monitoring and implementing agreements with a view toward identifying possible strategies to tame unwilling transnationals and bring them to the negotiating table. International Framework Agreements could be an effective means to secure workers' rights in developing countries if existing legislation was insufficient or even anti-union.

IMF World Councils and action groups had also played an important role in defending the rights of workers across national borders. It was suggested in the Action Programme that perhaps such World Councils could be transformed into smaller, permanent working groups financed by companies. It would be easier for them to react to urgent needs and to draft common strategies and coordinate initiatives with regional representatives, such as European Works Councils. The IMF had started to hold regional meetings in an effort to set up networks. This was very encouraging, and the IMF intended to continue along these lines.

The final point she discussed was the IMF's cooperation with NGOs and how cooperation might even be established with bodies within the UN. The question was raised as to the exchange of trade union representatives with countries which had not yet become democratically mature. SIF in Sweden had for many years maintained and developed contacts with China. They believed that openness and communication was the most fruitful way of moving toward democracy and human rights.

With these concluding remarks, Chair BUFFENBARGER introduced the panel participants who would be debating the issue of "Meeting the Challenges of Offshoring." The discussion was moderated by Robert Taylor, an advisor to the European Trade Union

Confederation and Employment Editor at the British newspaper *The Financial Times* from 1993 to 2001. He had also authored several books on labor issues.

Moderator Robert TAYLOR began by pointing out that the discussion was good venue in which examine both the strengths and weaknesses of the international labor movement in dealing with transnational corporations. Offshoring was a part of the strategic shift by the TNCs which in some cases had divided international labor groups. The panel consisted of Amilia Santana-VALENTE from CNM-CUT Brazil; Elizabeth BUNN from UAW-US; Göran JOHNSSON from Svenska Metall, Sweden; and Silumko NONDWANGU from NUMSA, South Africa. Moderator Taylor first asked about the pros and cons of offshoring:

"What are the good and bad effects of offshoring, and how do the unions react to offshoring?"

Ms. VALENTE reported there were many transnationals in Brazil and International Framework Agreements already existed in some cases. These companies complied outside of Brazil but not when they came to their country. It was necessary to work together to counter these tactics because capital tried to divide the workers. Therefore, the international union movement was important so workers could discuss their mutual problems. Many of these companies behaved very badly in Brazil, but it did allow people to at least work, even though they received indecent wages. Economic discrimination was even greater against women in Brazil. Communication was important to see what happened in different countries.

Taylor asked Valente about the amount of union organization in these transnational corporations and whether they had recognition of the union and collective bargaining in these plants.

She stated they did have collective agreements and there were proposals for national agreements and sectional agreements. There were two confederations where joint interests were discussed and they worked together, but they also had separate issues. Each trade union discussed their collective agreements together with their grassroots, not with the confederation.

Taylor referred to the fact the UAW in the United States had suffered a great deal in the loss of membership due to offshoring and relocation. He asked:

"What is the policy of the UAW in that regard and what practical activities has the union carried out perhaps in the countries where the offshoring is taking place?"

Delegate BUNN said that in the narrow context of UAW workers, offshoring and outsourcing within the borders of the U.S. had no beneficial effects. It did provide, however, some important lessons to be learned. Many years ago, the UAW represented almost all auto workers in the industry, in both assembly and parts. Over a period of time, the parts supply industry was outsourced from assembly operations. The union, therefore, represented a lower percentage of workers in the parts industry, although well over the majority in the assembly operations were still organized. For many years thereafter, the workers in the parts industry remained unorganized. However, in the last four years, the UAW had redoubled itsr efforts to organize the workers using capital investment strategies and whatever leverage and strength they had. The assembly workers were mobilized and were prepared to strike in the parts supply plants in support of organizing efforts, and

members in the organized plants were prepared to enact boycotts on non-union-made parts.

The final outcome was that they had successfully concluded so-called “partnership agreements” within USA borders, similar to IFAs only on a national level. The bottom line was that one of the strategies in the fight against offshoring and outsourcing was organizing. It was the only way to achieve the goal of creating an economy worldwide in which all workers had the right to form or join unions. "We have to have a world in which corporations compete on the basis of creativity and innovation and not on the basis of who could get the cheapest wages, the least safe and healthful working conditions and the worst benefits," she said.

Taylor pressed forward on offshoring outside the borders of the United States. He questioned whether the UAW had made efforts to engage with auto workers in American-owned companies in developing countries. The problem was that the jobs workers lost in the U.S. were going overseas, and Taylor wondered if that made it difficult to achieve solidarity.

Ms. BUNN agreed that it was difficult to achieve solidarity, but there was no more important task than to do so. Success was not possible unless they succeeded in solidarity efforts. The UAW did have an International Framework Agreement in place with Daimler-Chrysler negotiated by IG Metall. She felt they would be even more successful in using it in the future. One of the key pieces in the IFA was the inclusion of the supplier component so that the protections and standards negotiated applied not just to the transnational but to its supplier chain.

Taylor called on Goran Johnsson for the attitude of the Swedish trade unionists regarding offshoring and relocation, since the unions in Sweden seemed to always pursue an international approach.

JOHNSSON explained they had gotten used to structural change and had even forced through some structural change in the past because it had the potential to create a basis for better real earnings and social welfare. Historically, the unions in Sweden had never been negatively disposed to changing the structure of Swedish industry and society. One of the reasons for that was the close cooperation the Swedish unions had with the Social Democratic Party for more than 100 years. When people were made redundant because a company moved to a low wage country, there should be policies in place which provided for retraining and skills enhancement for displaced workers, in addition to a good unemployment benefit plan so that people did not suffer in social and financial terms from structural changes. The situation was somewhat worse today because it was more difficult to identify whether there were opportunities for unemployed metalworkers to get new jobs in the new branches that were emerging, or whether there were only jobs for academics or very highly qualified individuals.

Taylor's next question was directed at Silumko Nondwangu to describe their experiences in South Africa in the operations of the transnational corporations who had relocated there. He wanted to know if they were a good or bad thing.

NONDWANGU explained that outsourcing had not been a major problem in South Africa. NUMSA had negotiated good collective agreements with multinationals, primarily from the U.S. and Japan, which made it difficult for them to outsource production. They had established favorable relations over the years with the multinationals, particularly those

coming from Germany. They had been able to preempt negative processes to production in their country. In the last few years, however, multinationals had started outsourcing what they regarded as "non-core" production. In that event, the union insisted that conditions of employment with the new employer would be the same as they were with the former employer. This had slowed down the outsourcing of that sector. In addition, tight collective bargaining agreements had been negotiated with the automotive companies in their country. The union's strength was the main reason outsourcing had not become a major problem.

Taylor commented that this illustrated how important it was to build trade union strength in order to put leverage on companies to behave properly and fairly when they subcontract out work to other companies. That led to the next topic he wanted to discuss, which was the role of the International Framework Agreements being signed by the IMF. Taylor pointed out that each of the participants came from a country where the TNCs either had headquarters or who were signatory to such agreements. For instance, Daimler Chrysler, Renault, Volkswagen, Leoni all had plants in Brazil and he wondered whether the International Framework Agreements had made an impact in their country. He asked:

Had IFAs helped develop new strategic alliances within the trade unions in other countries?

VALENTE indicated there was more communication and exchange of information with the unions in the countries where these agreements existed. It had helped improve working conditions for the workers and they hoped to get more information about the IFAs during the Congress.

NONDWANGU added that his union had formed a very strategic relationship with IG Metall. They held bilateral discussions annually about the strength of their unions, about collective bargaining and about developments in general. This allowed them to know what the strategic decisions of the multinationals from Germany would be in the future, since members of IG Metall sat on the supervisory boards of their own companies. NUMSA used that to leverage influence in decision making, which worked very well for them and for IG Metall, with whom they shared information.

JOHNSSON could not go so far as to say that everything was fine. Only eleven IFAs existed, which were far too few. The eleven IFAs were a more sophisticated version of the former European agreements. Sweden only had one such agreement, but a few more were in the pipeline. He cautioned, however, that the forces of capital worked quickly and links had to be formed between the international groups very soon so that unions would not be lagging behind. The goal was to have ten times more International Framework Agreements at the next Congress, not only in Europe but all over the world.

Taylor added that IFA agreements were an institutional means for developing international trade union solidarity. The U.S. government did not have a positive international role in trade union affairs, although American companies in Europe always practiced within the laws of those countries. He questioned whether framework agreements would ever catch on in the United States.

BUNN drew a sharp distinction between the policies of the U.S. government and the UAW on just about any issue. The U.S. had lagged behind in the formation of IFAs, although her union had been involved in discussions with Ford and General Motors. IFAs had great potential, which was actually one step on a long path. The unions had to

concentrate on the supplier aspect of the framework agreements, otherwise they would only have assembly operations and outsourcing.

Monitoring and enforcement of the agreements were huge challenges for unions and workers as well. She pointed out that the ILO core labor standards included freedom of association. The U.S. had laws on the books which guaranteed freedom of association; however, it was not practiced in reality. Therefore, very close attention had to be paid to the realities of the IFAs and not just the written words. The real key to success was to meld all the aspects of the Action Programme into union activities, as well as ongoing communications and discussions among worker representatives-- and with unrepresented workers as well.

Taylor agreed that in some aspects the IFAs were less than the IMF might desire, and enforcement and monitoring were a major difficulty. Perhaps in the future when there were 100 of these agreements they would make more of an impact internationally and enforcement and monitoring would be commonplace.

NONDWANGU made the point that the IFAs may be important but they could not substitute for building an organization. If trade unions were weak they would not be aided by International Framework Agreements. Stronger, militant trade unions were needed to take on big capital. Proof of that could be seen by the fact that such agreements had not been formed in countries where the unions were weak.

JOHNSSON shared the view that with ten times the number of IFAs, some problems could be solved. Strong trade unions were necessary to get global or national agreements. The basic message was to organize the workers and train trade union activists in order to negotiate national collective agreements and local agreements. The Nordic trade union movement was strong because they had a high level of union membership. In Sweden 90 percent of the metalworkers belonged to the union. The solution was to organize and sign both national and global agreements.

VALENTE did not believe framework agreements would take the place of unions. It was another tool to strengthen them in their struggle, not to replace that struggle. Taking advantage of this tool could help unions and workers. Organizing workers was one of the main problems of the labor movement since workers had become more and more individualistic and did not want to belong to unions. International Framework Agreements did not solve all our problems as unionists. They were simply tools in the struggle, just as the OECD guidelines were.

Moderator TAYLOR called attention to China which was the biggest beneficiary of relocation and offshoring. He turned the discussion to the resolution on China passed by the Executive Committee. He asked:

How can a credible and effective trade union policy be formulated to solve this problem in order to avoid severe difficulties in developing an international strategy for offshoring and relocation?

JOHNSSON, Chair of the ad hoc group on China, commended the position taken by the Executive Committee regarding China because it struck the right balance, since there were differing views. His committee had suggested a number of activities to help get a handle on the China issue. First of all, a list should be made of the important multinational companies in the metalworking and electrical industries established in China. Details and

statistics on working conditions, wages, working time, and relations with the management would be compiled into a database for the benefit of other affiliates. Secondly, a special webpage on China should be created and linked to IMF's site so that affiliates could get access to information on activities regarding China. Thirdly, a seminar should be organized for workers to be held in China toward the end of 2006 which focused on democratic principles, the organizing of new members, and negotiating collective agreements and the environment. The idea was to visit China in 2006 so the IMF could make clear what it stood for regarding worker rights, the WTO, trade relations, multinational corporations, the work environment and organizing. They could explain trade union concepts of negotiations, occupational safety and health.

Ms. BUNN recognized that the goal of unions was to create conditions that permitted true democratic trade unions to flourish. Those conditions could not be created when legitimate trade union activists fighting for workplace democracy and political democracy were imprisoned. Unionists should redouble their efforts to act in solidarity to expose the plight of the brave comrades who remained in prison, not only in China but in various locations around the world. All IMF activities had to focus on creating conditions by which democratic unions could flourish. Through IFAs it might be possible to pursue direct connections with Chinese workers. But most importantly, unions needed to constantly highlight the abuses of workers' rights in China and around the world, and work with organizations who sought to free imprisoned labor leaders. "We need to work for the creation of dynamic, driving, democratic trade unions," she said.

Ms. VALENTE supported the position that International Framework Agreements helped promote international solidarity with Chinese workers. Brazilian companies which had moved to China did not follow the same social responsibilities for their workers. They should apply the same laws in China as they did in other countries. The authorities there should revise their laws to promote the rights of workers. Brazilian members of the Workers Party had contacts with colleagues in China to see if it was possible to change legislation to favor workers' rights.

NONDWANGU urged care be taken in the IMF's dealings with China so that efforts could not be viewed as advocating a regime change. The intention was to create better conditions in China so they could have democratic trade unions and enjoy the same international standards that other workers in democratic countries enjoyed. The message of the IMF had to be made very clear on that point.

JOHNSSON reported that the panelists so far had reflected the discussion of the ad hoc group. In the visit to China organized by SIF and the Swedish Metalworkers Union, they were very clear in saying what they thought of the Chinese system with regard to democracy or lack thereof, about human and trade union rights. He agreed with Nondwangu that in contacts with the Chinese, it was important to be clear that the IMF was not espousing that the current regime be overthrown, but at the same time had to be very clear about how strongly the IMF felt about democracy and the democratic trade union movement.

Taylor emphasized that in dealing with the question of offshoring the issue of China would have to be settled because it had a direct link to IMF's attitude toward other regimes around the world. Whether IFAs, collective arrangements across national borders between trade union centers, all those things were important. But unless the environment was such that unions were able to act and develop freely, it would be impossible for the framework agreements and the IMF strategies outlined in the Action Programme to be successful. It was difficult to draw a line between the work of unions and the work of politics. The work

of the IMF in Poland over 20 years ago, for example, did a great deal to lead to the changes that took place there with the Solidarity movement. The IMF was not in the business of bringing about regime changes. Its interests were essentially trade unions, the advancement of workers' rights both collectively and individually. The ILO core labor standards were at the heart of the matter. He raised the following question:

What was the best way to approach the challenge of offshoring, whether in China or anywhere else. Was it best to boycott or to cooperate? Was it best to have sanctions or voluntary agreements?

JOHANSSON said that, in parallel with the work done vis-a-vis the multinationals established in China, whether through the IMF or alliances with the ICFTU and other groups, the IMF had to make it clear to the governments, to the WTO, the U.N., the International Monetary Fund and G8 countries, that unions stood for democracy. There also had to be constant pressure from the rest of the world for democratization in China. Industrialized nations had seen structural changes taking place there for a long time. Many developing countries which had received the jobs that came from the western world would find the same things occurring there. He did not believe there was a way to stop jobs from being siphoned off to China and other countries where wages were terribly low. The question was, what sort of influence should unions have at the national level, and how to bring pressure to bear through the world councils.

Moderator Taylor thanked the panel for their stimulating discussion and summarized some of the remarks. It was difficult, at a time when trade unions were in crisis across the world, to find new and positive ideas and programs which had any possibility of challenging the power of capital and the power of the transnational corporations. The forces of globalization were enormous and formidable, but by no means inevitably dominant. Through trade unions like the IMF responding positively to the challenges of offshoring, developing the international links between strong and effective trade unions in developing countries and in the advanced countries was crucially important in producing some humanization to the globalization process. He hoped China did not become a big obstacle to the journey to achieve international labor standards and a further weakening of the trade union movement.

Chair Buffenbarger thanked Taylor and the roundtable participants for their keen insight on this important topic. The floor was opened for comments.

Hisashige DANNO (IMF-Japan) recounted the IMF's decision at the May meeting of the Executive that the issue of China would be examined. The Chinese economy grew by 9% annually and there had been some democratic changes there as well, so it was necessary to have a balanced view of China. A number of reforms had been enacted and the communist party was changing as well. There were gradual changes to that end. The IMF should look at the China issue from that standpoint.

The Executive had also made proposals to reform the structure at the IMF. Danno himself had proposed changes in the Iron and Steel Department and the Mechanical Engineering Department, and hoped there would be many more changes that took place within the IMF structure to benefit everyone.

Regarding IFAs, in 1997 the IMF-JC was at the forefront in drafting "**Code of Conduct**" **agreements** for MNCs. During the past eight years not much had changed nor was there progress in concluding those agreements, even though they had worked very hard.

Therefore, much more remained to be done. IMF-JC was fully aware of the problems in the Asian region and was working hard to solve them.

Kjell BJØRNDALEN (FF-Norway) pointed out that globalization was a difficult concept and the events taking place were a result of the world getting "smaller," so to speak. Electronic communications, for example, had made it possible to know what was going on in other parts of the world instantly. Globalization could have both positive and negative consequences. The Action Programme focused on the negative aspects that made it difficult to influence globalization in the direction unions wanted. Despite imperfections at the WTO, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, these were the most important **global financial institutions** in existence to accomplish fairer distribution of the riches generated by globalization. It was imperative to put social clauses into international trade agreements and into the lending mechanisms used by the World Bank and the IMF. It could not be called "free trade" when those who manufactured the products did not work in freedom. People had to have the right of association, the right to collective bargaining, gender equality. At the same time, the scourge of forced labor and child labor must be abolished worldwide.

Perhaps the most important thing to do was to put pressure on the IFIs to enact changes in policy and support trade union rights which were so important to world trade. The points in the Action Programme were vital to turn the world in the right direction, such as the work being done in terms of the IFAs that the IMF had managed to negotiate with the multinationals. His union had two such agreements and they hoped to start negotiating two more in Norway. IMF members should be in a position to have a say in what goes on in their work places.

Thorkild JENSEN (CO-industri-Denmark) stressed the need for solidarity in the trade union movement between rich and poor countries. The financial markets had become totally globalized, as had the industrial branches, and the metal industry was one of the most global. IMF members were concerned and afraid for their jobs because their companies established plants in other countries. Danish companies were bought by foreign groups and pressure was put on their wages and terms of employment. Surprisingly, Danish companies investing in production plants in other countries created more jobs in Denmark than they would have done if they had not invested abroad. However, there were huge problems with fair distribution of the assets and profits produced by globalization.

There was huge economic growth in Korea, China and India, although it did not necessarily translate into benefits for the majority of the population. Unions had to insist that companies practiced **social responsibility** and that there was good governance in world trade and in the WTO. He suggested that the WTO represented the best chance of getting rules for globalization, so the IMF had to keep up the pressure to have the WTO take trade union rights seriously. He supported the IMF's policy of negotiating International Framework Agreements and were currently negotiating with a number of Danish companies, although they had not yet achieved results.

The national unions also had their work cut out for them, and the members on the European Works Council played an important role to play. They had to see that globalization did not mean exporting poor and dangerous jobs to other parts of the world. It should not be a race to the bottom, and the profits of globalization should be shared fairly. Solidarity was the force which would bring the unions forward, because there was no question that poverty, exploitation, and oppression were unacceptable.

Ken NEUMANN (USWA-Canada) believed outsourcing was just another phase for “a race to the bottom.” **Solidarity** was the key to bringing fairness and justice to workers around the world. The Steelworkers had recently merged with the IWA in Canada and with PACE, a move which increased their membership by 300,000 members. It gave them the strength to take on companies who had plants on both sides of the border in North America. They had recognized over the years that without the strength of the IMF and the many affiliates around the world, they would not have been able to bring to successful conclusion some of the corporate campaigns they had waged. They had linked arms with other major affiliates of the IMF. In fact, recently they had signed a strategic alliance with the Mining and Metalworkers Union in Mexico, with the TMFAU and AWU in Australia, and with CMT-CUT in Brazil. They also cooperated with IG Metall. Presently they were also involved with negotiating with NUMSA in attempts to achieve a global alliance in dealing with a common employer.

His union also worked with many countries around the world in regard to poverty and linked arms in their charitable endeavor with trade unionists in Chile or Peru, or wherever the case may be. They also participated in the tsunami relief fund which donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to help the disaster victims. They held back some funds to help unions in those countries to rebuild. It was solidarity that brought decency and justice to trade union members in need.

