



TEXTILE WORKERS IN MOURNING

The big WCL family was terribly upset at the news of the death, on 11 July, of Lucien Fruru, aged 79. The World Confederation of Labour will always remember Lucien as a warm-hearted man for the textile workers in Belgium as well as across the borders, as President of the International Federation Textile and Clothing and of WCL Trade Action, which was still in its infancy at the time. He had a warm heart for the workers and their families in the poorest countries of the world, where injustice is still so much bigger than over here. Together with the people who now assume responsibilities in the international trade union movement we will endeavour to continue his work.

UBUNTU : FOR MORE HUMANITY!

During the Johannesburg Summit the village of the NGOs was called UBUNTU. UBUNTU is an old African work and means humanity, to share, to pay attention and to be in harmony with the creation. UBUNTU is also the chosen name of the World Forum of Civil Society Networks, a movement initiated by Federico Mayor, former Director of the UNESCO. During the Johannesburg Summit the UBUNTU organisation officially launched its global campaign for a reform in depth of the international institutions. The WCL supported this initiative right from the start and was also present at the launch in the capacity of founding member. UBUNTU promotes co-operation between individuals, cultures and nations; its campaign is aimed at a reform of the international institutions within the framework of a new world governance (<http://www.ubuntu.upc.es>).

TELE-FLASH

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8TH CONGRESS OF THE WCT

The World Confederation of Teachers (WCT) assembled its 8th World Congress in Albena, Bulgaria, on 19-27 July. More than 300 delegates turned their attention to the Congress theme: "The Teacher, Education Professional, Actor of Social Inclusion". This theme reminds of the first aim of social insertion of education in the knowledge society.

Besides the policy resolution, which sets the basic priorities for the next four years in the matter of professional and trade union development of the teaching staff and the WCT, the Congress passed regional, theme-related (poverty, AIDS, commercialisation, children's rights...) and sectoral (basic, secondary, vocational, higher... education) resolutions. A round table discussed the possible links between formal and non-formal education through the action of the WCT, in order better to achieve

the goals of Education for All. Special attention was paid to the importance of the working conditions of the teaching staff for the organisation of quality education.

The Congress elected a new leaders' team: the new President, Claudio Corries, is a native of Argentina. He is our first President from a country of the South. He substitutes for the outgoing President, Louis Van Beneden. The Secretary General, Gaston De la Haye, and the Treasurer, Cees Van Overbeek, were re-elected.

The Conference on "Women in Education" resulted in a modification of the Statutes, structuring the participation of women in all the governing bodies of the WCT. (<http://www.wtccsme.org>)

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLAC

Early in September our Canadian affiliate celebrated its 50th anniversary. The CLAC seized this opportunity to remind of its specific nature and to define the main goals in terms of organisation and organisational progress. Training remains a priority and will be further developed. Our best wishes to the CLAC.

PREPARATION OF THE WSF 2003 CONTINUES

The International Council (IC) of the World Social Forum met on 13-15 August in Bangkok, Thailand. Eduardo Estevez, Deputy Secretary General and regular Council member, Necie Lucero, Secretary General of the BATU, and Thawatchai Polcharoen, Secretary General of the NCPE-Thailand, represented the WCL at this meeting. The Council agreed on the activities during the Forum 2003 and defined five main themes:

- democratic and sustainable development
- principles and values, human rights, diversity and equality
- media, culture and counter-hegemony
- political power, civil society and democracy
- democratic world order, struggle against war and for peace.

The Council defined the various activities from the perspective of procedures and of the participants concerned. The activities include conferences, panel discussions, testimonies, seminars, workshops, and tables for dialogues and controversies. There will also be room for debates on the regional, theme-related and local social forums.

The WSF 2003 is scheduled for 23-28 January in Porto Alegre, coinciding with the World Economic Forum.

On 22-23 January, the WCL, the ICFTU, the ETUC, the CLAT and the ORIT will normally

organise a joint World Trade Union Forum open to all the trade unions taking part in the WSF.

