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# ICEM

## GLOBAL INFO

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**What does labour  
want from the  
financial crisis?**

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## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF CHEMICAL, ENERGY, MINE AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION

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# ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL DETERIORATION FOCUS OF JUNE CANADIAN CONFERENCE

The “global casino” model on how to run an economy has produced catastrophic results for workers and the environment. The ICEM and the International Metalworkers’ Federation (IMF) are teaming up again to show the way to a sustainable future.

On 18-19 June 2010, the two Global Union Federations – along with their Canadian affiliates – will host a pivotal forum for industrial and manufacturing unions. The “Triple Crisis of Sustainability” Conference will be held in Toronto, Ontario, where it will precede the G8 and G20 summit meetings.

The economic collapse, environmental degradation, and the resulting negative social impacts have badly affected workers, their families, and their communities. Contributing to the magnitude of these crises is the absence of effective global regulations and lagging financial governance of markets.

This World Conference on Sustainability will produce a declaration that will be forwarded to the G8 and G20 summits. It will demand that global economic and political leaders take decisive action to reverse the downward social spiral felt by most of the world’s people, and begin implementing real, worker-friendly solutions on climate change and a sustainable economic future.

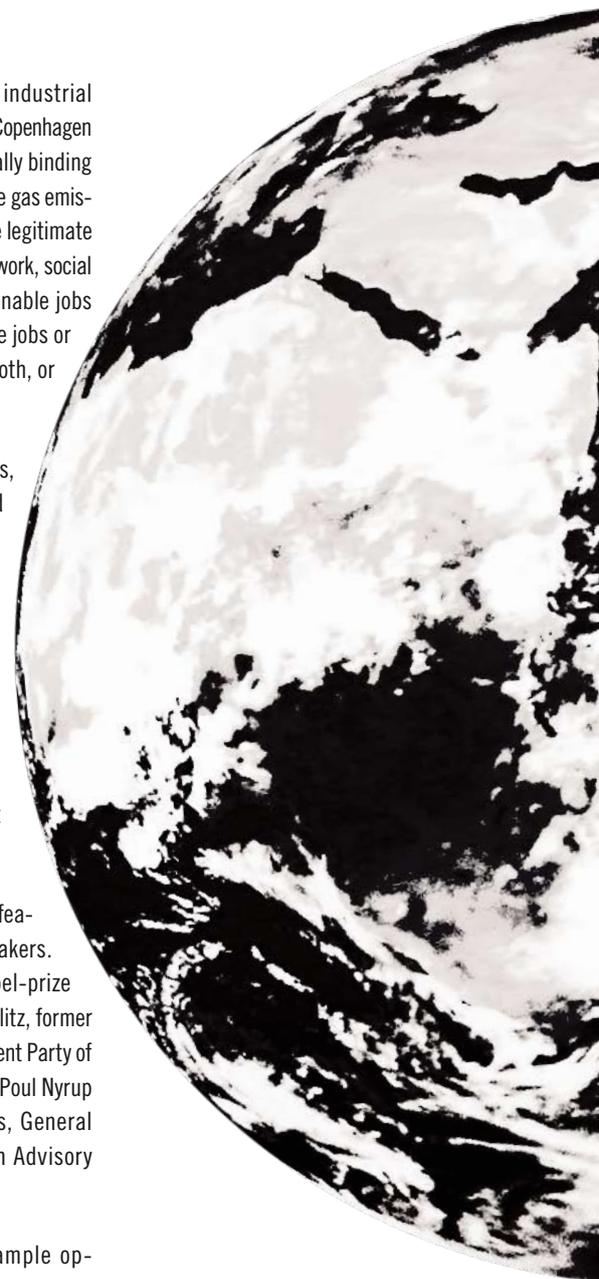
Workers have a central role to play in building a future that lifts people out of poverty, while protecting the environment. The ICEM and IMF believe that the systematic looting of the global economy by unscrupulous speculators must be stopped. The Jobs Pact developed by the ILO is one proposal for exiting a financial crisis brought about by greed and lack of financial oversight.

Regarding the environment, industrial unions did deliver a message in Copenhagen that a fair, ambitious, and legally binding agreement on global greenhouse gas emissions is necessary, but that the legitimate concerns of workers for decent work, social justice, and long-term, sustainable jobs must be forefront. It cannot be jobs or the environment, it must be both, or it will ultimately be neither.