Berthold HUBER (IG Metall-Germany) was the next speaker. He explained that unfortunately unions had no legal standing to guarantee human rights and workers rights. Therefore, they needed to develop their own instruments and apply them to the multinationals. Hence, unions had to keep working to get some kind of political regulation for the world economy. In more and more MNCs, the global unions had managed to conclude IFAs so that companies applied the ILO standards. These global agreements could bring about a change, such as the one they concluded with Daimler-Chrysler two years ago which could also be used in the context of subcontractors. Every IMF affiliate should make a commitment to try to negotiate such agreements with MNCs who had head offices in their own countries. National, regional and global networks could be formed to deal with the issues raised by multinational groups. IG Metall called for **global networks** that could bring together trade union representatives from different parts of the world. Efforts had been made to create more systematic and more lasting unbureaucratic structures. One of the biggest barriers was financial resources and in terms of manpower.

To solve the problems of resources, setting up national and regional trade union networks linked to a global network could also help. These networks were the first step toward the formalization of worldwide trade union representative structures which would be co-financed by the multinationals. These efforts had to be stepped up at the global level. Within the European Union there were more than 750 European Works Councils which could facilitate representation of workers' collective interests vis-à-vis the management at European level, and also serve as a source of information. Experience showed it was much more difficult for the employers to play off workforces in different countries against each other when information was provided to the workers in all parts of the group. It was important to have a forum where worker representatives could defend worker interests when strategic decisions were to be made by the company.

Gianni RINALDINI (FLM-Italy) was of the frank opinion since there were no hard and fast rules dealing with the issues of globalization, unions were in a weak position. Globalization was based on the premise that the world was merely an immense market where everything, including labor, was considered a commodity. The financial institutions, the World Bank and the IMF, did little to prevent these unfair processes from developing.

War and terrorism were structural phenomena that went hand-in-hand with this type of globalization. The very principles of the United Nations had been challenged by the bullying tactics of the U.S. and its concept of "preventive war."

Globalization as practiced today was the opposite of any form of solidarity. Relocation was probably the most visible aspect of this lack of solidarity, where workers were pitted against workers, factories against factories, encouraging all forms of casual labor. National collective agreements were being eliminated in different countries because of this **casualization of labor**. Social uncertainty in the workplace and in private life had become more evident. Even in Italy there was a very harsh social conflict with more factories being closed. The metalworkers had called for a general strike on June 10 throughout Italy in order to bring attention to labor's demands. The consolidation of industries, particularly in Europe, had been imposed by management, not through collective bargaining, in order to increase profits. This might cause a fragmentation in the International Metalworkers unions and at the union level worldwide. Therefore, it was necessary to attempt to bring the different categories of workers closer together.

Trade unions were dealing with a political situation where it was necessary to negotiate with employers and with some anti-union governments as well. The development of World Company Councils was one way to promote the unification of companies and ensure greater participation by the workforce. Rinaldini also urged the promotion of a National Metalworkers Day to emphasize workers' rights and protest the current trends of globalization.

Tony MURPHY (ICU-Great Britain) stated that **global agreements** were a practical way of trying to tame multinational companies and force them to respect workers' rights wherever they operated in the world. It provided a platform to pressure companies and to enable unions to organize and collectively bargain. In ICU's campaign at Quebecor, the agreement included a neutrality clause which had been a major help to colleagues in the United States where union-busters were systematically employed to stop organizing drives. He welcomed the work of the IMF for its increased efforts in trying to get more global agreements.

Although the agreements differed from one another, minimum standards should be contained within all of them. In addition, agreements that were drawn up without the involvement of key shop floor activists had little or no meaning or value. Murphy believed the IMF should look to achieve the following objectives: (1) agreement among all affiliates on the minimum standards contained in IFAs; (2) inclusion of all affiliates representing members within multinational companies negotiating an IFA; and (3) a guarantee from all affiliates that there would be no unilateral signing of these agreements by individual trade unions before it had been agreed upon by all other affected IMF affiliates.

Yongwon CHOI (KMWF-South Korea) believed **International Framework Agreements** were the best way for workers to fight the multinational companies because they could organize and mobilize the workers in the host country and in the home country as well. The workers at Hyundai had demanded the signing of the IFA within its upcoming collective bargaining proposal. In addition, the inclusion of the subcontractors in the agreement would benefit not only the Hyundai employees but would help other Korean workers. Signing the IFA would benefit workers around the world and improve working conditions for workers in other countries, thereby aiding in the fight against international capital.

Hyundai investment was the second largest in the Asian auto industry; therefore, it would be a significant step for IMF to initiate the signing of the IFA with them. Doing so would strengthen the fight against the multinationals corporations in the Asian region, which was relatively weak compared to Europe. Signing the IFAs was not easy and required as great deal of effort on the part of their union, and any agreements signed should be carefully monitored. Their union reaffirmed its commitment to fight against the transnationals in order to achieve IFAs. Unfortunately, the content of some of the IFAs was meaningless because the WTO catered to the interests of the capitalists. Choi urged attendance at the WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong so that the affiliated organizations of the IMF could develop coordinated action against anti-union policies.

Dominique GILLIER (FGMM-CFDT-France) commented on the need to adjust global union structures permanently and strengthen cooperation between international union federations because globalization affected all of them. That was the only way to bring pressure to bear on the world's financial and political institutions. The use of new means of **communication** was crucial in order to match the speed with which decisions were taken by multinationals. The IMF should be the focal point of communications between unions when emergencies arose across the world.

IFA's could be an essential tool for international trade union activity and could reinforce IMF's actions in the eyes of the workers. Representatives within the multinationals needed training with regard to IFAs to demonstrate how they could be useful tools. Meetings between the various unions who dealt with the same managements would be extremely beneficial. The CFDT had followed that procedure which gave them reciprocal understanding of each others views and activities and setting up networks and ways to deal with management. This practice also helped in negotiating IFAs. The European Works Councils also had their role to play. Monitoring of IFAs was essential and should be an integral part of their agreement. It was suggested a conference be organized of enterprises concerned and interested in introducing IFAs.

Ben KHOZA (MEWUSA-South Africa) welcomed the Action Programme and wanted to address the section regarding **communications and information sharing** which were vitally important. Communications in Africa lagged to the point where they heard of campaigns too late and had no time to react and participate. The Action Programme also gave them a strategic understanding of the struggles of workers around the world. Workers all faced the common enemy: capital. The slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all" had to be the fighting tool utilized to give practical expression to international solidarity. Improved means of communications would enable the unions to take up joint campaigns for the IMF.

Khoza expressed thanks to the IMF for the support and assistance given them especially during their apartheid struggle. The good features of globalization, such as prospects for social advancement, should be explored, but at the same time unions had to work to overcome its negative features. Africa had been the victim of globalization as the multinationals moved production in search of cheap labor. The Third World was the most vulnerable, and Africa continued to be plagued by unemployment, poverty, disease and war. Africa's unemployment rate stood at 40 percent, and 28 million people there were infected by HIV/AIDS. That problem had to be resolved. In conclusion he thanked the unions who had assisted in their fight for democracy.

Jean-Claude RENNWALD (UNIA-Switzerland) pointed out that due to its recent merger, UNIA had become the largest inter-professional trade union in Switzerland with about 200,000 members. Section 3.1 of the Action Programme contained two sentences which he

believed were absolutely vital: The declaration that even the day-to-day work of trade unions needed to be globalized so that every action at all stages linked the local and international levels; and that it needed to be clear to all members of the organization that every action, whatever its nature, did influence working conditions in other parts of the world. He was entirely in agreement with the text, but stressed that in order to achieve this goal more progress had to be made in the field of **communication**-- whether it was communication between workers who were directly involved in a particular project or communication used to win over public opinion internationally. Globalization had repercussions, not only for workers in factories that were relocated or closed, but for an entire region or country, or even for a group of countries.

UNIA had launched the idea at the San Francisco Congress of creating a kind of international trade union "greenpeace" which would make people aware-- by spectacular actions if necessary-- of all efforts to fight against the nefarious nature of globalization. This proposal, he believed, was more topical than ever since in today's world communications played a more fundamental role. The Action Programme emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation with NGOs and social movements, which were often much more proactive than unions. Mastery over communications technology would have a determining impact on people's minds. By meeting this challenge, unions would be able to make more social progress and be capable of bringing forward trade union ideals throughout the world.

Charles NATILI (KEWU-Kenya) was the next speaker and expressed his pleasure at the way the IMF had moved forward with the conclusion of the **International Framework Agreements**. But the creation of these structures should also become a reality in other countries besides Europe. Some unions were not equipped with enough information to enable them to compare IFAs with other agreements. IFAs that were negotiated in one country should act as models to help other nations to reach that same position.

He hoped the Congress would not become just another forum for discussion where representatives went back to their home countries and forgot about those discussions. It was imperative that delegates return home and follow through on the suggestions and programs. It was necessary to keep exchanging information about successes. He called for more information on the International Framework Agreements so they could compare their situation with those who had achieved positive results and negotiate agreements with their employers. Natili was happy to inform the delegates that the President of Kenya was on good terms with the unions and on Labor Day had promised to declare all casual workers permanent.

The final speaker was Antonio REGAZZI (FLM-Italy) who described how globalization had taken place in the past ten years in a really violent manner. The beneficiaries of globalization took advantage of low labor costs, while other countries, such as those in Europe, risked the loss of workers' rights acquired long ago. For the first time, workers had been pitted against other workers. The fundamental question was what to do to counteract this process.

The International Framework Agreements had to be negotiated, and the eleven that had been signed was a good start. Information regarding them had to be given to workers throughout the world. It was also important to look at the role and **function of trade unions**. Trade unions had to play an important role in the globalization process and had to have an impact. The IFAs could help, but unless the information could be propagated and shared with others, that process would not have the desired effect. The acquired rights of unions had to be defended and the trade unions which were formed in the developing

countries had to come together to prevent the negative effects of globalization. Perhaps the IMF needed to update its relations and networking with other unions to ensure that IFAs would become true tools which guaranteed rights to workers throughout the world. The unity of all workers was more important now than ever in order to counteract the violent process of globalization to give rights to those who didn't have them and to defend the rights of those who did.

Chair Buffenbarger commended the panel and the delegates for their very insightful comments and global response to the Action Programme which affected every trade union across the face of the planet. He called upon Mari-Ann Krantz to summarize the debate.

Ms. KRANTZ stressed the issue of cooperation because it was extremely important for the unions to work together at the national and the international level. Networks had to be built to stay in touch with each other in an efficient way. A communications strategy to manage those networks was also needed. The theme that ran throughout the debate was "solidarity." Many delegates had urged supporting each other in trade union work. In addition, International Framework Agreements had been mentioned as a good tool for achieving trade union values. The goal was to sign many more IFAs because they were the prerequisite for action. To do that, however, required organizing the unorganized. The IMF Action Programme provided a very good basis for our future work in all those areas.

Sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the Action Program having been thoroughly debated and discussed, were before the Congress for adoption. **So decided.**

Kjell BJØRNDALLEN (FF-Norway), presented the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION No. 7**  
**UNITING THE FORCES OF THE GLOBAL UNION FEDERATIONS**  
**IN THE INDUSTRY**

Submitted by Nordic Metal

Economic globalization, the worldwide abolition of trade and investment barriers, and new technologies have brought about major structural changes in the manufacturing industry. Increasing outsourcing, the emergency of supply chain network enterprises and industry-related services have further blurred the divisions between traditional industry sectors.

The development has contributed to a number of mergers between national unions in the industry, especially in Europe and North America, but also in other parts of the world. Global redistribution of jobs and transfers of production have enhanced this trend, as unions which are losing members are joining forces to pool their services, reduce overlapping activities and using limited resources in a more efficient manner.

At the global level, however, the development towards greater unity has been slower. Yet, the core activities of the existing five independent Global Union Federations (GUFs) in the industry, as defined by themselves in their policy documents, are to a large extent the same. They include negotiating and implementing international framework agreements with transnational companies, setting up cross-border union networks to unite workers in these companies, coordinating union-building and education projects, mounting solidarity campaigns to guarantee the observance of trade union rights, and cooperating with other GUF's and the ICFTU on campaigning for a social dimension to globalization.

As a result of national mergers, an increasing number of industrial trade unions are affiliated to several GUF's and thus financing overlapping activities. The fact that national unions are losing members adds pressure on the ability of GUF's to guarantee a sufficient membership fee income to take care of their core tasks. A failure to respond to these challenges may lead to unwanted cuts in services and insufficient capacity for efficient international trade union response.

On the other hand, transnational companies are becoming bigger and more often cross the traditional industry boundaries. A united trade union front across these boundaries is required to offer a real counterweight to their power.

It is important to take action while it is not yet dictated by economic necessities. Concrete cooperation between the industrial GUF's is limited. All effort should be made to increase practical cooperation and strategic partnerships between the GUFs in their above-mentioned core tasks, as well as common services, joint projects and regional activities. In some cases, mergers may prove to be the most efficient way of using scarce resources and avoiding the duplication of activities.

The 31<sup>st</sup> IMF Congress therefore resolves that the IMF Secretariat shall

- continue its efforts to increase cooperation between the GUFs in order to strengthen the labor movement for the benefit of working people through the world.
- examine the possibilities for increased practical cooperation and where appropriate consider the possibility of restructuring the GUFs to respond to the above challenges, and
- report regularly to the Executive Committee and Central Committee on progress in this area, and where appropriate present proposals for strategic decisions on increased cooperation and a review of the current structures of the GUFs.

On behalf of Nordic Metal, Bjørndalen moved adoption of Resolution 7. Globalization had raised the lines of demarcation between different branches of industry. The number of paying members in the industrial unions had been reduced, particularly in the western part of the world, so they had to be more rational in structuring their work. That was why they suggested clarification of the part of the Program of Action which dealt with cooperation between the different global union federations. There should be close cooperation to avoid duplication of work and more sure they moved in the same direction. This resolution was not criticism of the work that the IMF had done but was aimed at developing trade union strength over the next few years. Resources could not be wasted in this effort to counter global forces.

This resolution was not about national circumstances, but dealt with unions at the international level. It was not a merger document but called for closer cooperation between the global union federations in areas where they had common interests. It was meant to strengthen both the IMF and the rest of the international trade union movement. Bjørndalen requested Congress to give its support to Resolution No. 7.

Petteri OJANEN (TU-Finland) supported the resolution which dealt with reducing the duplication of work. TU of Finland belonged to seven global union federations, including the European branches, as well as the Nordic federation. The reason for such fragmented membership was the historic structure of their membership, which brought about a merger in 2001 of the four largest unions. They concentrated their resources mainly on the metalworking industry where most of their members worked. Many unions realized the

only way of succeeding in defending the members' interests and getting enough resources was to join forces. The resolution concerned not just the Nordic countries but the trade union movement in general. Their union supported the proposal to investigate the issues set out in the resolution and to take the necessary steps.

Barbara MURRAY (AMICUS-Great Britain) also fully supported this resolution. Union structures all over the world were evolving and changing in order to meet the challenges confronting them. Although Resolution 7 did not directly call for mergers of the international organizations, it did instruct the Secretariat to investigate the possibilities and report back. Her union was the product of three main mergers which took place within the last two or three years and were currently conducting merger talks with two other unions. This potential merger would result in the UK trade union representing over 2.5 million working members.

Amicus experienced positive outcomes as a result of their recent mergers. Besides political and industrial power, they had seen a dramatic increase in women members which now stood at around 30 percent of their total membership. They also saw an increase in the participation of young people within their structure. Young members, who were the future of the labor movement, were encouraged to become actively involved at local, national and international levels of union work. At the international level, Amicus was affiliated with all five of the international industrial federations. They shared the view that, if possible, simplifying and unifying these federations to make them more efficient and effective was desirable. It would make the international structures more visible, logical and effective. Although the national unions had considerable financial pressures, "if we are serious about trying to tackle the ills of globalization, we have to understand our international organizations need more resources," she said. Therefore, the international work had to become more of a mainstream issue and provided with greater finances.

Ewa TJÄRNSTRÖM (SIF-Sweden) said that in a globalized world where transnational corporations were crossing the borders of other countries every day, unions must have the courage to question our own lines of demarcation. To be able to face up to the challenges of the global market, unity was crucial, and that was the message within the resolution. Organizing the workforce provided united strength to secure jobs under fair conditions. That was the prime mission of the IMF. To achieve this end, efforts to create internationally applicable rules in order to improve the social dimensions of the global economy needed to be stepped up. IFAs had to be a focus of the work, but efficiency, without duplication or parallel projects, was also important in order to get results.

SIF was active in five global union federations and a number of European and Nordic federations. Cooperation with each of them was of vital importance, but the lines of demarcation between the branches were blurred. The pending merger of the Nordic federations for metalworkers and chemical workers was another good example for future work. It was imperative to work effectively, forcefully and in a united spirit on important trade union issues. The classical trade union idea was to organize, to cooperate, to apply influence and to sign agreements. The trade union movement would always have its roots in local issues, but had to start working at the global level, too. In other words, "Think locally but act globally."

Resolution No. 7, "Uniting the Forces of the Global Union Federations in the Industry," was **adopted unanimously**.

Chair Buffenbarger thanked the delegates for their assistance and support in getting through a very long day. Thereupon, Congress recessed at 5:35 p.m.

## **WEDNESDAY MORNING SESSION**

### **25 May 2005**

The Congress reconvened on Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m., chaired by **Michael LEAHY**, President of the Steel and Non-Ferrous Department of the IMF.

Assistant General Secretary Brian FREDRICKS introduced **Section 3.3 -- Solidarity and Organizing** of the Action Programme, the two most important core aspects of union work. He stressed the need to strive for national solidarity first, which would then spawn regional and international solidarity, the theme of virtually every delegate who had spoken before Congress thus far. Section 3.3 dealt with the issue of collective bargaining, the very essence of the role of trade unions. International Framework Agreements, which were a top priority and important goal for IMF members around the world, dealt with the issue of collective bargaining on a global scale. Multinationals were moving operations across borders and exploiting workers around the world, pitting worker against worker. Fredricks indicated that guaranteeing core labor standards was not the sole objective of IFAs. Nor was the negotiation of collective agreements affecting workers in a single country in an environment where companies were able to move across the world. If that were the case, there would be no need for an international movement.

He quoted Brother Rinaldini's comment on Tuesday that, "Unless we can look inwardly and determine what our weaknesses are, it is impossible to find beneficial solutions to problems." However, rather than focusing too negatively, the Action Programme outlined positive steps which would take the IMF forward. In addition, in order to achieve effective international agreements to solve problems in the different countries of the world, IFAs needed to be in place in countries other than just Europe where thus far all of IMF's existing IFAs had been negotiated. This was not an easy task. It was foolish to think IFAs could be achieved simply on the basis of approaching a company and demanding their cooperation.

Workers around the world needed to mobilize and pressurize the multinationals who resisted the signing and implementation of IFAs. Fredricks posed the question: "If we cannot get companies which operated throughout the world to even accept core labor standards, how can we get to the essence of what we believe is the best protection of workers?" He hoped the delegates would leave Congress with a better understanding of the positive elements of the Action Programme and take the initiative to find ways to educate and mobilize workers in order to truly and effectively deal with the MNCs so they could not continue to abuse workers.

The second item under Section 3.3 was **union-building**. The IMF had established offices in India and Latin America over 30 years ago, and it was undeniable that progress had been made during that time. But Fredricks questioned the effectiveness of IMF's efforts in those areas. More union-building was necessary not only in terms of solidarity actions, but also to encourage and empower workers to stand up to employers as well as influence governments and the political environment. Employers were the greatest challenge, but they were increasingly being joined by governments or were able to influence governments to take anti-worker action. Therefore, union-building involved more than achieving shop steward training within the plants. Strong unions also put workers on a level playing field and empowered them in terms of expressing and demanding their actual needs.

Collective bargaining was dependent on the same economy upon which the nation states were dependent. Perhaps 30 years ago, before globalization as it existed today, it was possible to achieve collective bargaining on a nation-state basis, but today unions had to

look beyond that. Union-building was not an issue of taking from the rich and giving to the poor; it was a way to equalize workers around the world. Traditionally, the union's response to worker inequality in terms of wages was, "Well, different economies exist in different countries." But that was the core of the problem because multinationals moved around the world in order to take advantage of that one element-- cheap wages.

Therefore, the response should be that in order to achieve standards and the ability to defend workers, union-building involved taking risks in confronting the employers-- and in many cases the governments. Those risks were enormous in some countries where union leaders faced the possibility of being killed in the process. The fact was that collective bargaining in the developing world was only as effective as the legal provisions within those countries. And that was where the concept of International Framework Agreements came into play. They were the vehicle by which unions would obtain better standards and the ability to protect workers because they were negotiated in the home countries of the parent companies where labor laws were better, because in countries where labor laws were weak, workers were stymied from taking real action against the employers.