MISSION TO UKRAINE

On 22-26 May the WCL conducted a mission to Ukraine. The programme of the mission included meetings with the Executive Board of VOST, with representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, with the co-ordinator of the ILO project in Ukraine and with local trade unions from the Odessa region.

The government of Ukraine is very interested in questions concerning relationship between the employers' organisations and trade unions. The legislation stipulates the freedom of association and other fundamental rights of workers. Ukraine has ratified the ILO conventions 87 and 98, and the Parliament has adopted laws for their implementation.

In Ukraine there is a need for new and independent trade unions.

Our member organisation, VOST, is mainly represented in five regions (Lviv, Kiev, Sumi, Krasnoarmeisk and Odessa) and has three structural branch organisations: industry workers, textile workers and education workers. VOST has presented a guide plan for 2002-2005 to develop the organisation. There is a project proposal to develop basic training programmes and propaganda seminars, creating an economic department and legal services and several necessary equipment.

A lot of progress has been made since the end of the TACIS programme in 2000. The national office is the pivot of the activities and the centre of the organisation. VOST is member of the Council of the Social Dialogue and is accepted by the government as a partner. They play a key role in the projects of the ILO in promoting principles and rights at work.

There is still pressure on the independent trade union members of VOST and the circumstances in which VOST as organisation must act are still difficult. The organisation needs the support of all the WCL affiliates.

REGIONAL SUMMIT ON MIGRANT WORKERS IN COLOMBO

On 26-28 August our Sri Lankan affiliate, the National Workers' Congress (NWC), hosted the Regional Summit on Migrant Domestic Workers. The Summit was attended by representatives of several governments from the region, various international and regional organisations, trade unions, NGOs and the media. It offered an opportunity for an enriching and interesting exchange of views. The trade unions highlighted their contribution to the social dialogue in the matter of migrant workers. Necie Lucero, Secretary General of

the BATU and representative of the WCL at the Summit, reminded of the fact that the situation of migrant workers is an important priority for the WCL and its affiliates: « *Initiatives to minimise if not prevent discrimination at the workplace are an opportunity for trade unions to proceed in bargaining over safety nets and clauses that take into account the total development and welfare of migrant workers. Adherence to the principle of equal distribution of wealth is a guarantee to the total well-being of people and their family circle, be they in the home or host country* ».

BANGLADESH: CLOSE-DOWN OF THE ADAMJEE JUTE MILLS

Our Bangladeshi affiliate, the BSSF, has informed us of the sudden decision of the Bangladeshi government to close down the Adamjee Jute Mills. This state-owned company was the largest producer of jute in Asia, employing around 17 000 permanent workers, 6 252 temporary workers and 1 972 executives and clerical workers. The close-down has a huge impact on the employment in the country. There is no doubt that the close-down results from the globalisation and from the structural adjustment measures imposed by the World Bank and the IMF. Several trade unions support the workers and have demanded the resumption of the production, but the government seems to be determined to stick to its decision.

Schedule of activities

11-13 September 2002: 6th Latin American Conference on "Right to Life, Development and Future", UTAL, San Antonio de Los Altos, Venezuela
9-13 September 2002: DOAWTU: General Assembly of Women Workers, Lomé, Togo
16-17 September 2002: Tripartite Conference for Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean on "Work, Employment and Decent Wages", a joint initiative of the CLAT, the CCT, the CGTP, the ILO, the UTAL and the ICAES, Panama
18-21 September 2002: 5th ordinary Congress of the CGTP, Panama ;
23-24 September 2002: International Conference of the Civil Society in Support of the Palestinian People, United Nations, New York ;
26-28 September 2002: Congress of Solidarnosc, Warsaw, Poland
23-27 September 2002: Mission to Palestine, visit to the ICATU
16-19 October 2002: Congress of the ACV-CSC, Ostend, Belgium