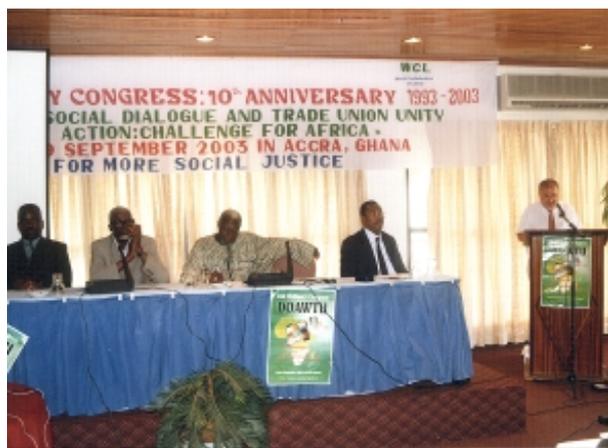


**10TH ANNIVERSARY AND CONGRESS
OF THE DOAWTU**

The year 2003 is a special year for our regional organisation in Africa, the DOAWTU – the organisation of democratic trade unions for African workers. In the first place, the DOAWTU celebrated



its tenth anniversary. Secondly, the organisation had its second Congress from 15 to 19 September 2003 in Accra (Ghana). During this statutory meeting Toolsyraj Benydin, chairman of the NTUC union on the isle of Mauritius, was elected as the new chairman. He succeeds Fernand Kikongi. Adrien Akouete, vice-chairman of the WCL for Africa, was appointed to the new general secretary and Momodoe Pa Faal of the GWC in Gambia as general treasurer. The position of women within the executive committee of the DOAWTU was reinforced by the election of Angélique Kupulu from the CSC-Congo. She will be in charge of Central Africa. Her colleague Rabiadou Sera Diallo (CNTG – Guinea) was re-elected as the person in charge of «Women». This Congress will therefore have meant an important step forward as regards the representation of women in the decision-making structures of the DOAWTU.

**SECOND EUROPEAN SOCIAL FORUM
PLANNED IN PARIS**

Since its launch, theme and regional forums have accompanied the World Social Forum. Thus, in 2002 the first European Social Forum (ESF) took place in Florence (Italy). With a view to its success a second reunion of civilians, pacifists, trade-unionists and members from other social organisations will be organised from 12 to 15 November in Paris Saint-Denis. The European Organisation Committee includes wide-ranging trade-union participation from ETUC and CFTC (France). The very first European trade-union forum will actually be organised by ETUC on 11 November, with support of the WCL, the ICFTU and French trade unions. In other regions, there was also great response to regional and theme

forums which mainly involved organisations affiliated with the WCL. At this time, there are on-going preparations for the next World Social Forum (Mumbai, India, 16-21 January 2004). The CFTUI (Confederation of Free Trade Unions of India) and the ICL (Indian Confederation of Labour), two organisations affiliated with the WCL, are active within the Indian committee. From now on, the BATU and the WCL are involved in preparing this new WSF.

**SPECIAL CONGRESS OF
THE CSC-CONGO**

From 1 to 5 September 2003 the special congress of the CSC-Congo on the theme «The responsibility of the Congolese trade unions with regard to peace and national rebuilding» was held in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo - RDC). The congress was special because the focus was on changing the executive team of the CSC. Thus, Symphorien Dunia was elected as the new chairman and Angélique Kipulu as vice-chairman. In order to defend, safeguard and promote the legal interests of the Congolese workers, the CSC-Congo will continue the investigation of the appropriate conditions for establishing a socially fair economic order based on justice and respect. This is even more important because peace expectations are becoming more and more obvious in this country, in which civil war is presumed to have caused over 2 million deaths in the past 4 years.

**INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL STANDARDS
IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WTO**

Just after the fifth ministerial conference of the WTO in Cancún (10-14 September 2003), de WCL openly declared to be in favour of integration of social standards in the future activities of the WTO. In the first place, the WCL is considering the establishment of a Council for Economic and Social Security in the context of the United Nations. This body would have to guarantee the socio-economic regulations of globalisation, with representatives from the trade union movement and non-governmental organisations. During this conference the developing countries were able to coordinate, which should have a positive effect on the activities of the WTO. But according to the WCL, the absence of a multilateral agreement cannot result in concluding bilateral agreements to the detriment of these countries.

**THE EZA ORGANISES THE THIRD
EUROPEAN SOCIAL WEEK**

From 16 to 19 October the EZA (European Centre for Workers' Questions) organises the third European Social Week. Divergent christian-social

TELE-FLASH

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organisations will meet in Bratislava (Slovakia) to discuss their possible place and role within the European Union in the context of its expansion. There the way to implement transparent democracy and forms of cooperation will be studied. The organisations will also compare their own operational methods and will establish points of action and common perspectives. Doekle Terpstra, chairman of the Netherlands Federation of Christian Trade Unions (CNV) and treasurer of the WCL, will chair the Social Week. Michel Camdessus, the former general director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), will also be present.

CONTINUED MURDERS IN COLOMBIA

Colombia remains a very dangerous country for trade unionists. This is evidenced by the information on serious violations of human rights, which the «Standards» department of the WCL receives continuously. Thus the CLADEHLT (Latin American commission for the rights and freedom of workers and people) informed us that on 23 July Carlos Barreto Jiménez was murdered for no apparent reason in the Atlántico Department. He belonged to the local trade union of hospital personnel. The next day, Juan Carlos Ramírez Rey was murdered. He was a prison warden in the district of Villavicencio and a member of the trade union of prison staff (affiliated with the CGTD). Less than a month later, Aleyda Rico Álvares was kidnapped from her home and murdered by hired assassins. She was a member of the executive committee of the CGDT, the sister of the chairman of «Acción Campesina Colombianas» (ACC) and was very active on a social level. Finally, at the beginning of September, Indovel Barrera Valencia – a member of the trade union of the Cundinamarca liqueur factory – was taken by would-be national policemen who in reality belonged to the private security team of the company. The WCL condemns these barbaric acts and again protests to the Colombian president, and demands that these murders are fully clarified and that the culprits and people behind them are punished.

SOCIAL SECURITY AT RISK IN PANAMA

The dismissal of Juan Jovanes, member of the «Council for Social Security», has recently caused commotion in Panama. Jovanes had repeatedly stated that he was against privatisation of social security and gained support on this issue from numerous trade unions and social organisations. His forced dismissal gave rise to a flood of protest actions, in which around fifty people were arrested and 15 people were seriously injured. In addition, a warrant for arrest was issued against 21 trade unionists, including Mariano Mena, general secretary of the CGTP (affiliated with the WCL and the CLAT) and coordinator of CONATO (National Council of Organised Workers). The WCL addressed a letter to the Panamanian government demanding to eliminate the arrest warrants and to re-establish dialogue with the trade unions. This is the only solution for implementing a model of qualitative social security, which everybody has access to. Several trade-union leaders were released because of national and international pressure. However, a recent report of the CGTP states that Saul Mendez, general secretary of SUNTRACS – the unique trade union of building workers – is to remain in prison and is subjected to degrading treatment.

THE CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 4 and 5 September 2003, in the headquarters of the United Nations Organisation in New York, the «International Conference of Civil Society in Support of the Palestinian People» was held to support the people of Palestine. The WCL,

represented by Paul Tennessee of the liaison office in Washington, actively supported this initiative. The WCL shares the conclusions and positions which emerged from this conference: «*The Committee reaffirms its belief that the international community has a moral responsibility towards achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region*». We may add that for the WCL only respecting the United Nations resolutions, which stipulate the right of the Palestinian people to a proper territory and state, can guarantee peace and an end to violence. The conclusions of the conference are very clear: it is important that the international community mobilises to ensure respect for the resolutions and that the «wall» is officially classed as illegal and is destroyed. An international week of action against the «wall» has been planned from 9 to 16 November 2003.