Therefore, Fredricks declared, unless the Executive Committee was charged by this Congress with doing some real work to achieve its objectives in terms of union-building, the IMF would continue for another 30 years developing organizations to whom it offered solidarity, but in the final analysis had nothing more to offer them. There had been successes over the years, but those successes needed to be examined and built on in order to do a much better job in the future. An example of "better" was the fact that eight women were now on the IMF Executive Committee representing a sector that had previously been discriminated against. Those new members would pose new challenges to the organization.

**Organizing** new members was the third important element in Section 3.3. Organizing was imperative to sustain and expand on collective action, but frankly the IMF had very little to do with local organizing. Neither the office in Geneva nor the regional offices throughout the world could assist the unions in their hands-on organizing efforts. The real role of the IMF was to interact with the unions from an international perspective where multinationals operated. Its charge was to help unions organize workers particularly in those areas where organizing was virtually prohibited. And it was not only in the developing world, however, that this problem existed. Previous speakers from the USA, the richest economy in the world, had complained that they were losing longstanding workers' rights, including freedom of association. The IMF had to interact with the American affiliates to enable them to engage the capital that oppressed them in order to assist workers around the world. Because any weakness of the affiliates in the United States, which supposedly had the strongest unions, was a weakness for unions throughout the world.

The IMF Action Programme was considered to be a document for all affiliates. However, reports received since 1997 indicated that the Action Programme spoke only to workers in the developing world. This situation had to be rectified because it was directly associated with solidarity. The unions in the U.S. were doing a tremendous job in bringing workers together despite being faced with tremendous obstacles in their efforts. Core minimum standards were not the issue in the U.S. Today the issue was losing hard-won workers' rights, losing jobs to outsourcing, competing with foreign workers making cheap wages. Being organized in a union was not about services that spoke to credit cards or issues within today's modern world. It spoke to the very basic issue of what caused the problems for workers, and those were the political and social agendas around the world today. That issue could not be dealt with through our collective bargaining exercises.

Therefore, the Action Programme outlined the basis of the IMF's commitment to continue its work. But unless that commitment was taken back and driven home to the members, unless they were educated about what they were really fighting for, in the future the IMF would only be able to rely on a fraction of its 25 million members to take action. Unless members could be mobilize members to take the real issues to heart and fight for them, the Action Programme meant nothing. For instance, the resolution on poverty raised in the Congress was an extremely important one which spoke to all the principles unions stood for in the international labor movement. It made no sense, however, for workers in Asia and Africa to mobilize against poverty by themselves unless workers in the developed world mobilized alongside them and ensured that their governments took different positions. It was not possible for workers living in poverty to fight against the developed world which condoned and perpetuated poverty with its exploitative policies.

The best protection for workers was to ensure there was sustainable development throughout the world. The Action Programme spoke for all IMF members, in both the developing and developed countries. History had shown that industrialization had brought immediate abuse upon workers. Workers' rights were not given freely by employers; they were achieved through workers' struggles, mobilization and solidarity. Employers must be faced head-on. And unless the union movement mobilized in that direction, the next Congress would find itself dealing with the same issues. Abused workers could not understand why it took years to achieve what they were struggling for. They did not understand that unequal distribution of wealth existed between the North and South, but also within countries. Probably the most unequal distribution of wealth today existed in the developed world. Therefore, "How can we believe that that situation will translate into a fairer distribution in the developing world?" he asked. Those issues had to be seriously attacked in order to make the Action Programme holistic and viable. It was his hope that the activities prescribed in the Action Programme would be taken back to the regions to develop concrete activities to turn the decisions and the ideals of the Congress into realities at the national, regional and international level.

### **INTERVENTION by Janet BARZOLA, President of Central Nacional de la Mujer Minera - CNMM, Peru**

Before moving to the panel discussion on Section 3.3, Chair Leahy introduced guest speaker Janet BARZOLA, (President, CNMM-Peru), an organization which worked to defend the human rights of non-union contract mine workers in Peru. Its work also extended to the wives and families of those workers in efforts to improve living conditions in the mining centers. Sister Barzola delivered an eloquent and emotional plea for **solidarity** assistance in the struggle for decency and **human rights** against the multinationals as well as the Peruvian government.

She firmly believed that the future of the social and union movements was based on the ability of organizations to build effective social alliances based on political positions which were clear and consistent on the issues at stake. They needed to identify projects and work together with strategic social sectors which fought for workers' rights but worked outside the union structure.

Globalization had brought about a situation where workers were pitted against TNCs which had established powerful trade alliances to gain access to cheap labor markets. The trade unions did try to organize the workers, but many unions in the South operated independently of the social movement. It was essential that the international union movement refine its position and realize that it needed social allies which were vocal and effective in speaking out against human rights violations. They should develop a sound

political agenda and involve themselves in efforts to abolish free trade agreements. The privatization of water supplies, for example, had impacted on the indigenous communities of Peru which resulted in social conflicts and environmental degradation. It was necessary for unions as well as other groups to act as leaders in raising public awareness on these issues. Unions must realize that NGOs could play a complementary role in support of the empowerment of workers and communities to help them be self-sustaining and independent.

Overcoming current economic trends was also essential. She called for support of initiatives to refocus on collective bargaining as a basic right of workers. Their goal was to bring in other social sectors which were also impacted by the work of the transnationals. In Peru, the power over workers' rights and human rights was strictly in the hands of the TNCs, especially the mining companies. In the mining sector, families were abused and suffered unbelievable indignities every day. They had hoped laws would be changed in order to improve the inhuman conditions in which mining families lived. But without alliances with other organizations, there was little hope that progress could ever be made in the political arena as far as human rights were concerned. The CNMM had called upon the union movement in Peru to join them in seeking social equity and freedom of speech and assembly. They had continued in this struggle and protested the laws which had such a negative impact on them, but political leaders continued to ignore the laws.

Over the last 14 years, Peru had adopted two constitutions. Although a third constitution was being drafted and promises had been made, it was of little benefit to the mine workers in remote areas if the laws were not enforced. The mining industry in Peru was primarily carried out high in the Andes mountains in isolated communities where the workers lived in inhuman conditions. Barzola described the cramped housing and environmental conditions of the families, their lack of clean water, utilities, and protection from extremely cold weather. The women also worked 14 to 16 hours a day alongside the men, earning an average wage of six dollars per day. They were constantly subjected to physical and psychological threats by the company of being laid off. Harassment of women in the area was prevalent. There were no cultural activities. The children were undernourished, without schooling, and seldom found anything to smile about. Though overcome with emotion, Sister Barzola continued her remarks and pointed out that there was no future for these children, many of whom had lost a parent in a mining accident, and who themselves were not physically fit because of poor hygiene and contaminated drinking water. This deplorable situation would continue into the next generation of miners to come unless something was done about it.

She had come to the Congress seeking solidarity in the struggle. They had tried to publicize their situation and demanded corporate and social responsibility. The multinationals attempted to manipulate the workers by giving them small gifts and clothes when what they really needed was food and clean water and respect. However, there was no way to regulate the companies' actions. Therefore, the women of the community had decided to band together in order to help themselves. They discussed their problems with other women, other workers' groups and the community at large, calling for greater social responsibility to bring about change. Now she called upon the IMF to recognize their plight and determine how it could help. Representatives of FETIMAP had traveled to the Andes to see the condition of mine workers for themselves. They assured the contracted workers that they were not alone in their struggle and could fight for their rights by organizing and becoming part of a movement which would fight with them and for them. She thanked the Secretariat for inviting her to speak and hoped to gain IMF's support in their continued battle for human rights.

The delegates expressed their appreciation for Sister Barzola's passion and zeal with a standing ovation as General Secretary Malentacchi presented her with a gift as a memento of her visit to the Congress. Chair Leahy thanked Sister Barzola for her speech which had touched the hearts of all the delegates, and pledged the total support of the IMF in that struggle.

The panel discussion on Section 3.3, **Improving the Work Environment**, was introduced and Robert Taylor, advisor to the European Trade Union Confederation and former Editor of the British newspaper *The Financial Times*, again acted as moderator. The Action Programme contained section on workers' rights to safe working conditions which stressed the fact that "Health is a worker's most basic asset. Therefore, defending and promoting health and safety at work was a fundamental trade union task which all IMF affiliates should include at the top of their agendas." He pointed out the clock located near the platform which was keeping track of the number of workers in the world who had died from asbestosis during the Congress. He announced that Marcello would launch the "IMF Global Asbestos Ban" later during the program, an effort which was being carried out in conjunction with Greenpeace. Asbestosis was one of the worst industrial diseases in the world and the goal was to stop the killing and demand that asbestos be banned around the globe.

The members of the panel, all experts in the area of industrial safety, consisted of: Ken NEUMANN, National Director and Vice President of USWA-Canada; Paul BASTIAN, Secretary of AMWU-Australia; Sanjay S. VADHAVKAR, General Secretary of SMEWFI-India; and Marcel GRIGNARD, General Secretary, FGMM-CFDT-France.

Taylor first called upon Paul BASTIAN, who had been involved in getting a landmark agreement with James Hardie, an **asbestos** company in Australia. The AMWU had sought compensation for its members suffering from the terrible effects of asbestos. He pointed out the features contained in the agreement, some of which could be used in other countries. They had organized a coalition against the asbestos companies internationally with other supporters in the medical and legal professions. Public education was incorporated to raise awareness of not only the general public but legislators as well on the issue of asbestos. National and international publicity was crucial to the success of their campaign in order to bring James Hardie to the bargaining table. Solidarity of the IMF with the asbestos victims group was a key factor. They had a strategic target and plan to achieve justice for the victims of asbestosis in Australia. They needed to attack James Hardie without destroying the company, which they wanted to remain viable and competitive. They attacked their image, their products in Australia and America. They got the message across to Hardie's individual shareholders and received their support.

The James Hardie campaign was a tremendous victory for the justice of the victims in Australia, but it was an isolated battle in a global war against the scourge of asbestosis. More had to be done with governments in terms of law reform to ensure that never again could a transnational go offshore to avoid the responsibilities to their victims. Asbestosis safety certificates had to be required in the building of any new homes. This represented progress but a lot still remained to be done in Australia.

Sanjay VADHAVKAR was asked to report on the health hazards of the **shipbreaking industry** in Bombay and their campaign to aid the workers involved in this dangerous employment. Shipbreaking had received international attention because of the inhuman conditions endured by the workers. In Bombay there were 6,000 workers, and in Allam 60,000 workers engaged in that work. Their union had taken up the challenge in 2002 to do something constructive for these people. They had a strong union in the ports which

enabled them to send representatives to investigate the problems. Within one year they had devised a strategy. Previously, various unions and agencies had attempted to aid the shipbreaking workers, but were not allowed access to the area.

Shipbreaking was considered one of the most hazardous occupations in the world. There were dangerous materials on board, including asbestos, and the cutting process was very risky. Working conditions were inhuman. They were basically migrant, illiterate workers who began work without much training. They did not have any employer-employee relationship or legal protection. They worked long hours with no drinking water or sanitation facilities. The union managed to gain workers' confidence by providing drinking water, ambulance services, and first-aid training. Eventually, the workers began identifying themselves with the union. In Bombay, about 500 shipbreaking workers were now organized under the IMF banner. They were trying to use this same experience in Allam where even bigger problems existed.

Taylor next asked Ken NEUMANN to comment on the fact that 22 steelworkers had died this year working in the steel industry in North America, a country which supposedly had occupational health legislation, yet deaths still occurred. He reported that there had been a tremendous increase in **industrial deaths** in Canada. In 1993, the death toll of those who lost their lives at work stood at 758. Ten years later, that figure increased to 963. Yet, during that same time, claims for lost time due to accidents declined. One had to ask how that was possible. Statistics showed that those numbers should go down together. Therefore, the rise in fatalities meant that work was getting more hazardous due to restructuring, contracting out and speed-ups in the various enterprises. And the number of accidents reported had gone down because the companies and the workers' compensation boards were suppressing the claims and hiding the statistics. Their union in Canada had taken on a national campaign to address this horrific increase in accidents and fatalities in the workplace.

Marcel GRIGNARD spoke next about attacks on the 35-hour work week in France. He spoke about the success of limited **working time** and its positive effects on the health and safety record in France. Over the last five years, they had conducted thousands of rounds of collective bargaining which led to the 35-hour work week being established for about half of all metalworkers. But there was still a great deal of inequality because in the large companies people worked 35 hours on average, but in small companies they worked in precarious jobs for subcontractors for much longer hours. Some improvements had been achieved, but also there was some deterioration. In places where work had been reorganized, there was an increase in the tempo of work which led to more occupational injuries and muscular strain. Increased profits from these new approaches had to be fairly distributed, not only in terms of money but also in terms of working time.

The political debate concerning the reduction of working time continued in France. Employers contended they could not compete on a global level in France or Europe where they worked 35 or 37 hours a week, when in other parts of the world workers worked much longer hours. The workers who had gone down to 35 hours a week were adamant and resisted any change.

Taylor concluded the introduction by saying that the world of work was getting more dangerous and more accident-prone instead of getting safer. Even with better technology and the power and strength of the trade union movements in the past, in the new world of work stress and psychosomatic diseases had grown more prevalent. He raised the following questions:

"What can be done about the deterioration in working conditions across the world? How could the consciousness of workers about accidents be raised? And could health and safety issues be used as an organizing tool?"

VADHAVKAR agreed that health and safety should be identified as a priority issue. His union had built up their health and safety policies and trained their leaders on that issue. They not only protected the health and safety of their existing members, but agreed it could be a good tool in organizing new members. He gave the example of the **goldsmith workers**. Approximately 500,000 goldsmith workers were scattered all over India who suffered from health-related problems. SMEWFI had organized health and safety programs for them and developed a module for that specific industry. Many worked from their homes without licenses and government authorities were investigating them. The union succeeded in developing a "code of conduct" and presented it to the government for approval. Those workers were now in the process of getting their licenses so they could continue to work from their own homes. The added benefit was that those workers were now affiliated with the union federation and indirectly with IMF.

Another example was a leading blade manufacturing company where the workers belonged to an independent union. In India there were many independent unions unaffiliated to national centers or federations. Those unions were organizing targets in the union's attempts to bring more workers into the mainstream. With the programs on health and safety, they had managed to bring many of them into the fold. They had also developed a counseling center for those workers in the informal sector. They conducted training programs for these workers and sought the help of medical professionals to tackle their health-related problems. Because of this activity, after a few years they would undoubtedly become affiliated with their union.

Taylor then asked:

"How high a priority are the Steelworkers Union giving to dealing with the health and safety issues?"

NEUMANN stated that his union believed in a strong committee support structure and their constitution stipulated that each local union have a **health and safety committee** to provide the training. In fact, union members requested health and safety training second only to shop steward training. They wanted to make sure the companies lived up to OSHA standards and that safety activists understood the legislation and moved that agenda forward.

In Canada they had a program called "Young Worker Awareness." They talked to high school students and gave them an understanding of their rights early on: the right to know, the right to refuse, and the right to participate. This year alone in Canada, they had presented this program to 18,000 students. The Steelworkers Union, along with other IMF affiliates, were instrumental in making a significant change in the law in Canada in the wake of the Canadian mine disaster in 1992 where 26 miners were killed. In many cases there had been negligence on the part of the mine owner. No longer could the CEO hide behind the former laws with regard to responsibility. They could now be held criminally responsible. They were getting support on other legislation to continue to make sure that health and safety was a top priority.

Taylor asked the same question with regard to health and safety of the Australian affiliates:

"Had they given a high priority to health and safety in the workplace, and could be used as a recruitment tool?"

Paul BASTIAN responded it had definitely been given a high priority and was a tool used in their recruitment campaign. Health and safety was considered the third or fourth highest priority issue to their members. In Australia the death rate from workplace accidents was 1 every 43 hours. But they were constantly under attack by both a conservative government and employers to roll back some of the hard-won gains unions had achieved. Ironically, on International Mourning Day in Australia, a number of employers' groups called for a dilution of workplace **safety laws**. They wanted to change current laws which presumed employer liability to one where the employee's behavior became the focus of accident inquiries.

Employers used sophisticated schemes to take the unions out of the occupational health and safety debate and make it a non-industrial issue. The AMWU had taken steps to assure that emphasis and action around occupational health and safety was in the forefront of their minds. They had redoubled their efforts to increase the density of their OSHA representatives in the workplaces and provide them with union training, pointing out some of the schemes employers used to disenfranchise workers from that process. They also continued to review their education programs and campaigned to institute work stoppages in any unsafe situation without fear of repercussion. Industrial manslaughter was a big issue for unions in Australia in all their jurisdictions.

Taylor called attention to the fact that the neo-liberal ideology sought to undermine and weaken many regulations and laws passed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to protect the health of workers. Their main objective was to improve shareholder value of the company and drive down labor costs, of which health and safety was an important part. He asked:

"Should there be more regulation or should regulation be reduced? Can we rely on voluntary agreements? Should the law regarding health and safety be very detailed or should there be a more general approach?"

GRIGNARD stressed the importance of having the proper balance between legislation and collective bargaining. **Global regulations on safety and health** were essential because when jobs were moved so were the risks related to them. The unions and the workers stood to lose a lot of ground in terms of safety and health if jobs were relocated to areas where regulations were substandard or non-existent. If the U.S. banned a hazardous product, the TNCs could simply use it elsewhere in the world. Therefore, international rules and collective bargaining were essential. Trade unions had the responsibility to demand social responsibility on the part of companies and insist on proper corporate behavior regardless of what legislation was in place. The health and safety of workers both in the TNCs and the sub-contracting companies was absolutely crucial. That was where International Framework Agreements came into play. For example, the French had worked with CUT in Brazil to analyze and compare the working conditions of the Arcelor Group in Brazil and in Europe, particularly with regard to the number of fatal accidents. The unions had spoken to the top management about accidents in Brazil even without an agreement in place, but having an IFA in place would make it easier to associate the Brazilian unions in our work.

Taylor referred to the existing laws and questioned whether they should be more general, or if perhaps that would weaken and dilute the protection for workers.

NEUMANN felt it was necessary to have stronger regulations. In his experience, deregulation had always been bad news for the workers and for the country as a whole. Governments had to own up to the fact that workers should have a right to work in a safe and healthy environment and there were responsibilities attached to that. Politicians should be elected who spoke to human values and the kind of society people wanted. After all, he said, "The best benefits in a collective agreement are not important if workers are not able to leave their place of employment and go home safely."

Taylor then questioned whether the conservative, neo-liberal government in Australia had tried to undermine health and safety regulations. He suggested that:

"Perhaps a program of **preventive action**, rather than litigation and compensation, might be more beneficial to the workers. It might be better to create the good workplace rather than deal with the victims and those who suffered the consequences of bad work places."

BASTIAN reported that the conservative government clearly had industrial health and safety reform on their agenda, and it wasn't going to be the type of reform which made life easier for workers. He believed, however, that the laws were a reflection of what society was prepared to accept. He agreed it was necessary to organize around the issue of occupational health and safety. In addition, the role of collective bargaining both nationally and internationally was important to ensure the formation of strong committees and safety rights for the workers. But continued fighting for the underpinning of those rights by a strong regulatory system was necessary.

Taylor referred to the terrible **disaster in Bhopal, India**, 20 years ago and how more than 100,000 people still suffered from chronic illnesses caused by that catastrophe. Dow Chemical had never paid any compensation to those people. He wondered if the IMF could perhaps follow the example of India in the shipbreaking industry and the goldsmiths as well, as perhaps a way to deal with the transnationals and hold them accountable for health and safety. Health and safety was an issue where unions got enormous support from the rest of society. The corporate image of companies was undermined if they condoned unsafe working environments.

Sanjay VADHAVKAR declared that the Bhopal tragedy was not only the worst industrial disaster in history, but was the least investigated. Industrial indifference and government apathy had perpetuated the catastrophe. As Taylor had stated, more than 100,000 people still suffered after 20 years, and 15 to 20 of those people died every month. Researchers found it had an effect on future generations as well. The land was spoiled, the water was contaminated and, worst of all, nobody took the responsibility for cleaning up the site where the Union Carbide plant stood. The U.S. courts were trying to decide who should take responsibility for the clean-up. Neither Union Carbide nor the Indian government took steps to help the victims. Over 500,000 people were still waiting to receive compensation. Union Carbide was taken over by Dow Chemical in 1999, but Dow refused to take responsibility for an incident that had happened so long ago for a product they did not develop and in a country they had never operated in. Those legal issues presented a barrier to attempts to resolve the problem. International health and safety regulations were the only way to avoid such a tragedy in the future.