The crises of failing economies, environmental inaction, and social disorder are interconnected. It will be the goal of the ICEM/IMF conference to ensure that the voices of workers are heard on these matters at the highest level. Jobs, workers’ rights, social protections, quality public services, and sustainability are at the heart of this agenda.

The conference is expected to feature high-profile keynote speakers. Among those invited are Nobel-prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, former Danish Prime Minister and current Party of European Socialists President Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, and John Evans, General Secretary of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD.

In addition, there will be ample opportunities for trade union leaders of ICEM and IMF affiliates, as well as others to tell their own stories of how workers have responded to a crisis not of their own making.



# MULTI-GUF COOPERATION: THE WAY FORWARD TO THE PROMISE OF DECENT WORK



A clear trend is underway among the Global Union Federations (GUFs), and that is now growing through ever-improving cooperation. Such cooperation is not new, but it has accelerated and honed itself around specific issues.

In part, this is due to the creation of the Council of Global Unions (CGU). Although it serves as a small coordinating structure rather than an organisation, it provides a forum for discussion, joint actions, and the all-important follow-up on actions taken.

The ICEM is taking the lead in this growing collaboration. ICEM cooperates with other GUFs on resolving industrial disputes, on common issues such as Contract and Agency Labour, and developing strategies regarding sustainable development or the response to the financial crisis.

Joint work within the CGU has also led to longer-term compacts, including joint task forces such as the Work Relationships Group and the Communicators Task Force, as well as a joint print publication called *Getting the World to Work*.

It is in the Work Relationships Group that the ICEM has carried an important role. General Secretary Manfred Warda chairs this group. The GUFs, along with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) of OECD, recognise that all workers need a clear “work relationship” with employers, and the Work Relationships Group seeks to improve workers’ rights, as well as job equality for temporary, agency, or precarious workers throughout the world.

This work group is effectively tackling the foremost issue in today’s world of work: companies employing two sets of workers, full-time and permanent workers who traditionally bring economic stability to families and communities, and temporary and short-term workers, whose income, job status, and lack of social benefits do not.

The work group meets regularly to discuss actions and activities, including consultations on the role the ILO and the OECD must play to correct the social disparities brought on by companies who, more and more, are

regressing to a disposable workforce. The Work Relationships Group, for example, is concerned about the umbrella federations of the global temporary agencies and the role they must play to assure a fair and equitable world economy.

With the majority of the world’s workers still stung by the financial crisis, joint work among GUFs is critical. There is clear evidence that employers are using the crisis to shift more risks on to workers. And that means further deterioration of work standards and a broadening gap away from decent work.

The global trade union movement must rise together to ensure that more, not fewer, jobs are full-time jobs that provide socially-viable security and family-sustaining pay. This, in fact, is the essence of decent work – work that promises a sustainable future.

# SAVING LIVES, REDUCING INJURIES: ICEM'S CAMPAIGN ON ILO CONVENTION 176

The years 2006 to now were tragic years in the mining industry. Major mining disasters killed hundreds of miners in Russia, Ukraine, Poland, and India. In China, the carnage continued with thousands of official fatalities and perhaps tens of thousands of unofficial deaths.

The ICEM at its 2007 Congress in Bangkok, Thailand, passed a resolution to once again devote attention to improved mine safety and health through ratification of ILO Convention 176, the Health and Safety in Mines Convention. However, since 1995, only 24 nations have ratified the convention. Countries where the most serious mining disasters occurred have not yet ratified.

Despite Convention 176 being first agreed to on a tripartite basis, neither employers nor governments have been at the forefront in promoting ratification. It was only through the efforts of the Miners International Federation (MIF), a predecessor organization of the ICEM, that the convention was established. After the MIF merged with the ICEF to form the ICEM in 1995, it was again the trade unions through the ICEM that took the lead in promoting ratification.

The purpose of ILO Convention 176 is to improve mine health and safety by improving national mining laws. The convention sets forth standards for mine health and safety laws such as requiring double exits; the right of miners to refuse unsafe work and to elect health and safety representatives; and the establishment of regulator bodies to inspect mines and

order suspension of mining operations when conditions are unsafe. The convention places responsibility on employers to remove the cause of hazards and not just the hazards themselves.

The ICEM announced last year that a renewed campaign on ILO Convention 176 will begin. Already, the ICEM has held discussions with trade unions, employers, elected officials, and government ministers in Colombia, India, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, and Bulgaria about the need to press forward this year toward ratification.

