



FROM PORTO ALEGRE TO DAVOS, SOCIAL JUSTICE IS FUNDAMENTAL



Back to Porto Alegre for the fifth edition of the World Social Forum, held from January 26th to 31st. The previous edition of the Forum was held in Mumbai, India. This year, some 150,000 participants representing NGO's, trade unions and other organizations attended this great event. Why? Because they think that another world is possible, another world where decision-making will not be ruled by neo-liberal globalization!

THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONISM AT THE VERY CORE OF THE WORLD TRADE UNION FORUM DEBATES

As usual, the World Trade Union Forum was held as a preamble to the World Social Forum. This important trade union meeting is organized every year by the WCL, the ICFTU and the ETUC. Numerous trade unionists from all over the world, mostly from

work together in order to create a new international trade union organization open to all the independent and democratic trade unions not affiliated to an international agency. The creation of this organization should result in the strengthening of the responsiveness and lobbying capacity of the workers' movement in the promotion of a fairer globalization model. Likewise, it should pave the way for the consolidation of male and female workers' representativeness, and a qualitative and quantitative increase in both employment and the observance of labour rights, as stated in the ILO Declaration of 1998. According to Willy Thys, «*The trade union movement has been weakened by the aggressive neo-liberal policies implemented both in developed and developing countries. That is why the strengthening of the trade union movement is a sine qua non for the defence of all workers: employed or unemployed, from the formal or informal sector, men, women, the youth and the elderly. We must grow stronger if we want to promote social justice*».



Latin America and Europe, rushed into the T  atro Novo DC in order to attend the meeting. The main theme of the meeting was of great interest for most trade unionists: «**The future of the international trade union movement**». The speeches of Guy Ryder, Secretary General of the ICFTU, and Willy Thys, from the WCL, were eagerly awaited. Both speakers agreed to say that the time had come to strengthen international trade unionism, so as to efficiently face the challenges posed by the neo-liberalist model of globalization. In fact, both international trade union confederations

THE WCL OUTSTANDING PARTICIPATION

WCL organizations actively participated in the World Social Forum of Porto Alegre. Belgium's CSC, as usual, sent a big delegation. We would also like to highlight that the logistic support offered by our Brazilian organizations, the CAT and the CNPL, was one of the keys to the success achieved. Since the first edition of the WSF, the WCL's involvement has been outstanding,

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especially regarding its participation in the International Council and the organization of seminars, in cooperation with other international trade union confederations and other civil society organizations.

LET US GIVE A SOCIAL DIMENSION TO GLOBALIZATION

In cooperation with the ICFTU, the ETUC and several NGO's such as Solidar, Social Alert and Global Progressive Forum, the World Confederation of Labour organized a four-day conference (from January 27th to 30th) on the social dimension of globalization, based on the report of the ILO World Commission. Migration, corporate social

development cooperation to 0.7% of the GDP, and to take effective measures to cancel the debt of the developing countries. Besides, trade unions and NGO's must work together to overcome the challenges posed by the growth of the informal economy sector and to organize informal workers, thus giving them a voice and supporting them to develop adequate systems of credit, self-help and social protection. Finally, all the organizations involved in the elaboration of the declaration call on all civil society movements and progressive political forces to join this vision and to make decent work a global goal.

In order to read, adopt and sign the final declaration, go to: <http://www.cmt-wcl.org>



responsibility, social protection and world governance were some of the issues addressed. After four days of hard work, the Conference elaborated a final declaration. In such declaration, the organizations that attended the conference appeal for decent employment to be placed at the very core of economic and social policies. According to the declaration, decent work, social protection and equality between women and men are the only way out of poverty. The Declaration also calls on governments to honor the commitment made to increase the levels of

UBUNTU IS ON THE GO

UBUNTU is a campaign launched by Federico Mayor, former Secretary General of UNESCO, for the reform of international financial institutions. The WCL actively participates in this campaign. Several seminars on this issue were organized within the framework of this year's World Social Forum. Cooperation between the WCL and UBUNTU has been crowned with success. Regarding the reform issue, we must not forget that the WCL is in favor of the creation of an Economic and Social Security Council within the United Nations.

WHAT ABOUT FUTURE?

Following the decisions made by its International Council – including the World Confederation of Labor –, the World Social Forum will be decentralized in 2006. Although the decision was made to hold the Forum in Africa in 2007, the host country is yet to be selected. Finally, the Forum may go back to Porto Alegre for 2008's edition. However, we must be careful, for the WSF's popularity may catch up with it. According to its Charter, the Forum is a process rather than an event and as such, it cannot take stands. Finally, the Forum must preserve its status as a meeting space open to all.

WITH ONE VOICE FROM PORTO ALEGRE TO DAVOS

The World Social Forum of Porto Alegre was held from January 26th to 31st. At the same time, Davos –a Swiss mountain resort- hosted the World Economic Forum (WEF), which gathers the representatives of the world's leading corporations. This year, an international trade union delegation composed of some fifteen representatives – including WCL representatives, such as Willy Thys, Secretary General, and Luc Cortebeek, Vice-President to Western Europe- participated in the WEF. This edition was particularly amazing. As a matter of fact, the struggle



against poverty was considered to be the world's number one objective. Although this decision is nothing if not pleasant, it will be interesting to see whether it will be respected and whether multinational corporations will create decent jobs and observe the ILO Conventions worldwide. Certainly, we must focus on actions, not on words. The trade union delegation conveyed the same message as in Porto Alegre: *«Social justice must be globalized, and decent and dignifying employment must be created in order to eradicate poverty and foster development!»*