Taylor concluded the panel discussion by reminding the delegates that the Bhopal incident illustrated the enormous challenges facing the IMF and the international labor movement in dealing with the transnational corporations on issues relating to the work environment. It was important for workers across the world to know that in cases which dealt with

asbestosis or disasters like Bhopal, the trade unions did have a response. "We need to name and shame the international companies which have terrible records on health and safety, and praise those companies who have done good things to improve the working environment," he said.

The panel discussion having concluded, Chair Leahy opened the floor for further discussion on the Action Programme 3.3.

Jyrki RAINA (CF-Sweden) reported that the unionization rate in the five Nordic countries of around 900,000 metalworkers was 90 percent, which was the result of 100 years of struggle and conflict. With new company structures, outsourcing, large entities being split into smaller units, they had to put even more resources into **organizing** in order to maintain their strong position. The expansion and dominance of transnational companies had increased the need for cross-border action. The Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, suffered after the collapse of the Soviet Union and their unionization rate decreased to a mere 10 to 15%. Their collective agreements covered less than 20% of the workers in the industry. Many Nordic companies, which behaved relatively well at home because the laws required it, were against organizing and signing collective agreements with the Baltic unions. Last year the Nordic and Baltic unions covering the industrial and construction sectors adopted a new joint strategy and decided to work together to correct this unacceptable situation. The 40 Nordic and Baltic national trade unions involved were going to work together to organize those companies one by one and reach a collective agreement. They were determined to succeed in this very concrete organizing project.

Organizing and union-building were central elements in IMF projects in developing countries, but there was room in the metalworking world for more than the 12 projects going on presently. IMF's regional offices were best positioned to identify needs for new organizing projects according to the guidelines set up in the Action Programme. World Company Councils should be transformed into flexible global trade union networks, and more such networks should be set up in major multinational companies. These networks facilitated the regular exchange of information and joint action, including support for organizing drives in places where there was not yet a union. IFAs could and should be tools for organizing.

The Nordic unions offered their cooperation to assure that Nordic companies behaved decently wherever they operated. Every metalworker should have the right to join a union and enjoy the protection of a collective agreement.

Ms. Junko NAKATOMI-UENO (IMF-JC-Japan) brought out the fact that in Asia the issue of **atypical workers** was a serious problem due to the instability of such employment. More people were forced to take such employment which made the organization of trade unions and labor relations even more difficult. In Japan the number of such atypical workers had doubled over the past decade. They now accounted for about 30% of the entire work force. Corporate managers wanted to increase this kind of "flexible work" in order to cut costs. The IMF-JC called for the development of a strategy to deal with new forms of employment by doing away with these unstable jobs and by making equal treatment, especially of women, a reality. In the Asian Pacific Conference, many disturbing reports were given which described even worse situations in other Asian countries. In the Republic of Korea almost 60% of the workforce was employed in atypical jobs, most of them women workers. Forty percent of the workers in Indonesia and India, as well as other countries, worked on a contract basis. She called upon the IMF to take the initiative and place this issue on the agenda of an IMF working party.

Stefan LOFVEN (Svenska Metall-Sweden) spoke about **equal opportunities for women**. The inclusion of women on the IMF Executive was a good first step. In many cases, women earned less than men for equal work, even though their jobs were often more difficult. Many were exploited and sexually harassed. Women were not represented as well in the labor organizations and too little was done about that. This issue was about living up to our most fundamental beliefs, that all human beings were of equal value. Both genders deserved decent working conditions and equal union representation. Very often male values were applied and male conditions steered the situation in the workplace and the unions. Women were not given the same chance to enhance their skills and were, therefore, paid lower rates. In addition, there should be more fair representation in our own organizations. A shining example of progress in that regard was CUT in Brazil where it was written into their rules that 30% of union representatives had to be women. This problem had to be solved locally, nationally and internationally.

Verner ELGAARD (CO-industri-Denmark) related that modern communication technology made it possible for companies to operate without any consideration at all for national borders. Both production planning and research and development were conducted on a global scale. Global financial markets constantly put pressure on companies' bottom lines. **Globalization** had the potential to offer more opportunities for wage earners throughout the world, but it could not be given free rein. International solidarity was needed in the world trade union movements if the results of globalization were going to benefit the people who actually did the work. The trade union movement nationally and globally had an important role to play in the fair distribution of the wealth. Unions should be in the forefront to ensure respect for human rights and sustainable development. **International Framework Agreements** were an important tool to make companies socially responsible, but IFA's were not enough. They had to be monitored systematically to ensure that the MNCs were behaving properly throughout the world.

Organizing the unorganized was absolutely fundamental. New answers had to be found to basic questions on solidarity and making sure we had political influence. New approaches to international cooperation had to be devised. "We have to be prepared to think in new terms to find the right answers to the questions facing the trade union movement," he said. Cooperation between global trade union alliances had to be stepped up, not by mergers but by solidarity between those groups.

Elgaard described his vision of the world in which globalization had a social dimension, where communication brought people closer together in solidarity, where the globalized economy was not given free rein, and where we had binding rules and full cooperation between the WTO, OECD and the UN. In his vision, a fair distribution of the prosperity generated should be guaranteed to all. This could be reality if the trade union movement created unity and got the right political and trade union results.

Terje ANDERSSON (Sif-Sweden) was pleased that the Action Programme raised the issue of recruiting and organizing **non-manual workers**, which should be one of the grassroots activities of every union. The level of unionization among non-manual workers was very low, even though the proportion of non-manual workers had increased dramatically as a result of technical changes in industry. These workers were subject to job insecurity and poor conditions of employment. Of course, organizing the non-manual sector was difficult, it could and should be a top organizing goal for all metalworkers' unions. Andersson described the Sif collective bargaining rounds in 2004 where employers presented unacceptable proposals which could result the deterioration of conditions and benefits for all employees. But because of the commitment of its members, Sif was able to quash those proposals, thanks to the fact that 80% of that particular workforce were members of the

union. Organizing non-manual workers was a strategy which could lead to the establishment of collective strength. The IMF policy for non-manual workers adopted last year was an excellent foundation on which to build. It was time to put the principles into practice. Sif was committed to making active contributions to the excellent seminars and workshops organized by the IMF Non-Manual Department. It was important to make use of the potential that existed in organizing the unorganized.

Joo Kwang MOON (FKMTU-Korea) believed that the Congress was an important venue for all affiliates to consolidate their international solidarity and exchange information and experiences. She referred to the difficult problem in Korea of **casual and temporary workers**. The number of temporary workers in Korea had increased each year and now represented 56% of the workforce. Their working conditions were deplorable, including below poverty wages and long working hours. In September 2004, the government announced the adoption of a special legislative act which would lead to an even greater increase in the number of temporary and contract workers. The Korean labor movement had fought hard against that law. FKMTU had provided a model language for collective bargaining to their affiliate trade unions to empower them to demand the conversion of the temporary workers to standard workers. Since then, the number of casual workers in the companies that were under FKMTU's banner had decreased from 24.4% in 2001 to 19.8% by the end of 2004. They were committed to continue working to eliminate more casual work and called for the support of the IMF and its affiliates in that effort. She insisted that "Organizing these temporary workers is the only way to provide them with the right to assemble and to bargain collectively."

Palitha ATUKORALE (JSS-Sri Lanka) felt the Action Programme contained the necessary ingredients and strategies to face the challenges of the present situation. It was up to the affiliates, however, to carry it forward and make it a success. He referred particularly to organizing the unorganized, especially in the **Export Processing Zones**, where 90% of the workers were women. In Sri Lanka, established labor laws applied to the entire country. In practice, however, that was not the case, especially when it came to freedom of association. His union had several branches in the free trade zones. Management had seen to it that those workers who formed the branches were eliminated from the factories. The law in Sri Lanka, enacted in 1996, dictated that if the union had 40% of the workforce, it was mandatory for the management to negotiate and bargain collectively with them. However, in the free trade zones this never happened. Even worse, the high court and the authorities had not taken any action on that matter. The conditions in the EPZs were so deplorable the workers could not continue to work for more than seven or eight years. Brother Dyvadheenam had been to Sri Lanka and knew the situation and Atukorale requested IMF intervention to approach the European Union to demand that these laws be complied with in Sri Lanka.

Thamrin MOSII (SPMI-Indonesia) recalled that solidarity had been stressed since the 29<sup>th</sup> World Congress in San Francisco. It was important, however, to clearly define **international solidarity** and how it could be put into practice when an industrial dispute arose. In Batam Island near Singapore, a conflict had arisen in a battery plant whose headquarters were in Germany. The company had laid off 15 key members of the union committee with the excuse of "downsizing." This was clearly anti-union activity in violation of the ILO convention guaranteeing freedom of association. They had requested aid from the IMF Singapore Council but were still awaiting their reply. The Manpower Department of the government suggested rehiring these workers, but the company had refused. The case was now in the courts. Another example was an industrial dispute in a case involving Mitsubishi in Jakarta. The company had closed down due to offshoring into the global market, specifically in Thailand. They had also violated the ILO convention

regarding freedom of association because the management did not want to negotiate with the Thai unions. The company did not want to pay the compensation called for in the collective bargaining agreement. That problem was not resolved and was scheduled to be heard in the labor courts. Mosii called for the solidarity and assistance of the IMF to help solve these problems.

Cyrille TAN SOO LENG (ISC-Singapore) pointed out that two-thirds of the 70 million metalworkers around the world were unorganized, many of whom were located in Southeast Asia. Millions of these workers had been oppressed by anti-union activities against workers. IMF had to seriously focus on **union-building** in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam where workers needed a decent standard of living and better working conditions. If the purchasing power of the 500 million people in Southeast Asia increased, the consumer market would also improve.

The IMF Southeast Asia office had worked tirelessly to organize unions within the region. Since 1999, union membership within the area had more than doubled to 350,000, but many millions remained unorganized. They needed IMF's assistance to build strong, sustainable leadership in the area. The economy of Southeast Asia had grown rapidly over the last decade, but the metalworkers continued to be abused by multinationals with poor wages, unsafe working environments and insecure employment. He proclaimed that, "If their trade unions do not struggle and fight and act as the catalyst for change, the fate of workers will be decided by the employers and by the government." They had to become strong so their workers could emerge from the poverty cycle and so young workers and women would have decent work, decent wages, and a better life.

Tom JEFFERS (AWU-Australia) declared that globalization and the capitalist-driven ideology was well organized and paid for by the sweat off workers' backs. It was deliberately designed to reduce the wages and worker protections in exchange for immense riches for the CEOs and shareholders. At the beginning of 2005, the AWU had signed a strategic alliance with the United Steelworkers of America in order to provide information-sharing, assistance and support to fight against the evils of globalization. Workers were forced to become social slaves to MNCs throughout the world who put profits and production before workers' rights and safety.

**Young people** needed to be taught early in schools about unions and industrial matters, including trade union philosophies, workers' rights, and collective bargaining as part of their education. They were taught about the social aspects of life and were trained to enter the workforce; therefore, they should also know about labor union history as it pertained to their future. The entitlements of workers had been fought for and died for by workers struggling to fight the cause of decent wages and working conditions. "Our children need the necessary background to appreciate the struggles of current and past union activists," he said. "As unionists, we fight to ensure that our children will never work as slaves." Young people should be educated so that they could ensure the same rights for the next generation of workers.

Ms. SULOCHANA (NMWF-India) stated this Congress was a milestone for the IMF with the election of **women** representatives on the Executive for the first time in its 112-year history. She credited General Secretary Marcello Malentacchi and his team for recognizing women workers as a force to be reckoned with. Women who worked in factories could now express their job-related problems and social stigma. Strength came from unity, not only of the workers but unity between trade unions as well. She felt that some of the unions in India fought more for their own aggrandizement than for the cause of the workers they represented. Working women in India were still being neglected. Although

legislation was brought into the parliament over five years ago for women's rights, it still was not passed and remained in the hands of the male-dominated legislative body. She appealed to the IMF to contact the appropriate authorities in India, a country where women had little representation, and demand passage of the much needed legislation.

Ms. Sulochana, Chair of the IMF India Women's Committee, sought permission from the regional office to use the IMF logo on her letterhead to write to the different trade unions about forming local Women's Committees to enhance efforts to organize the unorganized women. The regional office had denied permission to use the logo, which she felt was a policy that should be changed. She described the struggles and the hardships she had undergone when she began organizing women during her 47-year career in a steel plant. To date, they had organized 2,000 working women into their union who now received benefits previously denied them on the mere grounds they were women.

Moses SHIIKWA (MANWU-Namibia) spoke of the 47 million metalworkers around the world who were not included in the family of the IMF. He issued the challenge that before the next World Congress a goal of **organizing** at least one-third of those metalworkers should be met. The employers would be more prone to listen to the IMF if it had more clout and represented a majority of the workers in the industry. It was difficult to bargain collectively and implement agreements when the union represented only a minority of the industry.

The final speaker in the debate was Napoleon D.K. KPOH (ICU-Ghana) who said improved conditions of work and living standards had been under attack by employers in both the developed and the developing world. The impact of these attacks took different forms in different areas. In the developed world, the result was the offshoring off good-paying jobs to developing countries. In the developing countries these new jobs which were transferred to them were low-wage, hazardous jobs. The transnational corporations continued to create havoc in both developed and developing countries while they increased their profit levels. The result was that governments in the developing countries were manipulated by the TNCs, and in turn had become ineffective in governing their own countries. They also become instruments of oppression of their own workers by giving in to the demands of the companies in terms of permitting low standards. The workers were told that unless they accepted the jobs they were offered, they would go to other more receptive countries, thus pitting worker against worker and country against country. The solution to this attack on workers and their trade unions was through effective **international solidarity and organizing**. Workers throughout the world should share equally in the global economy. International solidarity was capable of dealing a fatal blow to these attacks on workers, but required practical collaboration between workers and trade unions in both the developed and developing countries. Training programs at the national and company level were necessary. It was imperative for each individual or affiliate to respond promptly to requests they received for solidarity action. Practical meaning had to be given to the slogan, "An injury to one was an injury to all."

Assistant General Secretary FREDRICKS summarized the panel discussion and said it made excellent contribution to the questions of international solidarity, organizing the unorganized, and the role that education on health and safety could play in terms of the future work to be done by the IMF. He responded to the delegates' remarks but first thanked Janet Barzola of Peru for her contribution which had undoubtedly touched the hearts of every trade unionist in the hall.

Solidarity in union-building and organizing were clearly at the top of the delegates' agenda. South Korea, India and Japan had referred to their unique problems and the fact that

atypical workers and women clearly faced the brunt of worker abuse. That was an increasing phenomena which the IMF needed to focus on more carefully. The new women on the Executive Committee would surely define the issues faced by women workers throughout the world and seek solutions to their problems.

The question of export processing zones had been raised by the Sri Lanka delegate who urged the IMF to take action in support of those workers. The IMF would certainly do whatever it could, but it was only through the power of workers through organizing that positive changes would be made. The support of organized workers would make the work of the IMF much more effective.

The question of Southeast Asia and the number of unorganized metalworkers in that region was also raised. The fact that there had been a tremendous amount of investment in that region made it clear the IMF had to give it more attention. While the governments acted against the workers and unions in those regions, the fact was that enterprise-based unions were less effective in responding to the needs of members. However, Fredricks assured the delegates of the Asian region that the IMF would of course give a tremendous amount of support to activities involving the building of strong national unions.

Regarding the use of the IMF logo, Fredricks assured the affiliates that when they asked for support and solidarity, it was freely given without question. However, in order to have the greatest impact, it should be clear that solidarity requests came from the IMF headquarters, signed and sealed by the General Secretary. If affiliates needed to have the IMF write something on their behalf, they only had to get in touch with the Geneva office and they would be pleased to do it.

The two speakers from Africa focused their remarks on union-building. Problems with organizing existed because foreign direct investment had not yet reached Africa; therefore, the majority of the 47 million unorganized metalworkers in the world were not in Africa, but were in China and Southeast Asia where the MNCs were seeking cheap labor. It was possible, however, for the African unions to develop a force that could not only address governments but which was able to mobilize affiliates in the developed world on behalf of workers in Africa.

Fredricks concluded by saying that the Secretariat could take heart, based on the contributions made during the debate, that the hard work of the Action Programme Committee had really paid off. Chair Leahy moved the adoption of Section 3.3. **Unanimously adopted.**

The following resolutions also came under the purview of Section 3.3. Proposed Resolution No. 5 was presented by Ms. Emilia S. VALENTE (CNM-CUT-Brazil).

**RESOLUTION No. 5**  
**STATEMENT ON GENDER EQUALITY**

(Submitted by the IMF Women's Committee)

RECOGNIZING THAT

Women, in comparison to men, still

- receive less access to education and training;
- receive lower pay for performing work of the same value;
- have fewer opportunities for advancement;

- are restricted from leadership positions in trade unions and in society;
- continue to suffer discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, as well as sexual harassment and violence;
- are subject to the effects of gender discrimination that is deeply rooted in all societies; and
- are concentrated in jobs which are low paid, part-time, temporary and/or casual, often intensive and harmful to health, and in addition are traditionally difficult to organize

AND AFFIRMING THAT:

- Opportunities to work and to earn a decent wage must be equally available to men and women;
- There can be no equality in employment without equality in the division of domestic responsibilities, including caring for children;
- In a truly democratic society, women must be equally represented in its governments, parliaments and institutions;
- Education is necessary to ensuring access to better employment opportunities so girls must have equal access to education;
- Collective bargaining has a pre-eminent role in improving pay and conditions for women workers, so special measures must be adopted to ensure that women are included in collective bargaining and the opportunity to put forward issues that concern them;
- Women must have equal opportunity to work in any occupation and perform any type of work;
- Pay and conditions improve for women workers when they are unionized yet the level of organization of women into unions is far behind that of men; and
- The strength of unions is dependent on their capacity to fully represent all workers.

IMF WILL:

- Work towards an equitable representation of women in its structures;
- Assist affiliates with recruitment strategies to organize women workers;
- Work with affiliates to ensure women's full integration into their unions;
- Promote gender equality in leadership positions in unions;
- Assist affiliates with campaigns to achieve equal pay for work of equal value;
- Promote a fairer balance between work and family and support changes to traditional patterns of work that facilitate it;
- Promote recognition of the needs of women workers to collective bargaining demands;
- Increase participation by women in its work by ensuring that :
  - ⇒ special measures are taken to ensure that women are represented at IMF meetings, taking account of their representation in the relevant sector;
  - ⇒ Union-building projects emphasizing improved representation of women;
  - ⇒ Women's representation in IMF is continuously monitored and reported on;
  - ⇒ IMF delegations to other bodies incorporate gender equity.
- Retain the minimum target of 20% participation by women for the next Central Committee and give consideration to raising it for the 2009 Congress

## AFFILIATES WILL:

- Ensure that women members are given opportunities to participate in IMF meetings;
- Put forward women leaders to take on positions of responsibility within IMF;
- Support the work of the IMF Women's Committee;
- Participate in consultations at the regional level to ensure that women members have a voice on the IMF Executive Committee; and
- Continue to pursue the goals of organizing women workers and ensuring their fair representation at all levels of the union.

Peggy NASH (CAW-Canada), Co-Chair of the CLC Women's Committee, congratulated the IMF for increasing the representation of women in its top leadership structure, and also for bringing forward this important resolution. Many women had worked for years to try to make these important transformations in the labor movement. In the field of union organizing, gender equality was very important. In Canada, 70% of workers were unorganized, many of whom were women working in low wage, precarious, insecure jobs. Women needed to see the unions as a vehicle for change in their lives. They needed to be recognized as equals by having women representatives in all levels of their organizations, including top leadership positions, and by giving women's issues equal priority. Better wages, greater job security and safety at work were the goals of both men and women, as well as access to more skilled jobs, child care and equal pay.

Unions could make a concrete difference in women's lives at the bargaining table by addressing the problem of violence in the workplace. In the CAW it was mandatory that every collective agreement contain language on harassment. Procedures had to be put in place to stop harassment of any type, especially harassment by a co-worker. They also contained language for the establishment of "advocates," women especially trained on issues of sexual harassment, violence and abuse. They had confidential phone lines and acted as counselors to refer women needing assistance.