The ICEM is also working closely with the ILO on regional tri-partite workshops in Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa. Peru, Luxembourg, and Bosnia-Herzegovina have been the latest nations to ratify Convention 176, but more needs to be done in resource-rich nations to enact ratifications.

The ICEM has now produced a campaign guide for mining unions on how to plan and organize a campaign for ratification. Please visit our website, [www.icem.org](http://www.icem.org), and visit the "ILO 176 Information" to download this manual as well as a PDF of ICEM's campaign poster.

## RATIFICATIONS OF C. 176

*Albania*

*Armenia*

*Austria*

*Bosnia-Herzegovina*

*Botswana*

*Brazil*

*Czech Republic*

*Finland*

*Germany*

*Ireland*

*Lebanon*

*Luxembourg*

*Norway*

*Peru*

*Philippines*

*Poland*

*Portugal*

*Slovakia*

*South Africa*

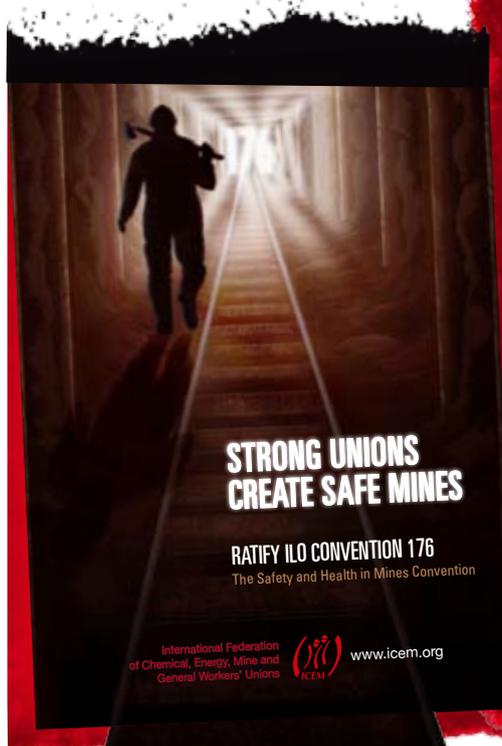
*Spain*

*Sweden*

*United States*

*Zambia*

*Zimbabwe*



# MINE STRIKE IN CANADA A TEST OF WILLS



If there was a defining sign that Brazilian mining house Vale was out to change the culture in a Canadian mining city, it was in 2007, shortly after Vale paid a premium of US\$17.6 billion to acquire Inco. Many Canadian-bred managers, engineers, and other key top-level personnel exited on their own accord.

The exodus came within months of Vale CEO Roger Agnelli promising “growth” as the keyword in nickel-rich Sudbury in northern Ontario province. *“Why would we need to change anything?”* he said in October 2006, immediately following the all-cash buy-up of Inco. *“I don’t see ... Sudbury losing in any way”* through our purchase.

The company agreed with the federal government, under the Investment Canada Act, to preserve jobs, maintain research and operations, and generally provide Canadian workers with wage levels and benefits they’re accustomed to in giving them comfortable livelihoods.

The promise was shattered two years later when Vale started issuing redundancy notices. It was shattered even more in April and May, 2009, just prior to a collective agreement expiration with United Steelworkers (USW) Locals 6500

and Local 6200. Vale was seeking a sharp drop to a production bonus, creation of a two-tier pension plan, and more latitude for the company to outsource jobs, which would further erode job security of permanent workers.

With a 31 May expiration looming on a three-year Inco contract, the USW extended negotiations for six weeks in efforts to reach a compromise. Meanwhile, another USW branch in the eastern Canadian province of Labrador/Newfoundland also extended its contract on 1 May for three months in hopes of reaching a deal. USW Local 9508, representing 450 miners and other workers at copper and nickel mines, faced the same set of concessions.

Vale negotiators refused to budge. On 13 July, 3,400 steelworkers at Sudbury and Port Colborne went on strike. They were followed on 1 August by miners and port workers at Goose Bay and Voiseys Bay, Labrador.

The strikes quickly turned fierce and pitched and three months into the strikes, Vale did something that predecessor Inco never attempted in many prior strikes, dating back decades: the Brazilian company deployed managers, technicians, and other staff who remained on the job under a

separate labour contract to re-start mining and smelting operations. Vale also hired outside contractors to resume production, further intensifying the strikes.