BELARUS VIOLATES THE RIGHT OF FREEDOM TO NEGOTIATE

The power station of Novopolotsk is one of the numerous companies in Belarus where management openly mocks workers' rights. Thus the BFTU – the «Belarus Free Trade Union» has told us that in the past four months several of its members and its leaders were made redundant. Moreover, there is continuous disrespect for the right to collective negotiations in the company. Nonetheless a right which was confirmed by the ILO Conventions and which Belarus officially ratified. In order to force the government to take measures and to respect trade-union rights in Belarus, the WCL addressed a letter of complaint to the Prime Minister. We would like to add that in mid September Alexander Yaroshuk, president of the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BCDTU), was sentenced to 10 days' imprisonment, because he had protested against the shut-down of the air controllers' trade union in Belarus in a local paper. The BCTDU considered this arrest a government attempt to break the independent trade union movement in the country and set up a protest campaign. The WCL also intervened in this dossier and Alexander Yaroshuk has since been released.

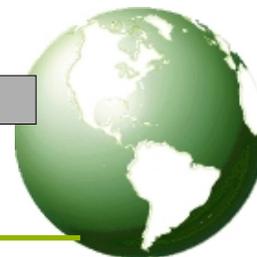
THE WCL MOBILISES AGAINST CHILD LABOUR!

On 7 October, the world campaign for awareness and the preparation process for the World Congress of Child Workers - which will take place from 10 to 16 May 2004 – were officially launched from Florence (Italy) and New Delhi (India) The WCL is mobilising!

Schedule of activities

- 19-25 October: Meeting of the Confederal Committee of the WCL, Djakarta – Indonesia;
- 11 November: European Trade Union Forum, Paris – France;
- 12-15 November: European Social Forum, Saint-Denis /Paris – France;
- 15-22 November: World Seminar of the WFBWU, Ostend – Belgium;
- 24-25 November: World Board FIOST, Ostend – Belgium;
- 24 November -12 December: WCL - IIFE week on the informal economy; 10 December: Open forum on the informal economy, Ter Nood/Overijse – Belgium.

Consult our schedule on: www.cmt-wcl.org



Trade Action

THE PAN-AFRICAN FEDERATION OF WOOD AND BUILDING WORKERS PREPARES ITS FUTURE

From 25 to 29 August, the first normal congress and a seminar of the pan-African Federation of Wood and Building Workers were organised in Lomé (Togo). Since its foundation four years ago, this Federation has welcomed four new organisations, which brought its number of member trade unions to 14, originating from as many African countries. During the congress the participants discussed the consequences of globalisation for the workers. As in most sectors, it is noticeable in the African wood and building industry on two levels: increasing presence of multinationals and «informalisation». The contributors at the congress and the seminar included: Jackie Jackers, president of the World Federation of Building and Wood Unions (WFBW), Jan Voets, expert at the WCL in the field of multinationals, works councils and social dialogue, and Piet Nelissen, executive secretary of the WFBW. In his opening speech Jacky Jackers emphasised the importance of cooperation between the trade unions on a world level. Didier Afanda from Cameroon was re-elected as general secretary. The other elected administrators are Marcelin Moundounga from Gabon, Ayao Gbandjou from Togo, Zinsou François from Benin and Shabalala S. from South Africa.