The percentage of women in the CAW had increased from about 12% to almost 35% because women were attracted to organizations that fought on their behalf. In political campaigns, union women talked to other women in their community about these issues of concern to them. These women-to-women campaigns were productive in helping to accomplish a great amount of work. There could be no solidarity without democracy and equality. Women wanted to stand side-by-side with men to defend their rights in the workplace and reduce inequality in society. Increasing the representation of women in all labor organizations was the way to make the worldwide trade union movement stronger.

Petteri OJANEN (TU-Finland) represented the non-manual workers of Finland. The union had emerged as the result of the merger of four Finnish unions. Since the merger, they had attempted to increase their international activities and solidarity through special solidarity projects. Besides the usual work unions did to increase their membership and train shop stewards in the Third World, they tried to highlight gender equality and the need to come to grips with the persistent problem of child labor. Together with the ICEM and FNV Netherlands, they had established a program, which was currently being evaluated, to promote gender equality and collective bargaining in some Latin American countries. At the Finnish Metalworkers Union, a similar project had been started which focused on more traditional issues, such as organizing and help for shop stewards.

Individual small unions could not do all the work that needed to be done, and that was the reason for the merger. Activities needed to be coordinated by a global union federation which represented the entire sector in order to avoid overlapping and duplication of work. The limited resources available had to be used to the best possible effect. Brother Ojanen believed the IMF, as a global federation, should be active in steering such a project, with emphasis on gender equality and equal opportunities for men and women.

Carol LANDRY (USWACDN-Canada) spoke in support of the resolution. Part of the work of the Steelworkers Education Program was to identify and build awareness around the struggles women faced in the workplace, in the homes and in the community. One in five women in Canada, close to three million, lived in poverty. Being poor in Canada was not the same as the poverty experienced in some parts of the world, but it meant deprivation and suffering while being surrounded by wealth and having no access to it. Women who lived in poverty were more susceptible to physical and mental illness and were vulnerable to violence and abuse.

Poverty for women was caused by either low wages for women's work, no wages for women's work, or discrimination. This was all linked together through globalization. Low wages resulted from part-time, low-paying jobs labeled as "women's work." No wages resulted from the expectation in society that women were primarily responsible for unpaid care-giving for their family members and household work. As more social programs were slashed or disappeared, women were forced to pick up more responsibilities at home. Many of the best-paying jobs were in male-dominated employment where women faced hostility from their bosses and co-workers. In addition, aboriginal women or those with disabilities, women members of minority groups, faced multiple forms of discrimination.

The IMF had an opportunity to continue the work of educating, networking and advocating on behalf of women workers on a global level. Through policies, campaigns and education, the IMF could work with all its affiliates to ensure that women were represented at all levels of union organizations. High priority should be given to organizing women, bargaining for gender equality, mobilizing for social justice issues and against exploitation of women workers, and sending the message that workers' rights and women's rights were the same.

Chair Leahy called for the vote on Resolution No. 5, "Statement on Gender Equality," which was **unanimously adopted**.

## **RESOLUTION No. 2 GLOBAL BAN ON ASBESTOS**

(Presented by Keith Hazelwood, GMB - Great Britain)

The 31<sup>st</sup> IMF World Congress recognizes that whilst 32 countries worldwide have banned the use of asbestos, its use is expanding in many markets, particularly in developing countries. This Congress also recognizes that the deadliest workplace hazard ever known continues to kill 100,000 people every year.

The IMF must intensify the fight against this global killer and launch a high profile international campaign which:

- In addition to the call for a global ban on asbestos contained in the IMF action plan, puts pressure on the 150 member states of the ILO that have not even ratified the 1986 ILO Convention setting out minimum standards to do so;

- opposes the actions of asbestos producing nations in exporting increasing quantities of the killer product to newly industrializing nations in Asia, the Far East and Africa;
- condemns the cynical and dishonest worldwide propaganda campaigns mounted by asbestos producers to promote asbestos as a “safe” product;
- confirms treatment and compensation for workers suffering from asbestos-related diseases should be borne by employers;
- highlights and condemns the actions of insurance companies that pursue court actions which seek to limit or avoid their liability to pay compensation to workers who have contracted asbestos-related diseases;
- pressures governments to adopt compensation schemes for workers harmed by asbestos that shift the burden of proof away from the worker, and ensure that guaranteed compensation is paid swiftly to victims of employers’ neglect;
- calls for increased governmental and international cooperation and coordination to raise funds for the development of improved research, diagnosis, care and treatment of workers suffering from asbestos-related diseases;
- develops a program of education and awareness raising about the risk of exposure to asbestos, particularly of workers in developing countries who work with no protection.
- calls upon all governments worldwide to introduce effective legislation that implements preventive and protective measures for all workers liable to be exposed to asbestos during the course of their work;
- requires national governments to implement transition programs for workers displaced by the banning of asbestos.

Brother Hazelwood emphasized that the resolution was about saving lives and the international trade union movement doing what was right. Asbestos was the most deadly industrial hazard workers ever had to deal with, and it was still responsible for over 100,000 deaths every year. Besides killing those who worked with asbestos, it also affected the families of workers and put the whole community at risk. The GMB had campaigned on this issue for many years. Despite the government ban on the use of any new asbestos, many workers were still at risk from asbestos that was already present in their workplaces. They had launched a campaign entitled “Asbestos - It’s Still a Killer” to raise awareness of the continuing and growing threat to their members. They eventually succeeded in getting new legislation to protect workers against this killer product. However, the use of asbestos had increased in the developing countries that were becoming industrialized where people worked without adequate protection in alarming numbers. Hazelwood warned that those workers would pay a heavy price. The lessons learned about asbestos had to be applied on a global scale. The international trade union movement had a responsibility to warn and support workers in countries like Africa and Asia. Increased pressure on all governments to take action to ban the production, importation, exportation and use of asbestos products was also needed.

Paul Bastian (AMWU-Australia) was the final speaker on Resolution 2 and reported that the AMWU also supported a global ban on asbestos. It was important for the IMF and its affiliates to take up the fight to put an end to the sickness and the tens of thousands of needless deaths that occurred as a result of exposure to asbestos based products. In 2004, after a prolonged campaign by the Australian trade union movement, Australia banned the import and export of these hazardous products. They had one of the highest rates of asbestos-related diseases in the world due to the extremely wide use of asbestos products prior to 1970. It was estimated that over the next two or three decades they would see another 40,000 victims.

The AMWU recognized that asbestos exposure and the disease that came with it was a global problem that required a global remedy. The victory for the victims against James Hardie was testament to what could be achieved through solidarity action. On behalf of the Australian victims, the AMWU expressed appreciation and thanks to the IMF Secretariat for its support and dissemination of the information on asbestos and for building important linkages with the affiliates, particularly in the Netherlands with the FNV and the CNV, as well as the victims' groups which also joined in their campaign. "A global ban on asbestos depends on our commitment to put words into action and working together to assure success," he said.

Chair Leahy then put Resolution 2 to a vote and it was **unanimously adopted**. He pointed out that since the opening of Congress, the asbestos monitor registered the fact that 807 people had died of asbestosis worldwide. The delegates were encouraged to sign a petition entitled, "Asbestos - Ban It," and post the forms before leaving Congress.

Before returning the Chair back over to President Peters, Leahy expressed his gratitude and honor at being invited to chair this session of the Congress, and again paid a special tribute to Sister Janet Barzola for her heartrending and superb plea for the miners in Peru.

President Jürgen PETERS announced that the IMF was losing a committed and active trade unionist due to the retirement of Katsutoshi SUZUKI who had made many contribution to workers' rights issues during his tenure with IMF-JC. He had worked at plant level, company level, and industry level, and also did excellent work at the national and international level. A memento of thanks was presented to Brother Suzuki with best wishes for a pleasant and fulfilling retirement.

Brother Suzuki expressed his appreciation for the accolades bestowed upon him. He considered the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the "male era" of industrialization of the United States and Europe. He saw the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the "female era" of industrialization of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It had been a great joy and his good fortune to work with his friends at the IMF and metalworkers from all over the world. He suggested that during the next 100 years the United States and all industrialized countries should find a third way, which was neither capitalism nor communism, to improve people's lives and facilitate the establishment of human rights and democracy for all workers.

After the announcement of a few housekeeping items, Congress recessed for lunch at 12:40 p.m.

## **WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **25 May 2005**

The Congress reconvened at 1:50 p.m., Chair Rudi Nurnberger presiding. Continuing with Agenda Item 11, IMF Action Programme, the next portion to be presented was **Section 3.4 -- A Social Dimension to Economic Globalization**. President Peters presented this section with introductory remarks on the "Different Faces of Globalization."

Globalization affected every aspect of life and politics, both on the national and the international level, was no exception. It wasn't just governments which shaped politics but also financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the WTO, and company federations were also formulating structures and planning future developments. In many cases, all this planning by informal institutions took place behind closed doors outside the purview of the people; thus, there was absolutely no democratic control over the process. For trade unions and their members, the policies being pursued by international institutions were far removed from day-to-day reality.

However, thanks to the involvement of non-governmental organizations, these hidden agendas were brought to light; for example, the fact that the so-called "structural adjustment programs" of the IMF actually resulted in an increase in poverty; international food concerns were awarded patents on seeds. Therefore, reforms within these global institutions were called for. The draft Action Programme adopted in September 2003 set out strategies and delineated the kinds of reforms the IMF wanted to implement, and now it was time for the IMF Congress to breathe life into those mandates.

Peters stressed a number of points which could be expanded into trade union activities and campaigns. First of all, the income gap between North and South must be reduced. That was the underlying premise, the goal, of all activities. In order to accomplish this, the developing countries needed to have a voice in the international arena; nevertheless, things seemed to be moving in the opposite direction. The election of the neo-conservative Paul Wolfowitz as President of the World Bank was the latest demonstration of undemocratic structures. The process by which the USA appointed the head of the World Bank or by which the Europeans determined the president of the International Monetary Fund was simply obsolete. Instead, Peters suggested, a representative from the developing countries should be head of the World Bank.

The heads of government which comprised the United Nations member states had fixed a very ambitious goal for the new millennium. By 2015 they wanted to reduce world poverty by one-half. But the U.S. and other industrialized countries refused to take the necessary steps to turn that goal into a reality. "If we're going to win the fight against poverty," Peters said, "then action must be taken quickly," starting with the remission of debt for the poorest countries. The gold reserves of the International Monetary Fund should be used for that purpose. Secondly, aid for public development should include innovative financing arrangements. In addition, an international tax to finance food and other public goods should be implemented, such as a Tobin Tax on financial transactions or taxes on aircraft fuel and weapons sales. And finally, effective measures to fight corruption were needed. There was no point in writing off the debts of poor countries and then simply ignoring the corrupt elite who piled up new debt.

At the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in February, there was a global call to action against poverty, and the ICFIU pledged to participate in achieving that goal. Other upcoming international conferences would provide the perfect opportunity to put pressure on policymakers and make the public aware of the events and results taking place. The

WTO Ministerial Conference was scheduled to meet in Hong Kong in 2005 and was being touted as "The Development Round" by the WTO. What was really needed was an authentic development round, one which took into account the needs of the developing countries and the social needs of workers.

Nothing characterized the face of the world economy so much as the General Agreement on Trade & Tariffs and its powerful successor organization, the WTO. GATT was founded as a "club" of sorts by the industrialized countries back in 1947. Today, three-quarters of the member states of the WTO was made up of developing countries, countries which sat at the "children's table" of globalization. Obviously, there was a need for greater democracy within the WTO where the special interests of the developing countries could be addressed. Nevertheless, it was due to the participation of this important bloc that the industrialized countries failed to get their wishes during the last WTO Conference in Cancun. Therefore, a veto power of sorts was beginning to emerge within the WTO made up of the developing countries, and that was a positive step. It was Peters' hope that other alliances such as the G-20 and the G-90 would also open up and embrace social and trade union goals.

At the upcoming Hong Kong conference of the WTO, negotiations which concentrated on agricultural and non-agricultural goods and services, NAMA as it was called, would be taken up again. The latter section was the one which was of most concern to the metalworkers' unions. The industrialized countries wanted NAMA to provide access to markets by eliminating high customs duties and tariff barriers to trade in the developing countries. Without getting into details, the bottom line was that the developing countries relied heavily on customs duties as part of their economic survival and they simply could not afford to reduce them using the same formula as the industrialized countries. The effect on national income would be devastating to countries like Indonesia, not to mention the impact it would have on their efforts to boost their economies by expanding production abilities to include new products. Preliminary reaction to the debate indicated that the industrialized countries were not willing to give the developing countries any special treatment with regard to customs tariffs.

And the discussions did not only apply to goods but services as well. "I see a very grave danger," Peters said, talking about the possibility of public services such as water utilities and education being sacrificed for the interests of large international groups. The water supply was not a commodity which could be left up to free market forces. In his opinion, it was a primary goal for trade unions to ensure the protection of public commodities such as water, education and health, particularly for the poor, and activities for this should be included in IMF's activities. If countries needed to set price levels on water used by commercial manufacturing or by wealthy residential areas, so be it. Let that income be used to provide free water for the poor. The proposals regarding the export of service personnel, such as consultants and construction engineers from the industrialized countries in anticipation of getting a foothold in foreign markets were another facet of the WTO discussions which needed close scrutiny.

These complex issues represented a non-traditional yet necessary arena for trade union work. But if globalization with a human face was the goal, then the trade unions must play a major role in the discussions. This is where alliances with other NGOs were important. Together, such a coalition had the power to bring these issues to the forefront of public knowledge and opinion and put pressure on governments and company managements to comply with international rules of trade which were fair and non-exploitative. The arbitrary actions of the MNCs which were detrimental to the world economy must be

opposed. "The trade unions must go on the offensive and remind people of our international solidarity," Peters said in closing.

Moderator Taylor opened the **Panel Discussion on Section 3.4**, which focused on "Fighting for Social Justice." Participants included Francisco GUTIERREZ (UOM-Argentina), Peggy NASH (CAW-Canada), Nobuaki KOGA (President, IMF-JC) and Gianni RINALDINI (FIOM-Italy). In his introduction, Taylor referred to a quote from Section 1.9 of the Action Programme regarding the emerging social alliances and broad-based coalitions which were beginning to play a major role in local and global politics. Peters had touched on this alliance-building in his remarks as being an important part of the fight for social justice.

Taylor raised some fundamental questions about the need to "separate the rhetoric from the realities" of trade union organization and capacity in dealing with these formidable problems. He referred to a speech on Tuesday by Ms. Papma of OXFAM when she said that campaigning for social justice and workers' rights required pressure from outside the traditional system of industrial relations. She saw the role of the trade unions and NGOs as one of using the leverage of not only the workers, but also consumers and public opinion in accomplishing these goals-- take the issues to the streets, in other words. This was the basis of his first question to the panel:

"Do we have to change the nature of trade unions to play an important role in the fight for social justice? Are the organizations we inherited from our forerunners still structurally relevant to deal with these problems, or do we need to create a new kind of trade unionism?"

Gutierrez answered first by saying that union structures were still strong and relevant in the fight for workers' fundamental rights, but that wasn't enough. They needed to be opened up to include other social sectors-- the unemployed, the younger workers, even the spouses and families of workers. These groups were enormously helpful in organizing the informal sectors. During the economic crisis in Argentina, factories were closed, layoffs occurred, and the metal industry was on the verge of collapse. The unions organized a nationwide march in defense of work which included not only union members but unemployed workers from two of the largest industrial centers. The event turned into an opportunity for many non-traditional groups to join the union in the fight for workers' rights.

Peggy Nash said there were two ways of looking at the focus of unions: one, the traditional business of unionism which involved the representation of workers and collective bargaining; and, secondly, the social aspects of union work. Union leaders must recognize that members' lives don't stop at the workplace. They had families; they were part of their communities. "But no matter how good we are the bargaining table, repressive governments manage to take away workers' rights and undermine our ability to organize," she said. She felt that building alliances with other entities, such as the peace movement and other social movements, was an example of a new kind of organizing. In Canada, the CAW formed an alliance with Greenpeace which historically had been in conflict with the labour movement. They formed a project called the "green car strategy" which was a strategy not only for sustainability in the auto sector but also environmental protection as well. It called for more investment and job security in the industry, but also for the production of automobiles which were less polluting and more energy efficient. That was one example of building non-traditional alliances which strengthened the union and enabled unions to be part of a broader social movement.

Koga of Japan referred to President Peters' introduction about the many faces of globalization and how different countries perceived the concept of globalization in different ways. Globalization gave the developing countries the possibility to increase people's income and standard of living. Therefore, globalization in and of itself should not be categorized as something evil, but rather as a phenomenon which led to new challenges. The question was how to build a new social system within the framework of globalization in terms of humanity, social security, and dignity of work on the one hand, and production efficiency, fair competition and coexistence on the other. "We are union activists," he said, "but also consumers, taxpayers and members of communities." As such, there were many other civil groups with which union members could form liaisons and build networks in order to stay involved and play an active role in the pursuit of common goals.

Rinaldini rounded off the discussion by saying it didn't really matter whether one was in favor or against globalization. It was a fact of life in today's world. The question was whether it was possible to guide the process of globalization so it could become something which helped the people of the world instead of harming them. Clearly, trade unions needed to be rooted in the workplace, but the traditional work of negotiating at the plant level was not sufficient to change the big picture. Globalization necessitated the need for a change in the way trade unions functioned. "We have to become more aware of social processes and participate in actions involved other parts of civic society," he said. In Italy, a new law was recently adopted which listed 43 different types of employment contracts now in existence, many of which were very precarious, casual types of labour contracts. Therefore, more had to be done on the bargaining end of trade union work. And that process of collective bargaining could be used as a platform for getting a different image across about trade unions and get our ideas of globalization across to the public at large.

Taylor persisted with the question in an effort to get to the essence of trade union structures by following up with his next question:

"In a world where most places don't have trade unions, can the fight for social justice be fought in the context of non-union workers as well? Can a trade union be a social movement and still remain rooted in the workplace?"

Gutierrez responded that it was quite true that in order to achieve a better world and globalization with a social dimension, it wasn't enough to just have traditional trade unions. Political and social alliances must be formed, as was proven by the developing countries where those types of alliances were very important. Work-place conditions were the focus, but trade union goals included other things as well-- the quest for democracy, access to homes, clean water and education-- human rights which were curtailed in many countries. Civic societies existed which needed and wanted ties to workers' organizations just as much as unions wanted ties to them. These ties needed to be strengthened.

Koga added the environmental issue to the mix and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Union activities alone could not solve these world problems. "We need to spread our wings," he said, and try to organize outreach activities with NGOs and other organizations.

Nash said that of course the trade union structures established in the 1930s or even earlier were not designed to grapple with the problems of globalization in the new millennium. In Canada, 70 percent of the workforce was unorganized. New work groups, such as contract workers, had emerged which consisted of a whole army of young people entering the workforce at poverty level wages. These new workers felt they had no hope of ever

joining a union or improving their situation. She thought that one very creative way of attaining more inclusion for those young people was with the establishment of a new subsection within the union structure for "associate members" which gave them a starting point and introduced them to the meaning and benefits of union membership. The corporations were very sophisticated in finding ways to prevent union organizing and the unions had to be just as aggressive.

Taylor's next question was even more specific in terms of the political strength of unions to accomplish their goals. Throughout history, governments of many countries had political parties to look after the interests of labour, whether it was the Socialist Party, Democratic Party, or Labour Party. Today, politicians tended to disconnect themselves away from trade unions. He asked:

"Does the trade union movement need to develop a political arm in order to be more effective, such as the Labour Party affiliation in the UK, for example?"

Rinaldini responded that in light of the current trend toward globalization, there seemed to be a gap between political forces and parts of civil society as a whole. The trade unions had managed to gain the confidence of workers and other groups with similar goals, whereas large portions of civil society had no trust whatsoever in politicians. "Globalization is redesigning the function of political parties," he said. This demanded that trade unions try to influence policy-making while at the same time maintaining independence from governments, employers and political parties. The goals and objectives of trade unions should be the basis of political platforms and actually compete with the ideas of politicians. The strength of trade unions was rooted in the fact that they represented workers, not special interest groups.

Nash agreed and said that even though the corporate agenda had proven to be such a complete failure and had not delivered on its promises of greater equality and better jobs, some so-called "progressive" social parties were still hanging on to that dream. That was why the trade unions could not afford to ally with a particular political party, but rather needed to stay focused on workers' issues.