In late February 2010, an independent mediator attempted to bring a resolve to the then eight-month strike in Ontario by bringing both sides together. But on 7 March, those talks failed. Vale submitted a proposal containing the same concessions and workers rejected it with an 89% vote, four percentage points higher than the original strike vote ten months earlier.

For the USW’s part, the union proposed to submit the unresolved issues to binding arbitration. But Vale wanted no part of that.

The mining strikes in Canada are a clash between a company seeking a changed work culture, topped off by reduced living standards, and workers that feel what was won by their fathers and grandfathers is not to be given away. The outcome remains unknown, but one fact is clear: Canadian miners have been betrayed by a transnational company that made false promises, as well as by their own government, which failed to uphold the principles enacted in its own legislation.

# THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL COLLAPSE:

## WILL A NEW SOCIAL ORDER FOLLOW?

In the midst of the global financial collapse late in 2008, the ICEM Presidium issued a statement calling it a turning point in history, and proof that the current system of capital has failed. The Presidium called for a newer and fairer system of global capital based on stringent financial oversight and governance, including a new set of global regulations.

Some 18 months later, it is unclear if the vast sums which governments put up to rescue banks, rebuild infrastructure, and establish emergency safety nets have provided some semblance of balance between the finance and social responsibility. It is uncertain that any recovery, no matter how gradual, will result in nothing other than a return to the status quo, a return to a world where unrestrained capitalism and uncontrolled greed rule.

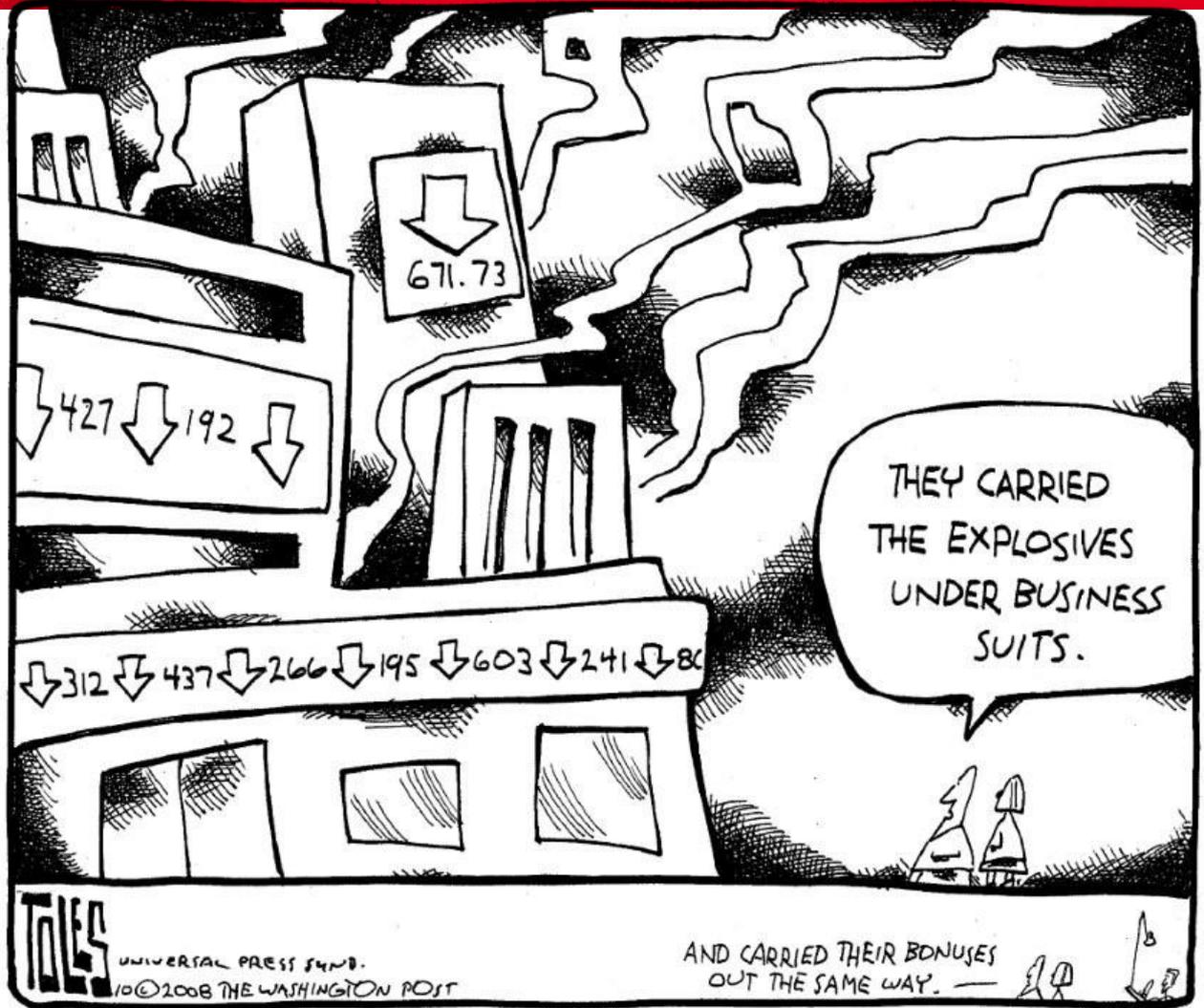
What is certain is that between 2007 and 2009, 59 million jobs have been lost and even if global markets do recover, the vast majority of these jobs will never return. This becomes even more daunting in a world dominated by enterprises fixed on eliminating direct employment with short-term, informal work relationships where social, legal, and regulatory standards are also erased.