MASS REDUNDANCIES IN JUTE MILLS IN BANGLADESH

The «Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation», a public enterprise in Bangladesh which manages jute mills, has recently closed down several sites all over the country. No less than 25,000 workers were immediately put on the street, without any social protection. Officially they were made redundant for a period



of 45 days, but the workers feared a definitive shutdown. The invention of plastic has in fact made jute production superfluous and expensive. Moreover, the Bangladeshi authorities did not invest in innovative jute products... The definitive shutdown of the mills would not only be a catastrophe for the redundant workers, but would also have disastrous consequences for farmers who cultivate jute and who supply the raw material. That is why it did not take long

before the first protest actions appeared. The BSSF trade union, which is affiliated with the WCL, supports the workers in their fight. In its turn, the WCL sent protest letters to the various Bangladeshi ministers and to the chairman of the Jute Mills Corporation, aimed at immediate annulment of the redundancies, payment of overdue wages and the establishment of a social security system to support these workers. The WCL and the IFTC (International Federation Textile - Clothing) have also summoned the Bangladeshi government to rapidly find solutions in the spirit of the ILO Conventions with a view to re-establishing a serene social climate in the country.

TRADE UNION REPRESSION AT GUESS? U.S.A. IN THE PHILIPPINES

The well-known clothing brand «Guess? U.S.A.» works in the Philippines as a licensed company, Diversion Industries Inc. (DII). Although this company confirms that it respects the Philippine Constitution, it seriously obstructs the «DII Workers' Trade Union». For example, DII recently filed a court complaint because the employees supposedly refused to work extra hours. Consequently, seven members of the trade union were arrested, including chairman Marcelino Cerenado. DII's lawyer suggested that the on-going actions would be discontinued if the trade union signed a declaration confirming that the threat of a strike and the complaints about trade union repression were withdrawn and if redundancies were no longer fought. Moreover, the lawyer demanded that the Workers' Trade Union was suspended! Since these actions are in conflict with the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the International Federation of Textile and Clothing Workers (IFTC) has again sent a letter of sharp protest to the management of DII and Guess? U.S.A. in Los Angeles (California). If the company does not revise its intimidation strategy and refuses to have an honest dialogue with the trade union on working conditions, the IFTC and the WCL will file a complaint with the ILO.

A GUINEA BAUXITE COMPANY RE-EMPLOYS REDUNDANT WORKERS

In March this year, several workers at the Compagnie des Bauxites in Kindia (CBK) in the republic of Guinea (Africa) went on strike to protest against the enormous salary increases for management and the absence of a wage agreement for the workers. Eighteen employees were immediately made redundant. Six of them were even arrested, including the head of the miners' trade union, Mansare Mamadou. The pan-African organisation FPTI – affiliated with the World Federation of Industry Workers (WFIW) – immediately organised a solidarity action. The arrested miners were released and at the end of March, Mamadou was allowed to leave prison. But that was still not the end of the affair... The CBK demanded 562,000 US dollars from the arrested miners because of the suffered financial loss. The trade union saw no other option than to involve a lawyer. In order to pay him, the FPTI decided



to release 200,000 CFA francs. The «*Fonds de solidarité des mineurs belges*» (Solidarity Fund of Belgian Miners) in its turn and in consultation with the WCL, raised 7,000 US dollars. Meanwhile consultations between the trade union, the Ministry of Labour and the CBK were resumed and the employees were able to start work again at the end of August. The CBK said it was prepared to improve the working climate. So the prospect seems positive, but the legal affair is still not completely resolved...

THE WCT MEETS IN ARGENTINA

On 25 and 26 August 2003, the WCT organised a seminar in Buenos Aires (Argentina) devoted to the «commercialisation of education». There the people in charge of the WCT regional organisation as well as the Confederal Committee listened to a talk by Louis Van Beneden (president of the EUNEC – European Network of Education Councils) on the impact of commercialisation and GATS on education. A representative of UNESCO talked about the consequences of commercialisation for the education programme. Finally, Claudio Corries, president of the WCT, emphasised that education and trade are incompatible. After an animated debate, the participants decided to present a resolution to the confederal committee which confirms the conclusions of the 8th congress of the WCT. A meeting of the confederal committee also took place in Buenos Aires from 27 to 29 August. Among others, there was a long discussion on possible cooperation between the WCT and the IE (International Education). The final decision on this dossier will be made in April 2004 at the latest.