Koga said that in order to improve the union's ability to represent the interests of workers, it was necessary for trade unions to broaden their perspective and create alliances with other groups, including political parties. However, in order to really implement the agenda of workers, it was going to require a careful balancing act of cooperating with governments on the one hand, while maintaining independence on the other.

Gutierrez disagreed and said that based on his experience governments often made decisions against the interests of the people. He wanted to see societies mobilize and get rid of political leaders who did not respect the interests of the people. In Argentina, five Presidents had been elected over the course of one week but were removed from power because they did not subscribe to the desires of the people. The same thing happened in Bolivia. Politics had get back to the basics of democracy and change the way people were represented to be more direct and more accountable to the needs of society.

Taylor said he was more interested in political processes than political parties. He brought the Porto Alegre Conference into the discussion by comparing it to the Davos Conference which brought together all the "fat cats" of the transnational corporations, the World Bank and other international institutions. He asked:

"If the international labour movement wants to humanize globalization, is it not better to go in force to all the international organization conferences, both on the streets and also in the conference rooms, to confront the antagonists and neoliberal zealots and argue with them on behalf of workers' rights and trade union rights?"

Rinaldini responded by saying that, "If they want to give us an entry ticket, we will go." The trade unions were very capable of expressing their views. The question was, did they have the power to influence and pressurize the various players in the international arena. He admitted that there was a vacuum or gap between the power of the trade unions versus the real decision-makers. And that gap had been filled by other players in civil society. As a result, some things had changed for the better and the trade unions now had a role to play. He felt the trade unions were absolutely on a level playing field with the various organizations, but getting an audience during world conferences was difficult.

Koga said that the level of interest among the rank-and-file within unions was very low. The World Social Forum was one international venue where trade unions could express their concerns. But on the world economic level, trade union power was limited. He considered the IMF together with President Peters and other officers, as well as other GUFs, on a level which could open many doors for the trade union movement to express its views, and that avenue be pursued.

Nash agreed that if the Davos attendees really wanted to challenge themselves instead of just agreeing with each other, they would do well to invite someone who could speak on behalf of the people instead of profits. At the same time, unions needed to hold trade negotiators and politicians accountable within each country. Politicians needed voters in their home countries. They needed to be reminded that the voters would be watching their actions as they went out and negotiated trade agreements that gave away jobs and exploited innocent workers abroad. Mobilization activities should be held in advance within the home countries before these "secret" international conferences took place in order to get that message across.

Gutierrez commented that the recent World Social Forum was indeed an arena where the trade unions should be present and audible in suggesting strategies to counter neoliberal globalization. He was pleased that the President of Brazil, Lula, had been in attendance and was very vocal in sharing his vision of a war against poverty. Other leaders had appeared before the International Monetary Fund to discuss solutions to debt problems.

Taylor followed up by talking about the relationship between the IMF and other global union federations. He asked:

"Being conscious of the fact that the trade unions have limited resources compared to the fiscal power of transnationals and the nation-states, do you think it might be more sensible to try and bring the various global union federations closer in terms of collaboration, instead of competing with each other or duplicating activities?"

Nash gave a specific example of where the GUFs crossed paths. One of the CAW bargaining committees, a small clothing manufacturing plant, recently reported that they had already outsourced 60 percent of their production offshore-- mainly to China-- but they wanted to keep the other 40 percent in Canada. The problem was that Wal-Mart, the US-based multinational, was increasingly dominating the retail sector in Canada and had the purchasing power to drive prices down, which dictated what production costs would be for

everyone. This was a huge factor in the decision of whether and to what extent outsourcing would occur. Nash felt that the retail sector, the manufacturing sector, the communications sector were growing closer and closer because of better technology which enabled them to coordinate organizing efforts and political campaigns.

Gutierrez commented that Brother Campos, the head of the IMF Latin American Regional Office, had made a tremendous effort to visit all the unions in each country to discuss problems and get input for the coordination of activities. He felt this was a good practice which should be done in all the regions. As Nash had stated, the presence of multinationals in one sector had many ramifications on the other sectors within the region.

Rinaldini said that with plant closings and layoffs taking place from one day to the next, there was no doubt that without coordination and solidarity huge problems ensued. Apart from the negotiation of IFAs, the World Company Councils needed to do their jobs as well. A bargaining system needed to be formulated which took into account the realities within different countries. The IMF did this on a regular basis. But that was the key, because solidarity needed to be put into practice, and the only way to do that was to get involved in bargaining to fight globalization which was designed to drive a wedge between workers and pit them against each other.

Koga added that alliances needed to be strengthened even more. One factor of globalization was the rapid development of ICTs and ITs. That was a major element of the problem. He felt it was necessary to anticipate how the industries would change structurally from within and plan activities accordingly.

Moderator Taylor summarized the discussion by again quoting the speaker from the OXFAM organization who had made several relevant points on the subject of alliances. She had said, "Consumers and the media are only too willing to believe evidence that companies are abusing their corporate muscle and exploiting workers. But they are even more convinced if the message comes not only from the usual anti-sweatshop campaigners but also from the official national trade union movements."

That joint leverage-- the power of labor and the power of the social movement together-- was the key to getting transnational corporations to understand that they did not dominate the world; that the voices of millions of workers and consumers was also very loud and rang out around the world. Therefore, the creation of social alliances on key issues was a big part of the answer to exposing and bringing MNCs in check in terms of their behavior in the developing world. Taylor felt strongly that such ties paved a new pathway for trade unions to follow toward accomplishing their goals.

Malentacchi sincerely thanked Brother Taylor with a gift, a small memento of his participation at Congress. Chair Nurnberger announced that DVDs of the Opening Ceremonies were being distributed to the delegates to take back home and share with their colleagues, and then opened the floor for further discussion on Section 3.4.

Hlokoza MOTAU (NUMSA-South Africa) said that instead of discussing problems, the IMF should focus on what international actions were going to be undertaken if demands were not addressed at the WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong. "Otherwise, we will be meeting at the next Congress to talk about the same issues all over again," he said. It was the responsibility of the trade unions to arm workers with the resources to fight the battles within their own countries. People who died from hunger were no different than those who were killed in Colombia; they were all victims of a world order which cared only for profits. Part of the battle was to elect progressive governments to power to fight on behalf

of the people. However, in the face of globalization as it existed, governments were in the pockets of the MNCs. The right to strike was one weapon the trade unions could use. Problems were not going to be solved by attending another meeting or seminar; trade unionists needed to be out there on the front lines. A national or international day of action against worker exploitation across borders would bring the issue to the attention of the world. "If we don't act on behalf of others, we rob them of the weapons to fight for themselves," he said. Another weapon in the fight against poverty was to export food technology to teach the developing world how to help themselves.

Hector Oscar LaPLACE (AOM-Argentina) extended a warm welcome to the women elected to the Executive Board and pledged the wholehearted support of the Argentina affiliates for their input. He expressed his heartfelt respect for Sister Barzola of Peru who brought the special problems of the mining industry to light. Mines obviously could not be moved to another country like an auto assembly plant. The problem was the companies which came in to supervise the work of extracting the minerals and imposed every form of worker abuse on the miners-- atypical work, 60-hour weeks, child labour, appalling conditions. He felt that negotiating IFAs with these companies would not only protect the workers but the environment, the natural resources of fragile economies. Mining activities took place in remote areas which had virtually no community structures to aid the people. He reported that the AOM was collaborating with NGOs in an effort to help communities in jeopardy. In addition, the Regional Director, Jorge Campos, had recently attended a conference of the American Miners' Association for the first time. This was a sign of progress which could turn into an alliance that would help bring justice to mine workers across the world.

W. RHODE (IG Metall-Germany) pointed out that the real problem was not globalization itself, but rather that the benefits of globalization were not distributed fairly. The host country profited little, particularly the developing countries which only had a tiny share of trade. The industrialized countries were also beginning to see themselves as the losers. Employees were fearful of being dislocated because of plants moving abroad, and the media only inflamed the situation. A recent issue of a popular magazine in Germany had featured a cover photo of a Southeast Asian man with a caption which read, "Will he get your job?" Trade unions wanted to find responses to these problems which had the effect of pitting worker against worker. The real front line of the fight was between employers and workers.

To add to the problem, governments failed to apply global rules in the blind belief that they would gain tax revenues. The downward spiral of corporate taxes opened the door to the erosion of the tax base in many countries resulting in increased income taxes for individuals. Even today, international tax competition had not led to greater investments in jobs as the neoliberals argued; on the contrary, countries were being pitted one against the other. It was his view that tax policies needed to be applied worldwide to prevent this. For example, minimum corporate taxes should be levied with the objective of closing off tax havens. Currently, there was a draft bill in front of the Belgian parliament on a financial transactions tax and IG Metall was totally in favor of the proposal.

Syed QUAMRUZZAMA (INMWF-India) was from the mining sector where only 12 to 15 percent of the workers were organized. Most of the mining contracts had been outsourced to companies where the working conditions were substandard, workplaces were unsafe, and labour laws were disregarded. His union was working very hard to organize the workers and improve their lot. As for the debate on the social dimension of globalization, he agreed with previous speakers that in order to execute the Action Programme, strong national trade unions were necessary. There were multiple trade unions in India which were divided

on many issues. As far as the government was concerned, trade unions were losing relevance as a movement. The unions needed to work together to organize the unorganized and strengthen from within. Only then could they influence the international policies of the government. He supported the Action Programme and called upon the IMF to coordinate with the national trade union centers of India to help them become more united.

Owen HERRNSTADT (IAMAW-USA), spoke in support of the Section 3.4, particularly the provisions concerning trade, an issue which reflected two faces of globalization. The first face was visible all too often. It was built on the backs of workers who didn't enjoy fundamental human rights, decent pay or safe working conditions. It was built by union activists who were jailed or killed for speaking out for reforms, by parents who sent their children off to work in order to merely survive, and by those who saw their pensions and healthcare stolen by despicable employers. The second face of globalization was "filled with light," Herrnstadt said, as he described the ideal benefits it could provide the workers of the world. It was a face built on the basis of democracy, fairness, transparency, worker dignity and inclusion. It was based on core labour standards being incorporated and enforced in the WTO and all trade agreements. "These are not negotiable and cannot be compromised," he said. Trade unions must remain committed to working with each to fight against corporations which sought the highest profits with the lowest standards; to challenge governments who tried to manipulate and instill mistrust into our midst. Only by working together in the true spirit of trade union solidarity, could the IMF ensure that the old face of globalization withered away and was replaced by the new face of globalization encompassed by the Action Programme.

Sarde S. RAO (SMEWFI-India) confined his remarks to Section 3.4.3 and the issue of debt cancellation for the poorest countries. Debt cancellation was not, as some would like to think, some magnanimous act on the part of the industrialized world brought on by an attack of conscience. Debt cancellation was intricately linked to trade and the concept of social justice. In this era of globalization, this issue had special significance in the sense that many of the countries in debt were not democracies. Whether the issue was aid or debt cancellation for the developing countries, the agenda of the TNCs was to get something in return. They wanted cheap labour, raw materials and free access to labour markets. He asked that the IMF coordinate with the unions within the developing countries to ensure that debt cancellation initiatives were not negotiated in exchange for workers' rights.

In closing, Rao wanted to add to the comments of Brother Quamruzzama about the mining sector. Under India's laws, the mines located in areas which formed part of the forests belonged to the Indian tribes and as such could not be given to anyone except the government. However, the TNCs which purchased the mining rights to the land were being not only unfair but unlawful because they did not offer jobs to the tribe members on the reservations. This was an issue of social justice and human rights which he wanted the IMF to investigate.

Carlos GRANA (CNM-CUT-Brazil) referred to the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre and said he hoped the next Social Forum would operate in a more decentralized fashion where more of IMF's affiliates could take part and have more input. It was essential, he felt, for trade unions to have more dialogue with the social movements, particularly given the role that unions played in the world today as vanguards of the workers. Specifically with regard to Brazil, Grana reported that in 1987 there were 2.7 million metalworkers in the country. For 15 years, following a neoliberal model, so-called "exclusive globalization," over half of those jobs were lost. During those disastrous years, the unions had fought to rebuild their organizations and at the same time formulated strategies for changes on the

political scene as well. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a metalworker, was elected President in 2002 and within two years 20 percent of the job losses were recovered. More than 150,000 jobs had been created by the Lula government with his policies of inclusion.

There were still some problems, however. The right-wing elite controlled the media and infused their agenda into the news every day. But even with a democracy in place, the role of government did not replace the role of the trade unions, and CUT was actively involved in the political process to prove that workers could be effective leaders and protagonists of change. That kind of change was also needed in the international arena, in the WTO and the United Nations. Speaking of the U.N., Grana supported the idea of debt forgiveness for the developing countries. It was essential, he said, that external debt be not only forgiven but transformed into investments in health, education and social inclusion to ensure the growth of the developing countries.

Edward MARPAUNG (SBSI-Indonesia), who had witnessed the aftermath of the deadly tsunami first-hand, wanted to first of all thank the IMF and all the affiliates who had provided relief efforts in Southeast Asia. However, he focused his remarks on another deadly situation, that of the violence taking place in Colombia, the torture and murder of trade union activists perpetuated by the military government in order to spread fear throughout the country. Brother S. Monje was one of three human rights activists killed by Colombian paramilitary forces last year. His death aroused so much anger that the workers went on strike in order to bring attention to the injustices going on in Colombia. Enough pressure was brought to bear to start an investigative commission into the murders. But the trade unions kept struggling and eventually the matter was brought before the parliament which was also too intimidated by the military government to resolve the issue. Today the struggle continued. Marpaung asked that the IMF support the Colombian colleagues in their attempts to finally obtain justice for Monje and his colleagues.

Napoleon GOMEZ-URRUTIA (SNTMMS-Mexico), in discussing what the role of unions should be in the future, said that the biggest problem of globalization was the unfair distribution of wealth between North and South. The traditional role of the trade unions-- that of collective bargaining, defending workers' rights, building union structures and organizing the unorganized-- was still the focus of union work. But the strategies expressed during the Congress suggested new solutions which should be taken back to the regions and implemented. He was especially in favor of the idea of forming new alliances with groups which shared the common goals of human and workers' rights. Coalitions which spanned across the globe created a powerful worldwide network of support for human rights activities, from the U.S. to Germany, Peru and Australia. "We should fight for a new type of unionism," he said, a modern, intelligent, efficient and inclusive movement which could thrive into the future. The need for greater clout in the political arena was also vital. He supported the Action Programme and stressed that it should not just be taken back to the home countries of the affiliates and forgotten; indeed, it should be taken seriously and put into practice.

President PETERS summarized the discussion by saying that clearly Section 3.4 of the Action Programme sent out an appeal to all IMF affiliates to fight the current trend of globalization which benefitted only corporations. The discussion also showed that alternatives were available in the pursuit of a more just form of globalization. The fact that the majority of workers were part of the casual or informal sector in many countries was also brought to light. Obviously, the union movement needed allies in order to participate in the policy-making process on a national and international level.

Although each country had different structures in which the trade unions operated, the basic elements were ones on which everyone agreed: (1) the implementation of ILO core labour standards in trade agreements and within other international institutions; (2) making the rich countries pay their contribution towards the developing countries in terms of debt forgiveness and development aid; (3) the enactment of real reforms within the WTO; and (4) the need for increased cooperation with civil organizations, such as alliances with NGOs. He thanked the affiliates for the consensus displayed during the discussion, and placed Section 3.4 of the Action Programme before the Congress for approval. **So adopted.**

**RESOLUTION No. 4**  
**WOMEN'S WORK UNDER GLOBALIZATION**

(Introduced by Kirsten ROLKE, IG-Metall-Germany)

RECOGNIZING THAT:

Globalization and intensified international competition are continuously reducing workers rights and conditions.

Never before have corporations been so mobile. When workers organize and wages rise, companies look elsewhere for cheaper labour, and increasingly this means women's labour. For corporations, women's labour constitutes a flexible, low cost, non-unionized workforce that can be deployed at will.

Women account for up to 90% of the 27 million workers in Export Processing Zones where conditions are the worst of all. Here women can expect compulsory pregnancy testing, sexual harassment, adverse environmental and health conditions, repetitive and often harmful work, and extreme job insecurity.

Women's employment under globalization is precarious. Millions of young women throughout the world are hired at minimal wages, only to be laid off when they get married or start a family. Women's jobs are the first to be lost, often forcing them into even more marginal and potentially dangerous means to earn a living or to migrate in search of work.

Overall, the pattern of women's employment is unlikely to be a lifetime of full employment, but sporadic employment in temporary, part-time and contract positions. Inequalities between men's and women's pay are increasing, as is gender segmentation of the workforce which restricts women to jobs that are lowest in status and skill.

Women are working longer and harder to earn a living. At the same time, their responsibility for domestic work has not reduced. The resulting social costs are felt not just by women's families, but by society as a whole.

The impacts of globalization are more acute for women who are additionally subject to racial discrimination.

AND ACKNOWLEDGING THAT:

Women's struggles against social injustice, violence and war, as well as against inequalities within countries and between North and South, are fundamental to IMF efforts to build alternatives to globalization.

Despite the very evident impacts of globalization on women workers, discussions of globalization generally ignore the specific interests of women, including within trade unions.

The conditions of women's work under globalization present an enormous challenge to organizing.

The precarious and irregular pattern of women's employment is increasingly becoming that of men, too.

#### AFFILIATES WILL:

Take a stand against the inferior forms of employment that are often the only ones available to women.

Gather information on gender segmentation and equal pay in their areas of coverage and use it to ensure that women are not restricted to the lowest paid, lowest skilled work.

Use negotiation and implementation of International Framework Agreements to promote women workers' rights.

Work together with women's organizations to organize women workers in EPZs and the other ghettos of globalization, raise their issues, and ultimately improve their conditions of work.

Rolke proudly announced that the 1<sup>st</sup> IMF Women's Conference had met on a formal basis during the week and had enjoyed great success. Resolution No. 4 was the resulting mandate which encompassed the discussion on women's rights during the Conference. The effects of neoliberal policies and globalization as presented by so-called analysts as "gender-neutral" were in fact much more serious for women than men. For example, in addition to working outside the home to support their families, women predominantly were also responsible for the day-to-day tasks of managing the household and tending to children and the elderly. "Global capitalization is like a caravan," she said, because it went from one country to another in search of lower wages and work standards which resulted in higher profits. In EP Zones, worker and human rights were non-existent. This was where capitalism showed its real face. Ninety percent of the 27 million workers in the EPZs were women. Working conditions were horrific-- 60-hour workweeks at wages which were below poverty level, impossible work quotas, compulsory pregnancy testing by employers and immediate layoffs of pregnant women in order to avoid having to pay maternity leave, and rampant sexual harassment.

The IMF Women's Committee was dedicated to fighting against these perverse conditions by creating worldwide networks with organizations which had common goals-- human rights organizations, women activists, but above all women in the trade union movement. Women were more successful at organizing other women because they could relate to each other's struggles and gain their trust. The Women's Conference also supported the idea of emphasizing women's issues in International Framework Agreements. The ultimate goal was to aggressively integrate women into trade union work. She asked the delegates to unanimously support the resolution.

Sally KEEGAN (T&GWU-Great Britain) presented the inarguable premises upon which all trade unionists based their work: fair and just treatment of people regardless of sex, race, creed, political opinion, disability or sexual preference. First of all, any society which

restricted access to employment or promotion on grounds other than ability to do the job denied itself the ability to optimize its own economic and social development. Such societies failed because they could not compete with countries which recognized the workforce as its most valuable asset. The communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the apartheid states in South Africa fell primarily because of the strength of the trade union movement, but also because their economies could not be viable by denying the greater part of the population opportunities to fulfill themselves in employment.

Secondly, women and other groups particularly vulnerable to discrimination were often on the front lines of trade unions fighting to end appalling injustice. Women like Maniben Kara in India and Emma Mashinini in Africa played crucial roles in bringing about reforms within their countries which paved the way for democracy and freedom. In Latin America, many women led struggles for workers' rights at great risk to their very lives.

Finally, in the context of organizing, Keegan argued that the best recruiters of women into the ranks of trade unions were other women, just as young people were best equipped to recruit young people. She firmly believed that Resolution 4 outlined the way to a promising future for the international trade union movement. "Denying individuals and groups respect for their human dignity leads only to conflict and waste," she said. She encouraged the delegates to be blunt and brave in implementing the Action Programme and adopting the resolution.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 4 was before the Congress and was **adopted**.