There is no denying that the poor of the world, and working people, have paid the price brought on by irresponsible risk-taking and speculative anarchy. Countries with emerging and developing economies have also suffered, to the point where achievement of the Millennium Development Goals has been jeopardized. Workers in both developed and developing nations are facing an economic ordeal unprecedented in their lifetimes, or the lifetimes of their forefathers.

As such, the global trade union movement has repositioned itself during the crisis and is now insisting on a full partnership to define political solutions that ensure social justice and economic parity is never again shortchanged. What this means is firmly-entrenched tripartite structures in which workers' voices on job creation, not job slashing, raising living standards, not lowering, and the necessity for secure, sustainable futures for all are heard.

### LONDON DECLARATION'S ACTION PLAN

1. **Clamp Down** on the 'shadow' financial economy (hedge funds, private equity, derivatives)
2. **End** tax and regulatory havens and create new international taxation mechanisms
3. **Ensure** fair and sustainable access to international finance for developing countries
4. **Reform** the private banking business model to prevent asset bubbles and reduce leverage risks
5. **End** the discredited bonus culture
6. **Protect** working families against predatory lending
7. **Enhance** the public accountability, mandate and resources of supervisory authorities
8. **Build** a new financial service and banking landscape that works for the real economy
9. **Integrate** asset and leverage risks in banking prudential rules
10. **Restrict** shareholder dividends, share buyback programmes and leveraged-loans



10-12-08

## JOBS PACT

Last year, one such tripartite structure adopted a response to the crisis that nations and global financial institutions should adopt as part of their own policies. The ILO's Global Jobs Pact recommends job retention, acceleration of job creation, as well as broadening public infrastructure investments, social protections, and minimum wages as means to deal with the crisis.

It also called for a "stronger, more globally consistent supervisory and regulatory framework" of the financial sector. The Jobs Pact parallels policy set forth in the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.

Global labour unions are demanding from this crisis a just transition in order that opportunities to stem global warming and other environmental problems are met with long-term, stable employment. This means aggressive investment in the modernization of industry, technology development, training, and "green" jobs creation. It also means training, job opportunities, and commitments to the young so that the industries they enter are rewarded with their experience and longevity.

## A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Labour is convinced that this crisis must be overcome through new democratic institutions that manage trade, regulate commerce, and secure equality and social justice. Quality jobs and decent work must be at the heart of renewal because there will be no marked recovery until there is family-providing, community-sustaining jobs. Without living wages, there is weak consumption, thus no economic recovery.

Expanding, not constricting workers' rights will contribute to economic growth. Wage growth, not wage concessions is the way to beat deflationary spirals, and financial institutions putting restrictive social criteria into development loans is a sure way to prolong this crisis in the poorest of countries.

Global union federations must be fully recognized and involved in the debate at the G8/G20 levels, before the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and at other global bodies to achieve fairness to a new financial system. The door has already been opened, but it is not a seat at a side table that will correct the harm that those at the main table have helped create. A workers' voice is essential in the negotiating process in order to stop short-term financial speculation and replace it with good fiscal governance; to re-regulate resources and industries instead of deregulating them; to inject funds into public services and public assets instead of privatizing them.