SECURITY AND HEALTH, THE PRIORITIES OF THE FIOST

In spite of the profound studies and the clear guidelines in the field of security, the campaigns in favour of responsible behaviour on the road and the warnings against tiredness at the wheel, there are still too many accidents in the transport sector. Inflexible competition and the profitability race incite employers to deploy too rigid planning. This planning increases the stress and tiredness of the drivers, who then make mistakes. Moreover, almost 12% of the accidents in the sector are due to alcohol or drug abuse. The ILO Conventions, the guidelines of international institutions and national legislation on the matter have unfortunately not resulted in stricter adherence to and application of the rules. For the FIOST it is therefore imperative to set up an international awareness campaign and a follow-up. «Security and Health» will therefore be one of the main themes in the next meeting of the World Council of the federation, which will take place on 24 and 25 November in Ostend (Belgium).

THE WFAFW SEES POTENTIAL IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

The congress of the WFAFW was held on 26 and 27 September in Madrid in Spain. The main subject of discussion at this meeting was reinforcement of the organisation: on the one hand by setting up a more transparent contribution system and, on the other hand, by increasing the number of affiliated organisations. The world over, 47% of workers are active in agriculture, the food industry and the tourist sector. In addition, these are rapidly growing sectors which conceal enormous potential. On the other hand, if agriculture and the food industry are mentioned, the informal economy cannot be ignored. In India, for example, 92% of the entire active population works in the informal circuit – and a majority in agriculture. In Africa and Latin America, the origin of most members of the

WFAFW, virtually 50% of workers are employed in the informal economy, in particular in agriculture and the food industry. Therefore, the WFAFW will develop and implement an action programme to help these workers in close cooperation with Trade Action.

THE WFCW AND THE ACTION PROGRAMME OF THE WCL TRADE ACTION

The European organisations affiliated with the WFCW (World Federation of Clerical Workers) and the people in charge of Africa, Asia and Latin America attended the meeting of the WFCW World Council from 2 to 5 October in Brussels (Belgium). Eric Aarts from WCL Trade Action revealed the progress of the VERBA project (Strengthening Trade Action). As a reminder: this action programme consists of three parts, viz. strengthening capacities, informal economy and multinationals. Subsequently, the role of the WFCW in this programme was discussed. The World Council launched the first preparations for the planned WFCW congress. The other items on the agenda were: WFCW participation in ILO meetings, new affiliates, the activity programme and the financial report.

CAPACITY BUILDING: THE GO-AHEAD FOR COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES!

As you know, the trainers who attended a course in the context of the «Capacity Building» of the WCL in over 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America will start the second part of their training, in cooperation with the trade federations and their national organisations. These training programmes have to be integrated in a clear strategy defined by the organisations involved (preferably in the shape of an activity plan focused on reinforcing Trade Action). The trainers have the choice between the following themes, divided into two main categories. A budget is available for each activity.

Category I - Organisational skills: recruiting members, member management and contribution systems / structure and democratic organisation of the trade union on different levels / internal functioning of committees and departments (organisation) / service to members / communication with members (basic skills).

Category II: Trade union themes: social dialogue, tripartite structures, institutionalisation / negotiations, CCT, socio-economic contexts / employment, course of work, professional training / safety conditions at work, health care in the company / social security, pensions / international organism.

WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTECTION!

The «Informal Economy» project group of the WCL Trade Action continues to deploy great efforts to defend the interests of workers in the informal circuit. In particular, Trade Action wants to help its members on the legal level, by studying the possibilities offered by labour rights (international, national or sectoral) in order to protect workers from exploitation, inherent in the informal economy. The Trade Action of the WCL needs you! Anyone who can give us useful information on labour legislation in his own country or his own sector would contribute to establishing work conditions which are worthy of the numerous people working in the informal economy. Let's not forget: strength through unity!

Send information and inquiries to: wim.degroof@cmt-wcl.org