The discussion on the Action Programme thus being completed, the document in its entirety was also **unanimously adopted**.

## **ITEM 12: RESOLUTIONS**

### **RESOLUTION No. 1 COLOMBIA**

(Submitted by USWA, USA )

WHEREAS, Colombia continues to be the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists in the world, with 94 trade unionists killed last year alone. Year after year, Colombia accounts for well over half of all the trade union assassinations worldwide-- this according to the ICFTU.

WHEREAS, according to Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the U.S. State Department Country Report on human rights in Colombia, the vast majority of these trade union assassinations are being carried out by right-wing paramilitaries closely aligned with the Colombian military.

WHEREAS, in recent months, the Colombian military itself has engaged in direct assaults and assassinations of trade unionists, most notably of three trade union leaders in Saravena, Arauca in August of 2004.

WHEREAS, the U.S. and, to a lesser extent, other countries are supplying the Colombian military with billions of dollars of assistance as well as hundreds of military advisers,

WHEREAS, the international labour movement has for many years petitioned the ILO to open a Commission of Inquiry into Colombia's abysmal labour rights situation, and whereas the ILO has denied this petition year after year,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the IMF, its affiliates and affiliate members take the following actions to show solidarity with the labor movement of Colombia:

- Make a concerted effort to vocally and publicly oppose those countries, particularly the United States, that continue to provide military aid to Colombia and lobby public officials to discontinue such aid;
- Redouble efforts to prevail upon the ILO to open a Commission of Inquiry on the labour rights situation in Colombia;
- Organize an IMF delegation to Colombia to investigate the attacks against unionists in that country and to bear witness to the attacks against the union movement; and
- Provide material support to trade unions in Colombia, particularly for the purpose of helping preserve the lives of trade union leaders.

Jerry FERNANDEZ (USW-USA) introduced Resolution No. 1 by describing the violence, terror, abuse, kidnapping and even murder that trade union activists in Colombia were subjected to. Since 2001, over 600 trade unionists in Colombia had been assassinated, representing half the deaths which occurred in all other countries of the world combined. In a passionate speech, Fernandez decried these events as monstrous attacks on individuals whose only crime was to stand up for workers' rights. When two union members were dragged out of a Coca Cola bottling plant and murdered, the USW sent a delegation to Colombia on a fact-finding mission to investigate the terror and intimidation perpetrated upon trade unionists by the paramilitary government. "I'm ashamed of my own country," he said, reporting on the \$1.8 billion in military aid that went to Colombia supposedly to fight the drug war, money which wound up in the hands of the very people who did the government's dirty work. Both men and women were targeted equally, particularly teachers, because they tried to educate people and children, to impart the vision of democracy.

There was a huge economic power at work in Colombia. Fernandez felt there was no such thing as an "American transnational" or "Canadian transnational" or "Swedish transnational." The MNCs had no home, to flag, no borders, and no respect for countries or other people. He encouraged worldwide action to bring attention to the situation, whether in the form of protests at all Colombian embassies around the world or protests against the ILO, an institution which had the power to form and send a Commission of Inquiry to Colombia, but did nothing. "They do nothing because they are bureaucrats guided by the influence of corporations and governments," Fernandez said. He asked for support for the resolution in memory of the 600 brothers and sisters who had lost their lives in Colombia, as well as other trade unionists who had died in their pursuit of freedom and dignity.

Stefan LOFVEN (Svenska Metall-Sweden) reported that he had personally gone to Colombia to investigate the situation for himself, and had even more startling statistics. Since the end of the '80s, over 3,000 trade unionists had been killed. This was incomprehensible in a so-called "civilized society." Yet trade unionists continued to step up to the plate to lead the way toward democracy and workers' rights. His union, Svenska

Metall, had been instrumental in actually helping people escape the persecution by leaving the country and living in exile elsewhere. The resolution should inspire every single trade unionist to get angry and get involved. On May 27<sup>th</sup>, the Swedish affiliates would be presenting this issue to the Swedish government together with a request that the E.U. get involved. On the same day, a demand letter would be delivered to the Colombian ambassador asking for an emergency meeting to address the situation. He promised the Colombian affiliates that "the distance between Stockholm and Bogota is not so great that we can't do our part to put a stop to these atrocities."

Carol PHILLIPS (CAW-Canada) challenged the affiliates to take the resolution's message back to their home countries and do everything in their power to expose the situation in Colombia through the press and media so that politicians could not get away with characterizing the situation as a conflict about drugs and terrorism. They should be held accountable for their part in funding a so-called "cure" which was worse than the disease. Tackling global solidarity issues such as this seemed overwhelming at times, but by dealing on a human level on specific problems, union members could relate to the frustration and mobilize themselves despite the horror. The CAW was another union who helped Colombian trade unionists whose names were included on a "death list" by paramilitaries to escape to Canada with their families. Another group, an NGO which had been extremely helpful, was the Peace Brigade International which was composed of young people from around the world who offered themselves as human shields in order to accompany those at risk of death in countries like Colombia. These young people were now touring Canada and other countries to expose the criminal actions of the paramilitaries, such as the massacre in February of eight people in San Jose, a recognized sanctuary for peaceful coexistence. In closing, she issued a challenge to all affiliates to raise the issue of Colombia in every forum possible and conduct solidarity actions-- whether at embassies, corporate headquarters, political rallies-- to try to put and end to the terror.

The final speaker on the issue was Luis Enrique HERNANDEZ (FETRAMECOL-Colombia) who said that the resolution reflected the absolute true reality faced by trade unionists in Colombia every day. In fact, part of the Colombian delegation had not been able to attend the Congress because of the possible consequences. He expressed his gratitude for the support shown by the IMF and by the affiliates for his union comrades. Complaints lodged with the ILO reporting the number of people who had been killed had landed on deaf ears, so it seemed, for nothing had been done to address the problem. The Colombian government responded by issuing statistics saying that the situation had improved; that "fewer murders had occurred over the years"-- only 15 in 2004 as opposed to 25 in 2003. They called that "progress." The situation for women was even more dramatic, with a 600 percent increase in incidents involving violence against unionized women in just one year. In addition to the appalling situation of crimes against trade unionists, the very right to work was also being threatened. Labor agreements were no longer recognized in Colombia and people over the age of 30 or 35 were losing their jobs. Hernandez issued an urgent plea for solidarity, not only with the Colombian unions but across Latin America and the world because, as he stated, "only in unity shall we overcome."

There being no other delegates wishing to speak, Resolution No. 1 was put to a vote and was **adopted unanimously**.

**RESOLUTION No. 8**  
**PARAGUAY**

(Submitted by SITRAC-FETRAMPAR)

Paraguay is a country that has signed and ratified various ILO Conventions, including Conventions No. 87 and No. 98 on freedom of association and free collective bargaining. As a signatory to these conventions, it is obliged to respect them, honoring its international commitments and providing legal protection to all citizens and foreigners that live in this country.

The IMF condemns the blatant interference of the Paraguayan government into the democratic right of the trade union in this country and calls on this government to immediately stop this interference and restore social justice through respect of the law and international labour standards.

Therefore, the International Metalworkers' Federation will:

1. in consultation with its affiliate in Paraguay SITRAC-FETRAMPAR lodge a complaint with the ILO against government interference in the internal affairs of the trade union;
2. call on its affiliates to take protest actions against this interference and violations of basic ILO conventions;
3. launch a public campaign to inform unions around the world and ask them to lend their support to the union in Paraguay to ensure that their rights are fully respected.

Hugo CHIRICO GONZALEZ (FETRAMPAR-Paraguay) introduced Resolution No. 8 by saying that since Paraguay was the very heart of the Mercosur, one would think the ILO conventions would be respected; however, in many respects, they were not. Both the steel companies operating there and the government continually harassed and interfered with union activities in an attempt to do away with the free, democratic trade unions of Paraguay. First, there were demands that workers dissociate themselves from their unions or face losing their jobs. Many workers succumbed to these threats and were now among the unemployed. Next, trade unionists were accused of subversiveness in an effort to intimidate them. Attempts to fight back legally were ignored. Promises by the government that the matter would be addressed were compromised by the companies. Massive layoffs continued and the unions were literally dying. The workers had tried fighting the companies and the shareholders in the hopes of shutting them down. He thanked the IMF for providing a forum vis-à-vis the Congress where problems could be shared with the rest of the world, and expressed the need for solidarity for the workers in Paraguay.

Francisco GUTIERREZ (UOM-Argentina) reflected that upon hearing the comments by Brother Fernandez regarding Colombia and now Brother Gonzalez of Paraguay, the delegates were getting a first-hand look at the dark side of globalization. More than one million people had been exiled from Paraguay and were now living in Argentina and other Latin American countries in order to escape the oppression. Though democracy had been restored, the government continued to overlook abuses of workers' rights and trade union rights. The industrialists operating there refused to recognize the collective bargaining agreements which had been in place for many years. He reported that the recent Latin

American Conference in Chile had already adopted the resolution unanimously and he asked that the Congress also show its full support.

Hugo BIANCHI (UNTMRA-Uruguay) said that the resolution represented a very clear problem: the violation of ILO Conventions 87 and 98. Clear labor laws existed in Paraguay even under a Fascist regime. As Gutierrez had stated, the resolution had been discussed during the Porto Alegre Conference, but also at many other meetings where participants feared for Brother Chirico's life because of his outspoken criticism of the company's tactics as well as the passive response of the government. His fight was in essence a fight for democracy, which was in the interests of the entire Latin American region. He asked for support for the resolution.

There being no further comments, Resolution No. 8 was **unanimously adopted**.

**RESOLUTION No. 9**  
**RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY IN NEPAL**  
**STOP MILITARY AID TO THE KING OF NEPAL**

(Submitted by SMEFI - India)

The International Metalworkers' 31st World Congress held on 22-26 May 2005 at Vienna, Austria,

- takes a serious note of the anti-democratic steps taken by the King of Nepal in dismissing a democratically elected government and usurping all powers;
- strongly condemns the banning of all trade union and political activity, arrest of leaders and putting shackles on the press and media. The brutal attack of the army on the students in Pokara and its role in terrorizing the masses and leaders in all walks of life needs condemnation;
- exposes the ulterior and sinister design behind the so-called lifting of the state of emergency to receive military aid from countries and especially India in the name of fighting and continuing Maoist insurgency in the country;
- appeals to all countries, especially India, not to extend military aid to the King as long as there is no restoration of democratic institutions and practice in Nepal;
- recommends imposition of sanctions against the King and his government until all democratic institutions are restored and perform their normal functions and reinstatement of Parliament without any delay in a fixed time frame;
- calls upon the King to immediately restore the democratic institutions and practice and release all leaders put in prison;
- calls upon the UN to take urgent steps for the restoration of democratic institutions in Nepal.

Sarde S. RAO (SMEFI-India) introduced Resolution No. 9 briefly explaining the problem in Nepal where the King had refused to recognize the democratically-elected government and had ordered the arrest of trade union leaders, 30 of whom were still in jail. He had imposed his own form of dictatorship on the country-- no human rights; no freedom of association; no bilateral or trilateral negotiations or agreements. Companies had free rein

to hire and fire employees at will. The worst forms of child labour, the trafficking of women and children, and prostitution were taking place. The King had recently tried to create a smokescreen by supposedly lifting the state of emergency in order to receive military aid from other countries. The world needed to know and understand that the state of emergency still existed and contributions to Nepal were being usurped by the King. Therefore, Rao urged support of the resolution in defense of trade union rights and human rights on behalf of the people of Nepal.

Resolution No. 9 was **unanimously adopted**.

### **RESOLUTION No. 10 WORKERS' RIGHTS IN BELARUS**

(Submitted by EMA Estonia, LMLU Latvia and LMTU Lithuania)

In Belarus World Declaration of Human Rights, fundamental ILO Conventions are bluntly violated, a fact established by a special commission of the International Labour Organization in 2004. In 2000 the ILO has initiated Case 2090 on the violations of workers' rights in Belarus. The International Labour Organization has more than once recommended to the Government of Belarus to take measures to eliminate the violations of workers' rights.

Still, this oppression of rights, prosecution of trade union leaders and activists, and limitation of workers' rights continues. A contract-based system of employment for all workers was introduced. The condition of employment is an obligatory affiliation to a state-run trade union affiliated with the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus, controlled and ruled by the Administration of the President.

Workers, affiliated to independent trade unions are subjects to repressions; they are prosecuted and dismissed from their enterprises. Protest events and actions of workers and trade unions in support of their labour rights are forbidden. Trade union newspapers and publications are prohibited.

In 2003-2004 Belarusian authorities practically dismantled the IMF-affiliated unions AAM and REI. Reprisals continue against IMF-affiliated independent Belarusian trade union REPAM, which was formed by the members of the trade unions REI and AAM, unions that adhere to the idea of independence of the trade union movement.

The authorities continue to take measures to destroy the trade union REPAM, and prosecute its activists and leaders. Despite this Belarusian trade unions keep on fighting for workers' freedoms and rights.

Delegates of the 31<sup>st</sup> IMF Congress express their solidarity with struggle of the independent trade unions of Belarus for workers' rights and demand that the leadership and government of Belarus stop prosecuting and baiting of trade union activists and leaders, and respect workers' rights.

Resolution No. 10 was presented by the Estonia delegation. The subject of Belarus having been discussed at length previously, no additional speakers wished to comment. With a few abstentions, the resolution was **adopted**.

## ITEM 13: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business to come before the Congress, General Secretary Malentacchi took the opportunity to recognize and thank **Don Stillman**, a longtime member and supporter of the IMF whose award-winning work in publications and the media spanned several international unions and helped spread IMF's message throughout the world for many years.

President Peters resumed the Chair and reflected on the work of the Congress over the last three days. He highlighted the fact that despite coming from diverse countries, cultures, and background, the delegates had agreed on common positions and goals. Even though the debate had been intense, the delegates were unified in their resolve to keep up the fight for workers' rights in today's globalized world. The passage of the IMF Action Programme proved that the IMF would not rest on its laurels for the next four years; indeed, it had set out specific and ambitious activities to ensure growth and strengthening within the ranks of the trade unions. For example:

- In the continued fight for inclusion of ILO core labour standards in WTO agreements, the Congress had committed itself to push for the negotiation of more International Framework Agreements and set a goal of successfully completing, implementing and monitoring more IFAs.
- It had also decided to develop IMF World Company Councils for a better exchange of information, and to increase networking capabilities in order to respond quickly to solidarity actions.
- The IMF was also dedicated to imposing a worldwide ban on asbestos. The video display which started at zero at the beginning of Congress stood at 863, representing the number of people who had died due to asbestos-related disease in just three days. This goal went hand-in-hand with improving working and living conditions of all workers.
- The fight against atypical work-- casual and part-time labour-- would continue.
- Globalization must be subject to binding social rules. The profit motive of the few did not dictate the face of globalization; the living and working conditions of the many should be at the forefront of policy-making in the industrialized countries, of course, but primarily in the developing countries and emerging economies. Together with other GUFs, the IMF needed to exert influence on the discussions and agreements adopted in the WTO, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.
- In terms of IMF's internal structure, the election of eight women to the Executive Committee was a milestone event which would guarantee more inclusion. In addition, a new dues subscription formula tied to GDP would ensure a more fair determination of dues among the affiliates.

Peters again thanked the Austrian host union, GMT, for a spectacular Congress venue and presented special gifts in the form of IMF insignia statues to GMT President Rudi Nurnberger and the other organizers. He included a special thank you to the IMF staff, the floor monitors, the interpreters and technicians, as well as the Austria Centre Vienna for all the hard work they had done to make the Congress a success.

In a delightful and moving closing performance, the Youth Choir and dancers from the Performing Arts Center appeared on stage holding hands as they encouraged the delegates to join in singing, "We Are The World - We Are The IMF."

Thereupon, the 31<sup>st</sup> Congress of the International Metalworkers' Federation adjourned, sine die, at 5:12 p.m.

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## **Appendix:**

### **STANDING ORDERS**

### **RESOLUTIONS**

*Adopted at the 31<sup>st</sup> IMF World Congress  
Vienna, Austria, May 22-26, 2005*

### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**





**IMF IMB FIOM  
FITIM FISM**

INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS' FEDERATION  
INTERNATIONALER METALLGEWERKSCHAFTSBUND  
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES ORGANISATIONS DE TRAVAILLEURS DE LA METALLURGIE  
INTERNATIONELLA METALLFEDERATIONEN  
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE TRABAJADORES DE LAS INDUSTRIAS METALURGICAS  
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President: Jürgen Peters  
General Secretary: Marcello Malentacchi

**31st IMF World Wongress  
Vienna, Austria  
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**4**

**STANDING ORDERS**

1. Congress shall be chaired by the President, a Vice-President and the General Secretary. They will constitute the Standing Committee of the Congress.
2. The Credentials Committee (7 members) shall check the credentials of the delegates and report to the Congress.
3. Seven Tellers shall be appointed to count votes.
4. Proceedings of the Congress shall be recorded in minutes.
5. A delegate, or member of the Secretariat, desiring to speak must inform the Chair in writing of their intention to speak. Such a request to speak can be made only after the point of the agenda has been opened for discussion. The speakers will be given the floor in the order of their requests. The time for speaking shall be limited to 20 minutes for those making reports, 10 minutes for those moving the resolutions and 10 minutes for all other speakers. Reporters can be given the floor out of the regular order of the speakers' list.
6. No delegate shall be allowed to speak twice on any issue until all delegates desirous to speak have had a chance to speak.
7. A motion shall not be opened for discussion until the motion has been duly accepted by the Chair. Motions to be discussed, other than motions of order, must be presented in writing. The mover of the original motion shall have the right of reply at the close of the debate upon such motion. The question shall then be put to the vote immediately and under no circumstances shall any further discussion be allowed.
8. The motion to close debate may be moved and seconded only by members who have not previously spoken at any time during the debate. No speeches shall be allowed on such motions and the list of remaining speakers shall be announced prior to the voting on the motion to close debate (motion to close the list of speakers is admissible).

## **ACTION PROGRAMME**

9. The Action Programme shall be subject to discussion and decision. The discussion will be organised in themes. A number of paragraphs will be discussed under each theme and be subject to decision.

Each paragraph shall be subject to concurrence or non-concurrence from the floor.

No amendments to individual paragraphs of the Action Programme can be made from the floor.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

10. Reports of the Resolutions Committee (7 members) shall be subject to concurrence or non-concurrence from the floor. No amendments to resolutions can be made from the floor.

Resolutions on subjects not already covered by the Resolutions Committee, due to technical reasons, will be accepted in writing, until noon, May 23, 2005. They will be reported by the Resolutions Committee, in accordance with Article 10 of the Standing Orders.

Resolutions must be adopted by a majority of votes, as provided in Article 3.2 I & J of the Rules of the Federation.

## **RULES**

11. Changes in the Rules of the Federation, submitted to the Rules Committee (11 members) in accordance with Article 3.3.K of the Rules of the Federation, shall be reported to the Congress by the Rules Committee.

Reports of the Rules Committee shall be subject to concurrence or non-concurrence from the floor. No amendments to the proposed Rules changes can be made from the floor.

Alterations to the Rules shall require a two-thirds majority, in accordance with Article 3.2.N of the Rules of the Federation.

12. 50 per cent of the votes shall constitute quorum.
13. Corrections and personal comments are permissible only after the close of the debate on the items of the Agenda in question.
14. The Standing Orders may be amended or suspended only by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present.

## **VOTING**

15. Any amendments to the Rules on voting and subscriptions decided by the Congress 2005 shall take effect from January 2006.



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President: Jürgen Peters  
General Secretary: Marcello Malentacchi

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### ***Adopted at the 31<sup>st</sup> IMF World Congress Vienna, Austria, May 22-26, 2005***

- Resolution 1: Colombia
- Resolution 2: Global Ban on Asbestos
- Resolution 3: Against war
- Resolution 4: Women's work under globalisation
- Resolution 5: Statement on gender equality
- Resolution 6: Eradicating poverty through decent work, fair trade and development
- Resolution 7: Uniting the forces of the Global Union Federations in the industry
- Resolution 8: Paraguay
- Resolution 9: Nepal
- Resolution 10: Workers' rights in Belarus

**31st IMF World Congress  
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**Resolution 1: COLOMBIA**

WHEREAS, Colombia continues to be the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists in the world, with 94 trade unionists killed last year alone. Year after year, Colombia accounts for well over half of all the trade union assassinations world-wide – this according to the ICFTU.