The financial collapse has proven one thing for certain and that is the perverted absurdity of selling off public services and the public good to investors driven solely by profit.

In January 2009, leaders of the global labour federations met with Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund. He succinctly told labour leaders: *"The root cause of this crisis is greed. We have to find a way to contain that greed."*

The way to stem that greed is through socially responsible national laws, binding international standards, and governments that do not cower to financial or corporate interests. It is also through stringent global financial regulation and oversight.

A few months after Strauss-Kahn's statement, global unions presented G20 finance ministers, meeting in the United Kingdom, with the London Declaration. It spells out the excesses brought on by unharnessed financial tools and mechanisms, devices that have led to a debt crisis global in scope and unfathomable in scale. The Declaration serves as a blueprint for recovery, with a five-point strategy to build a fairer and more sustainable world economy for future generations.

Those five points include:

- A coordinated international recovery and sustainable growth plan focused on job creation, public investment, and social protection for the most needy;
- Nationalise banks that are insolvent and establish new rules and machinery of governance to control global finance;
- Combat inequalities and protect earnings by extending coverage of collective bargaining and strengthen institutional protection for living standards;
- A strategy for "green economy" investments that will move the world economy onto a low-carbon growth path and create the conditions for international agreement at the Copenhagen climate change summit in December 2009; and
- Changes to global governance of social and economic policy and practice to make the world economy a fairer place to work and live.

Failure by the world's governments to deliver at Copenhagen is signal that the tasks at hand will not be easy. But if the crisis has done anything, it has opened a door to a new social order placing humanitarian values first and foremost. Now is the time of reckoning. Now is the time for those values to be ingrained into financial governance and to gain common universal acceptance.

“ The root cause of this crisis is greed. We have to find a way to contain that greed. ”

Dominique Strauss-Kahn  
Managing Director - International Monetary Fund

# OUT OF CRISIS, MUST COME EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN



**W**omen workers have been the hardest hit by the global economic crisis, which still has a devastating effect across the world. According to the ILO, 22 million women lost their jobs in 2009, and redundancies continue into 2010.

The ILO fears that the biggest negative impact will be in the Asia-Pacific Region, which has the highest number of working women. An estimated 65% of women are in vulnerable jobs, with most of those jobs in the informal economy.

With 2010 being the 100th anniversary of the announcement of the 8 March International Women's Day, the period between 2010 and 8 March 2011, the date 100 years ago when the first four countries (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland) began observing the day, must be used to strive for social equality, equal pay, and an end to women being placed in the most precarious forms of employment.

When the crisis began in September 2008, it affected sectors where mostly men were employed. But since, it has spread to services, sectors that are dominated by women. The crisis affects women and men differently because of the jobs they do, and it also has different effects in different regions. In the developed world, men have lost manufacturing jobs.

But because women generally face marginalization in social, economic, and political areas, they are the ones now bearing many of the hardships brought on by the crisis. Women have less access to education and social services, and they encounter obstacles such as jobs that are less secure, lower wages, and insufficient political representation.

Women make enormous contributions to the economy: they pay taxes, they head households, and they prop up community life. They are more likely to work in flexible,

part-time jobs, or on temporary contracts, and the work they generally do is low paid, meaning they have less savings. They are also the ones that employers can fire most easily, especially pregnant women or young mothers who often are the first to go when employers look for ways to shed employees.

Societies are worse off for discrimination. We must be vigilant that employers do not hide behind the global recession to resort to illegal discrimination. We cannot allow the crisis to be turned into an alibi to block progress on equal opportunities.

Real solutions in response to the financial crisis must be designed with a gender perspective. Investments must be made in sectors where women work and where women's skills are vital in the road to recovery. As in any crisis, opportunity awaits; it is imperative that in this crisis, opportunities for women on pay equity, gender balance, and workplace equality not be missed.

Let that be our work as we head toward 8 March 2011, the date when the first countries began officially recognizing International Women's Day.

# HASHMEYIA MUHSIN PUTS DUTCH MONEY TO USE IN IRAQ

Last year, ICEM Executive Committee member Hashmeyia Muhsin Saadawi from Iraq won the Febe Elisabeth Velasquez Trade Union Award, as presented by the Dutch labour centre FNV. The award is given to a trade unionist who takes personal risks in defending workers' rights in countries where they are routinely violated.

