

Stop the violence in Colombia

“Every year Colombia accounts for more than half of all trade union murders worldwide - more than 3,000 since 1990,” said Dr. Sabine Vogler of Amnesty International Austria.

Her organization is conducting solidarity action programs here at the Congress. “Most times, the assassinations are carried out by army-backed paramilitaries.”

The USW has introduced a resolution that calls for concerted efforts of protest to the countries, particularly the U.S., that provide military aid to Colombia. It also calls for providing support to Colombian trade unions, particularly for the purpose of helping preserve the lives of union leaders.

“We need action by the international community to stop this repression,” said Luis Inerme Hernandez, FETRAMECOL, Columbia’s delegate to

the Congress. “Trade unionists in Colombia fear for their jobs, lives and families.”

The Resolution calls for the ILO to open a Commission of Inquiry on labor rights in Colombia and for the IMF to organize a delegation to Colombia to investigate and document the attacks.

“It’s an outrage that the U.S. and other countries supply the Colombian military with billions of dollars of assistance,” said the Jerry Fernandez of the USW. “It is also unconscionable that the ILO has failed to initiate an official inquiry of the situation.”



Delegates lend support to Amnesty International's efforts to end violence in Colombia

Welcome, kids!



Another first for the Congress: Childcare is a great opportunity enabling more delegates to attend IMF Congresses.

IMF CONGRESS News

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Dinner & Excursion

Evening Reception at Vienna Town Hall on Wednesday

Congress delegates will be invited to a Dinner Reception at the Vienna Town Hall, hosted by the City of Vienna.

Buses will depart from hotels at 7.30 p.m.

Trip to Pannonian Plains on Thursday

After leaving the hotel, the journey will take us to one of the most untouched natural landscapes in

Central Europe. As we drive south-east from Vienna, the mood of the landscape gradually changes to that of Hungarian Puszta.

Burgenland is known for its fascinating variety of wildlife as well as for its excellent red wine.

Buses will depart from hotels at 8.30 a.m. (look for IMF logo). Participants are requested to wear their Congress badges.



IMF CONGRESS News #3

WEDNESDAY
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Bulletin for the 31st IMF World Congress, Vienna 2005



Marcello Malentacchi introduced the IMF Action Programme

Discussion on the Action Programme

General Secretary Marcello Malentacchi began the discussion on the IMF Action Programme yesterday by introducing the first two chapters of the document.

“The Action Programme is an international, a global plan. And we will need it if we are going to succeed in improving the lives of workers in

the global economy,” he said.

The discussion followed the keynote address from Sharan Burrow, President of ICFTU, on Advancing Workers’ Rights. “Labour is not a commodity and the challenge of the 21st century is to establish global rules that guarantees respect for the rights of working people,” she said. ■



Mari-Ann Krantz, President of Sif, spoke of the enormous power transnationals have during her introduction of Section 3.1 and 3.2 of the Action Programme.

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Janet Barzola is speaking to Congress today about her experience as president of a national organisation that supports subcontracted workers in the mining industry in Peru.

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Participants in the round table discussion on Tuesday afternoon

Offshoring round table discussion

Mari-Ann Krantz, President of Sif, spoke of the enormous power transnationals have during her introduction of Section 3.1 and 3.2 of the Action Programme.

"Everyday we see how transnational corporations use offshoring to pressure workers to give up hard won social benefits," she said.

Facilitated by Robert Taylor, the round table discussion that followed, continued on the same subject.

Elizabeth Bunn (UAW) from USA said: "Offshoring has to be about organising the unorganised.

And while we are excited by the potential International Framework Agreements (IFAs) have for us, they are only one step in a long process that must include supply chains."

Silumko Nondawangu (Numsa) from South Africa said: "As important as IFAs are, they can not be a substitute for building strong trade

union organisations. We require strong, militant unions to take on big capital. The strength of trade unions is the most important thing."

Emília Valente (CNM/CUT) from Brazil said: "IFAs do exist with companies operating in Brazil. Through these we have a communication network with other trade unions that has helped us a lot. IFAs will help us to develop international solidarity with Chinese workers, so that those workers can know

more about what their basic rights are."