WHEREAS, according to Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the U.S. State Department Country Report on human rights in Colombia, the vast majority of these trade union assassinations are being carried out by right-wing paramilitaries closely aligned with the Colombian military.

WHEREAS, in recent months, the Colombian military itself has engaged in direct assaults and assassinations of trade unionists, most notably of three trade union leaders in Saravena, Arauca in August of 2004.

WHEREAS, the U.S., and to a lesser extent other countries, are supplying the Colombian military with billions of dollars of assistance as well as hundreds of military advisers,

WHEREAS, the international labor movement has for many years petitioned the ILO to open a Commission of Inquiry into Colombia's abysmal labor rights situation, and whereas the ILO has denied this petition year after year,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the IMF, its affiliates and affiliate members take the following actions to show solidarity with the labor movement of Colombia:

- Make a concerted effort to vocally and publicly oppose those countries, particularly the United States, that continue to provide military aid to Colombia and lobby public officials to discontinue such aid;
- Redouble efforts to prevail upon the ILO to open a Commission of Inquiry on the labor rights situation in Colombia.
- Organize an IMF delegation to Colombia to investigate the attacks against unionists in that country and to bear witness to the attacks against the union movement;
- Provide material support to trade unions in Colombia, particularly for the purpose of helping preserve the lives of trade union leaders.

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**Resolution 2: GLOBAL BAN ON ASBESTOS**

The 31st IMF World Congress recognises that whilst 32 countries worldwide have banned the use of asbestos, its use is expanding in many markets, particularly in developing countries. This Congress also recognises that the deadliest workplace hazard ever known continues to kill 100,000 people every year.

The IMF must intensify the fight against this global killer and launch a high profile international campaign which:

- in addition to the call for a global ban on asbestos contained in the IMF action plan, puts pressure on the 150 member states of the ILO that have not even ratified the 1986 ILO Convention setting out minimum standards to do so;
- opposes the actions of asbestos producing nations in exporting increasing quantities of the killer product to newly industrialising nations in Asia, the Far East and Africa;
- condemns the cynical and dishonest worldwide propaganda campaigns mounted by asbestos producers to promote asbestos as a “safe” product;
- confirms treatment and compensation for workers suffering from asbestos-related diseases should be borne by employers.
- highlights and condemns the actions of insurance companies that pursue court actions which seek to limit or avoid their liability to pay compensation to workers who have contracted asbestos-related diseases;
- pressurises governments to adopt compensation schemes for workers harmed by asbestos that shift the burden of proof away from the worker, and ensure that guaranteed compensation is paid swiftly to victims of employers’ neglect;
- calls for increased governmental and international co-operation and co-ordination to raise funds for the development of improved research, diagnosis, care and treatment of workers suffering from asbestos-related diseases;
- develops a programme of education and awareness raising about the risks of exposure to asbestos, particularly amongst workers in developing countries who work with no protection;
- calls upon all governments worldwide to introduce effective legislation that implements preventive and protective measures for all workers liable to be exposed to asbestos during the course of their work;
- requires national governments to implement transition programmes for workers displaced by the banning of asbestos.

\* \* \*

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**Resolution 3: AGAINST WAR**

The right to peace is a fundamental right of every human being: the struggle to fully achieve it is linked to the struggle for economic, social, civil and trade union rights of metalworkers, for sustainable and equal development between the North and the South in which the IMF is involved.

Millions of workers, citizens of the world, have demonstrated against the wars which are causing thousands of civilian victims and bring only death, destruction and hatred. The IMF and its affiliates must express their own opposition to the strategy of "preventive war", to military occupations, as well as to all forms of terrorism.

The IMF must intensify its efforts to curb the uncontrolled dissemination of arms around the world, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the exponential increase in military expenditures. To that end the IMF and its affiliates support the "Control Arms" campaign promoted at the international level by the non-governmental organizations Amnesty, IANSA (International Action Network against Small Arms) and Oxfam, and to that end they support the nuclear weapons convention and the "Abolition Now" campaign.

We cannot forget that, despite the silence surrounding them, over 50 states in the world are at war or experiencing situations of armed conflict. Conflicts often caused or encouraged by unscrupulous multinationals and by the sales of arms despite prohibitions and embargoes imposed at the national and international levels.

With regard to the conflict in Iraq, the IMF considers that the United Nations must play a central role in the new political phase after the elections, in which the Iraqi people have the chance to determine their own future.

In this area the IMF, together with the entire world labor movement, could also play a key role, helping and cooperating with the free Iraqi trade unions in economic reconstruction and social cohesion, struggling to ensure respect for human rights and in particular for the rights of the working class, as a basis for a true democratic society.

\* \* \*

**31st IMF World Congress  
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**Resolution 4: WOMEN'S WORK UNDER GLOBALISATION**

RECOGNISING THAT

Globalisation and intensified international competition are continuously reducing workers rights and conditions.

Never before have corporations been so mobile. When workers organise and wages rise, companies look elsewhere for cheaper labour and increasingly this means women's labour. For corporations, women's labour constitutes a flexible, low cost, non-unionised workforce that can be deployed at will.

Women account for up to 90% of the 27 million workers in Export Processing Zones, where conditions are the worst of all. Here women can expect compulsory pregnancy testing, sexual harassment, adverse environmental and health conditions, repetitive and often harmful work and extreme job insecurity.

Women's employment under globalisation is precarious. Millions of young women throughout the world are hired at minimal wages, only to be laid off when they get married or start a family. Women's jobs are the first to be lost, often forcing them into even more marginal and potentially dangerous means to earn a living, or to migrate in search of work.

Overall, the pattern of women's employment is unlikely to be a lifetime of full employment, but sporadic employment in temporary, part-time and contract positions. Inequalities between men's and women's pay are increasing, as is gender segmentation of the workforce which restricts women to jobs that are lowest in status and skill.

Women are working longer and harder to earn a living. At the same time their responsibility for domestic work has not reduced. The resulting social costs are felt not just by women's families, but by society as a whole.

The impacts of globalisation are more acute for women who are additionally subject to racial discrimination.

AND ACKNOWLEDGING THAT

Women's struggles against social injustice, violence and war, as well as against inequalities within countries and between North and South, are fundamental to IMF efforts to build alternatives to globalisation.

Despite the very evident impacts of globalisation on women workers, discussions of globalisation generally ignore the specific interests of women, including within trade unions.

The conditions of women's work under globalisation present an enormous challenge to organising.

The precarious and irregular pattern of women's employment is increasingly becoming that of men too.

## AFFILIATES WILL

Take a stand against the inferior forms of employment that are often the only ones available to women.

Gather information on gender segmentation and equal pay in their areas of coverage and use it to ensure that women are not restricted to the lowest paid, lowest skilled work.

Use negotiation and implementation of International Framework Agreements to promote women workers' rights.

Work together with women's organisations to organise women workers in EPZs and the other ghettos of globalisation, raise their issues and ultimately improve their conditions of work.

\* \* \*

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**Resolution 5: STATEMENT ON GENDER EQUALITY**

RECOGNISING THAT

Women, in comparison to men, still

- receive less access to education and training
- receive lower pay for performing work of the same value
- have fewer opportunities for advancement
- are restricted from leadership positions in trade unions and in society
- continue to suffer discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, as well as sexual harassment and violence
- are subject to the effects of gender discrimination that is deeply rooted in all societies
- are concentrated in jobs which are low paid, part-time, temporary and/or casual, often intensive and harmful to health, and in addition are traditionally difficult to organise

AND AFFIRMING THAT

- Opportunities to work and to earn a decent wage must be equally available to men and women
- There can be no equality in employment without equality in the division of domestic responsibilities, including caring for children
- In a truly democratic society, women must be equally represented in its governments, parliaments and institutions
- Education is necessary to ensuring access to better employment opportunities so girls must have equal access to education
- Collective bargaining has a pre-eminent role in improving pay and conditions for women workers, so special measures must be adopted to ensure that women are included in collective bargaining and have the opportunity to put forward issues that concern them
- Women must have equal opportunity to work in any occupation and perform any type of work
- Pay and conditions improve for women workers when they are unionised yet the level of organisation of women into unions is far behind that of men
- The strength of unions is dependent on their capacity to fully represent all workers

## IMF WILL

- Work towards an equitable representation of women in its structures
- Assist affiliates with recruitment strategies to organise women workers
- Work with affiliates to ensure women's full integration into their unions
- Promote gender equality in leadership positions in unions
- Assist affiliates with campaigns to achieve equal pay for work of equal value
- Promote a fairer balance between work and family and support changes to traditional patterns of work that facilitate it
- Promote recognition of the needs of women workers in collective bargaining demands
- Increase participation by women in its work by ensuring that
  - Special measures are taken to ensure that women are represented at IMF meetings, taking account of their representation in the relevant sector
  - Union-building projects emphasise improved representation of women
  - Women's representation in IMF is continuously monitored and reported on
  - IMF delegations to other bodies incorporate gender equity
- Retain the minimum target of 20% participation by women for the next Central Committee and give consideration to raising it for the 2009 Congress.

## AFFILIATES WILL

- Ensure that women members are given opportunities to participate in IMF meetings
- Put forward women leaders to take on positions of responsibility within IMF
- Support the work of the IMF Women's Committee
- Participate in consultations at the regional level to ensure that women members have a voice on the IMF Executive Committee
- Continue to pursue the goals of organising women workers and ensuring their fair representation at all levels of the union.

\* \* \*

**31st IMF World Congress  
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**Resolution 6: ERADICATING POVERTY THROUGH DECENT WORK,  
FAIR TRADE, AND DEVELOPMENT**

The 31<sup>st</sup> Congress, representing women and men working in the metal working industries in all regions of the world:

**Convinced** that the persistence of poverty anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere and is a source of the denial of basic human rights, and that integral human development requires governments to respect fully trade union and other fundamental democratic rights;

**Appalled that** poverty in developing countries still claims the lives of 30 000 children every day through hunger or preventable disease;

**Noting** the recent Commission on Africa Report to the G8 countries is an urgent call to action to end world poverty;

**Noting further** the ILO World Commission conclusion that globalisation in its present form is not sustainable and that policies for so-called free trade advanced by some rich countries are a source of continuing human suffering on an immense scale.

**Convinced that:**

the majority of people who experience the worst forms of poverty today are workers and rural peasant populations in developing countries, women in particular;

the present global order in which the majority of the Earth's people are poor while a small fraction is rich is unsustainable;

in developing countries, especially in Africa, poverty is growing in inverse proportion to the growth of productive forces in the world, while many women and men have no jobs, or have poorly paid and increasingly casual and unprotected ones;

the eradication of poverty requires, among other global measures, the mobilisation of global workers' solidarity;

**Recognises that:**

increased aid and credit will not be sufficient to open opportunities to developing countries to sustain industrial development and raise family incomes;

the current trade policies of the most powerful trade blocs – in particular the heavy subsidies paid to farmers – restrict access to northern markets and perpetuate poverty and acute suffering;

all the un-payable debt of the world's poorest countries must be wiped out;

the promotion of fair trade, and particularly the elimination of agricultural export subsidies are indispensable so that developing countries can share in the benefits of international trade and investment .

The unprecedented global growth of forces of production offers today the greatest possibility of spreading the benefits of just incomes and eliminating the scourge of mass unemployment in developing countries.

The creation of decent work must be the central priority of governments, and the main element of a truly development-focused round of trade negotiations. Trade should be an important factor in the attainment of development and the creation of decent work, but for many workers the international trading system is either irrelevant or, worse, is undermining this objective. In developing countries and industrialised countries alike, agriculture, job security and decent livelihoods are seen to be menaced rather than enhanced by trade, while multinational companies threaten to shift production to where workers' rights are denied and labour is cheap.

Expansive promises about the potential of trade liberalisation through the WTO have failed to materialise in terms of more and better jobs and higher growth either worldwide or in developing countries. Indeed, many developing countries that undertook trade liberalisation in line with the policies recommended by the WTO, as well as by the international financial institutions, found de-industrialisation to be the outcome as their domestic industries collapsed in consequence

Employment must be at the centre of the agenda in the preparation for the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial. The impact trade has on the level and quality of employment determines whether trade contributes to or detracts from raising living standards, achieving development and eliminating poverty. Yet the employment consequences of trade are virtually always neglected in trade negotiations, despite these self-evident linkages.

This situation needs to change fundamentally so that trade negotiations take place on the basis of a comprehensive ex ante assessment of their impact on the level and stability of employment (particularly in labour-intensive sectors), respect for fundamental workers' rights, equality between women and men, good working conditions, social protection, as well as food security and access to quality public services

The challenges facing developing and least developed countries are even more acute in the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations. At both multilateral and national levels, a rigorous assessment needs to be conducted of the impact of NAMA negotiations on development, decent work and people living in poverty. Governments should not make deals in such negotiations except on the basis of a clear picture of the likely repercussions on their ability to implement industrial policies to attain their development and employment goals.

The provision of national and international funding is needed to support employment adjustment assistance when jobs are lost as a result of trade liberalisation.

Both developing and industrialised countries need to have the policy space to undertake legitimate domestically-based industrial development strategies. NAMA negotiations should not overly restrict that flexibility. A clause is needed that would enable any developing countries (particularly least developed countries) that do bind their tariffs, to be able to alter that commitment on grounds of justified social and development purposes. They should have the right to retain higher tariffs if they so wish, in line with the principle of "less than full reciprocity" contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration.

**Congress declares** its full backing for the Global Call to Action Against Poverty and **urges** the affiliates to mobilise their membership to:

- demand of their national Governments that the creation of decent work be at the centre of their agenda, particularly in trade liberalisation negotiations.
- call on G8 countries at their meeting in June to introduce effective policies against poverty

The IMF **shall**:

- continue working in close collaboration with the other Global Union partners and with like-minded social movements for the attainment of the goals indicated above
- in particular, build the capacity of affiliates to effectively influence their governments' policies on trade, aid and development
- use IFAs as a tool to strengthen worker's rights to information and education on the above issues.

\* \* \*

**31st IMF World Congress  
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**Resolution 7: UNITING THE FORCES  
OF THE GLOBAL UNION FEDERATIONS IN THE INDUSTRY**

Economic globalisation, the worldwide abolition of trade and investment barriers, and new technologies have brought about major structural changes in the manufacturing industry. Increasing outsourcing, the emergence of supply chain network enterprises and industry-related services have further blurred the divisions between traditional industry sectors.

This development has contributed to a number of mergers between national unions in the industry, especially in Europe and North America, but also in other parts of the world. Global redistribution of jobs and transfers of production have enhanced this trend, as unions which are losing members, are joining forces to pool their services, reduce overlapping activities and using limited resources in a more efficient manner.

At the global level, however, the development towards greater unity has been slower. Yet, the core activities of the existing five independent Global Union Federations (GUF) in the industry, as defined by themselves in their policy documents, are to a large extent the same. They include negotiating and implementing international framework agreements with transnational companies, setting up cross-border union networks to unite workers in these companies, co-ordinating union-building and education projects, mounting solidarity campaigns to guarantee the observance of trade union rights, and co-operating with other GUF's and the ICFTU on campaigning for a social dimension to globalisation.

As a result of national mergers, an increasing number of industrial trade unions are affiliated to a several GUF's and thus financing overlapping activities. The fact that national unions are losing members, adds pressure on the ability of GUF's to guarantee a sufficient membership fee income to take care of their core tasks. A failure to respond to these challenges may lead to unwanted cuts in services and insufficient capacity for efficient international trade union response.

On the other hand, transnational companies are becoming bigger and more often cross the traditional industry boundaries. A united trade union front across these boundaries is required to offer a real counter-weight to their power.

It is important to take action while it is not yet dictated by economic necessities. Concrete co-operation between the industrial GUF's is limited. All efforts should be made to increase practical co-operation and strategic partnerships between the GUFs in their above-mentioned core tasks, as well as common services, joint projects and regional activities. In some cases, mergers may prove to be the most efficient way of using scarce resources and avoiding the duplication of activities.

**The 31<sup>st</sup> IMF Congress therefore resolves, that the IMF Secretariat shall**

**continue** its efforts to increase cooperation between the GUFs in order to strengthen the labour movement for the benefit of working people throughout the world

**examine** the possibilities for increased practical co-operation and where appropriate, consider the possibility of restructuring the GUFs to respond to the above challenges, and

**report** regularly to the Executive Committee and Central Committee on progress in this area, and where appropriate, present proposals for strategic decisions on increased co-operation and a review of the current structures of the GUFs.

\* \* \*

**31st IMF World Congress  
Vienna, Austria, May 22-26, 2005**

**Resolution 8: PARAGUAY**

Paraguay is a country that has signed and ratified various ILO Conventions, including Conventions n°87 and n° 98 on freedom of association and free collective bargaining. As a signatory to these conventions it is obliged to respect them, honoring its international commitments and providing legal protection to all citizens and foreigners that live in Paraguay.

The IMF condemns the blatant interference of the Paraguayan government into the democratic right of the trade union and calls on the government to immediately stop this interference and restore social justice through respect of the law and international labor standards.

Therefore, the International Metalworkers' Federation will:

1. in consultation with its affiliate in Paraguay SITRAC-FETRAMPAR lodge a complaint with the ILO against government interference in the internal affairs of the trade union;
2. call on its affiliates to take protest actions against this interference and violations of basic ILO conventions;
3. launch a public campaign to inform unions around the world and ask them to lend their support to the union in Paraguay to ensure that their rights are fully respected.

\* \* \*

## **31st IMF World Congress Vienna, Austria, May 22-26, 2005**

### **Resolution 9: NEPAL**

The International Metalworkers' 31<sup>st</sup> World Congress held on 22-26 May 2005 at Vienna, Austria,

- takes a serious note of the anti-democratic steps taken by the King of Nepal in dismissing a democratically elected government and usurping all powers;
- strongly condemns the banning of all trade union and political activity, arrest of leaders and putting shackles on the press and media. The brutal attack of the army on the students in Pokara and its role in terrorising the masses and leaders in all walks of life needs condemnation;
- exposes the ulterior and sinister design behind the so-called lifting of the state of emergency to receive military aid from countries and especially India in the name of fighting and continuing maoist insurgency in the country;
- appeals to all countries, especially India, not to extend military aid to the King as long as there is no restoration of democratic institutions and practice in Nepal;
- recommends imposition of sanctions against the King and his government until all democratic institutions are restored and perform their normal functions and reinstatement of Parliament without any delay in a fixed time frame;
- calls upon the King to immediately restore the democratic institutions and practice and release all leaders put in prison;
- calls upon the UN to take urgent steps for the restoration of democratic institutions in Nepal.

\* \* \*

**31st IMF World Congress  
Vienna, Austria, May 22-26, 2005**

**Resolution 10: WORKERS' RIGHTS IN BELARUS**

In Belarus World Declaration of Human Rights, fundamental ILO Conventions are bluntly violated, a fact established by a special commission of the International Labour Organization in 2004. In 2000 the ILO has initiated Case 2090 on the violations of workers' rights in Belarus. The International Labour Organization has more than once recommended to the Government of Belarus to take measures to eliminate the violations of workers' rights.

Still, this oppression of rights, prosecution of trade union leaders and activists, and limitation of workers' rights continues. A contract-based system of employment for all workers was introduced. The condition of employment is an obligatory affiliation to a *state-run* trade union affiliated with the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus, controlled and ruled by the Administration of the President.

Workers, affiliated to independent trade unions are subjects to repressions; they are prosecuted and dismissed from their enterprises. Protest events and actions of workers and trade unions in support of their labour rights are forbidden. Trade union newspapers and publications are prohibited.

In 2003-2004 Belarusian authorities practically dismantled the IMF-affiliated unions AAM and REI. Reprisals continue against IMF-affiliated independent Belarusian trade union REPAM, which was formed by the members of the trade unions REI and AAM, unions that adhere to the idea of independence of the trade union movement.

The authorities continue to take measures to destroy the trade union REPAM, and prosecute its activists and leaders. Despite this Belarusian trade unions keep on fighting for workers' freedoms and rights.

Delegates of the 31<sup>st</sup> IMF Congress express their solidarity with struggle of the independent trade unions of Belarus for workers' rights and demand that the leadership and government of Belarus stop prosecuting and baiting of trade union activists and leaders, and respect workers' rights.

\* \* \*

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