This year, Hashmeyia Muhsin put the prize money attached to the award to good use: she has started a national social security campaign that goes far beyond the scope of her own Iraqi union and extends to social justice and equality throughout the country, in health care, education, housing quality, and obtaining social benefits.

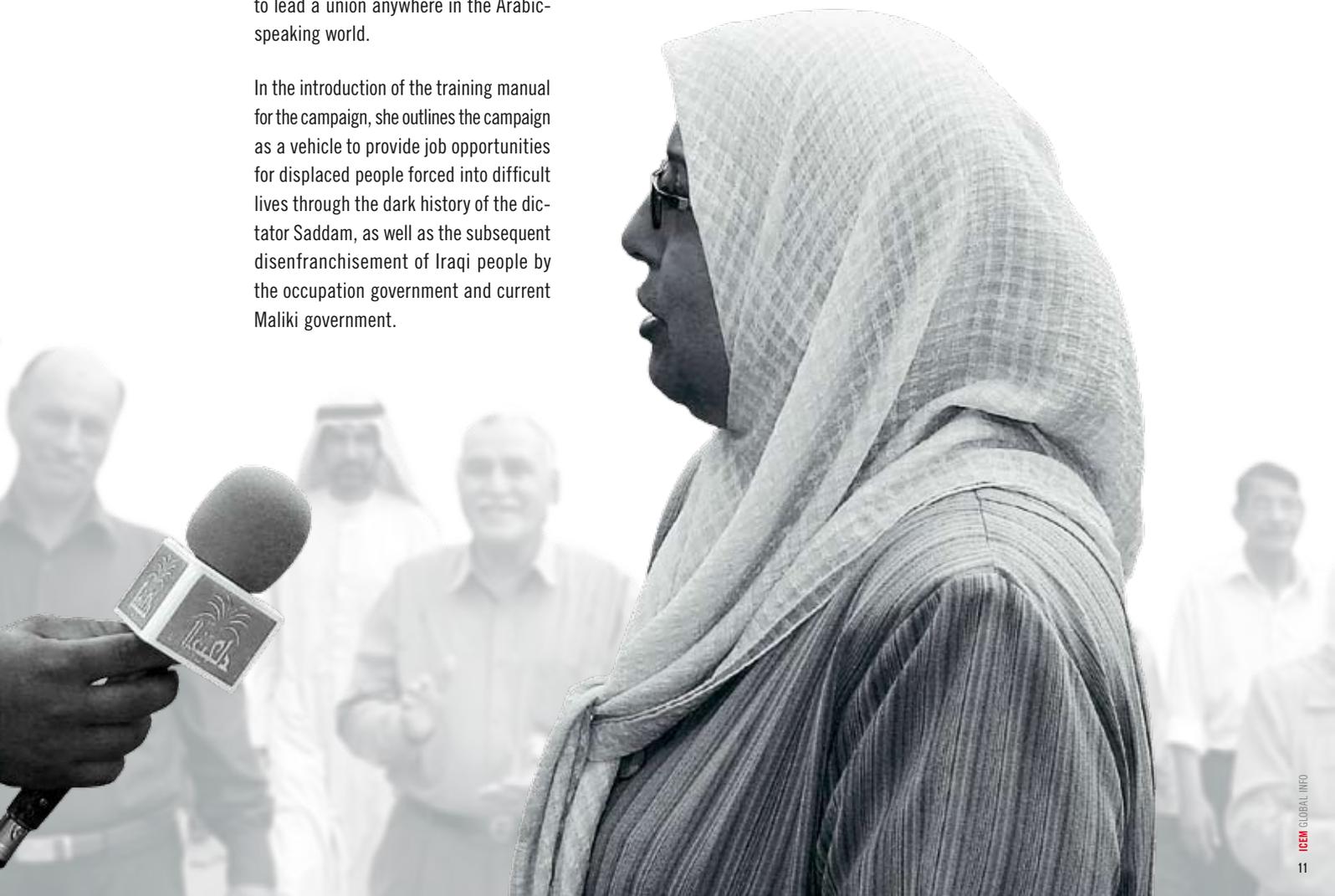
Hashmeyia Muhsin is the President of the General Union of Electricity Workers and Technicians of Iraq. She is the first woman to head a national trade union in Iraq, and is believed to be the first woman to lead a union anywhere in the Arabic-speaking world.