Göran Johnsson (SMF) from Sweden said: "The IMF Executive made a declaration on China on Friday. The IMF will try to engage workers at multinational companies operating in China. We must always be very clear with the Chinese about what we think of democracy and human rights."

We asked 7 delegates at the IMF World Congress: What do you think of the IMF supporting a global ban on asbestos?



"I think it's a good thing. Its important that IMF affiliates work together to remove the largest single industrial killer that wrecks devastation on victims and their families across the world."

Paul Bastian (AMWU), Australia



"Asbestos has been banned in Norway for 20 years after unions campaigned for its ban. But even today the effects of asbestos are being felt. Therefore, we need a global ban immediately."

Liv Christiansen (FF), Norway



"A global ban on asbestos is a must. In Sri Lanka, on workers memorial day we launched our own campaign to outlaw asbestos. Unions campaigning on a world basis will strengthen our cause."

Palitha Atukorale (JSS), Sri Lanka



"Unions must vigorously engage with Governments to achieve a ban on asbestos. There are alternative materials to asbestos and there is no excuse for its use in the 21st century."

Selina Tyikwe (NUMSA), South Africa



"This is the right policy. But I think for introducing a global ban on asbestos it is necessary to create a fund to support workers in poor countries, because to die from starvation is not better than dying from asbestos."

Mikhail Tarassenko (MMWU), Russia



"Workers have a right to healthy living. This right is universal and indispensable. Because of that the campaign is very important."

Carmen Henriquez (CONSTRAMET), Chile



"It's very important that the IMF starts this campaign together with national unions. For national unions it's fundamental that their priorities are brought to an international level. That's the main challenge for the IMF".

Blandine Landas (FGMM-CFDT), France

Asbestos: Stop the suffering!

Over two million workplace fatalities occur each year, all of which could have been prevented. This is the harsh reality faced by workers and will feature in today's round table discussion on "Improving the Work Environment". Round table participants will consider strategies to overcome the following issues:

- Governments and employers push towards safety schemes, which rely on a voluntary approach to health and safety as opposed to the regulation approach preferred by trade unions.
- Methods of working, such as lean manufacturing, have increased workload, work pace and work hours whilst

encouraging understaffing.

- Asbestos kills 100,000 people a year. Thirty-two countries have banned asbestos yet usage is increasing in developing nations.

In addition, delegates will be asked to take action in support of a global asbestos ban. One immediate action delegates are asked to take is to sign a letter that will be sent to their national government, calling for a global ban on the production, import, export and use of asbestos products

For further information on the asbestos campaign visit IMF's display in the foyer of the Congress Hall. ■



Alfred Gusenbauer, Leader of the Social Democratic Party of Austria

“Economic success can not be measured by the stock market. It is measured by the amount of jobs and the income of the working people.

Janet Barzola

Janet Barzola is speaking to Congress today about her experience as president of a national organisation that supports subcontracted workers in the mining industry in Peru. The Central Nacional de la Mujer Minera (CNMM) seeks to defend the rights of these workers in the face of transnational companies.

As subcontracted workers are not unionised and risk losing their jobs, Janet works with women, particularly the wives of the subcontracted miners, to improve the living conditions in the mining centres. Having already established several strategic partnerships with other groups, Janet recently become involved in an IMF project in Peru. Working with Federacion de Trabajadores de las Industrias Mineras, Metalurgicas y Afines del Peru (FETIMAP), the project aims to organise the unorganised, including the subcontracted workers that Janet is working with. ■

Reaching agreement on a global plan

Debate and decisions on the IMF Action Programme and resolutions will continue today before the Congress closing ceremony takes place at the end of the day.

09.30

Make it safe

"Improving the work environment" is the subject for this morning's round table debate.

13.30

Justice for all

Ensuring a social dimension to economic globalisation is the subject of this afternoon's discussion.



Jürgen Peters, President of the IMF, will guide the Congress through the Action Programme section on "A social dimension to economic globalisation"

Highlights

Festive Feast

By invitation of the City of Vienna, delegates are invited to a special dinner tonight to celebrate the close of Congress.

Tomorrow

Join the IMF excursion to Burgenland, famous for its natural habitat and red wine...