In the introduction of the training manual for the campaign, she outlines the campaign as a vehicle to provide job opportunities for displaced people forced into difficult lives through the dark history of the dictator Saddam, as well as the subsequent disenfranchisement of Iraqi people by the occupation government and current Maliki government.

The campaign seeks to set a national blueprint for total social and national care through quality work, health, education, and living in a country that still has failed to pass meaningful labour and social reform.

First elected to head the Electricity Workers and Technicians in September 2003, she has been re-elected twice since, and also is Vice Chairman of the General Federation of Iraqi Workers (GFIW). In 2007, she was elected to the ICEM's Executive Committee. She was nominated for the Dutch award by the ICEM.

The Febe Elisabeth Velasquez Award of FNV was named after a Salvadorian trade union leader and former General Secretary of Fenastras who was killed in 1989 when a bomb exploded at her union's offices.



# NEWS OF AFFILIATES



## NIGERIA: CASUALISATION A GROWING THREAT TO DECENT WORK

ICEM's two affiliates in Nigeria, PENGASSAN and NUPENG, are facing a crisis. That crisis is over casualisation, the fact that more and more multinationals in the country's energy sector are using non-direct, contract workers in key roles in the oil and gas industries.

In February 2010, the two unions staged a two-day strike over the issue against Mobil Producing Nigeria (MPN), the subsidiary of American-based ExxonMobil. That strike centered on the fact that since September 2009, hundreds of Nigerian nationals were suddenly discharged by MPN contractors because they responded to a union call for equitable wages.

Both PENGASSAN and NUPENG decided to take joint industrial action in reaction to these unfair labour practices and persistent victimization.

The proliferation of casual, or temporary work in Nigeria's oil and gas sectors has meant that several global companies – including MPN – have completely done away with junior staff, or workers that normally would fall into the membership ranks of NUPENG. The common fact is that when companies

phase out full-time staff, they generally re-surface as short-term contract workers, jobs in which freedom of association is limited, social entitlements are few, and career paths become non-existent.

Casualisation in Nigeria is synonymous with cheap labour and maximization of profits. Despite several conventions between the unions and MPN to address casualisation, the company refused dialogue until the ICEM intervened. And even then, the Nigerian subsidiary said since the concern was over non-direct employees, the unions had to take the matter up with the labour brokers employing the workers. MPN did offer to be an observer in such discussions.

*"This is a disguise,"* said PENGASSAN General Secretary Bayo Olowoshile. *"These workers use Mobil's equipment, they use Mobil's facilities, and they perform the same work that PENGASSAN or NUPENG workers once did."* The ICEM stands together with the Nigerian unions in demanding equal pay for equal work, and for giving all casual staff regular work with full workers' rights and social entitlements.

## THAILAND: SLOW JUSTICE FOR SACKED UNION ACTIVISTS AT MICHELIN

Justice is sometimes slow, but it is proving sure at a Michelin tyre factory in Laem Chabang, Thailand, although remaining incomplete. In 2009, Michelin fired 22 union activists of a branch of the Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Federation (PCFT) for leading public protests against Michelin's unilateral wage cuts in the midst of the global economic crisis.

Without notice, managers at the Chonburi Province factory slashed pay by 13% in March 2009. Workers began a petition calling on bosses to consult with their union before imposing the cuts. But instead, the company demanded that workers in the 1,500-worker plant retract their names from the petition.

For 383 workers who refused, Michelin imposed a 35% pay cut and then locked them out. With intervention by the ICEM, along with the FCE-CFDT of France and Michelin's European Works Council, the company relented, and agreed to a mediated solution through Chonburi's Labour Protection and Welfare Office that put an end to the pay dispute through a compromise.

But Michelin zeroed in on the 22 activists, denying them their jobs back and bringing criminal charges against the 22 for their roles in plant gate demonstrations. Finally, in January 2010, ten workers were reinstated to jobs, but 12 others face continued recriminations and still face court proceedings brought forth by supervisors for an April 2009 plant blockade. The ICEM will continue to engage the company in this year-long dispute until all matters are resolved.



© Bangkok Post

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: BACK WAGES PAID AT SODIUM CARBONATE PLANT

**W**orkers' steadfastness to gain unpaid back wages, combined with ICEM intervention gave the Independent Trade Union of Chemistry and Non-Metals of Bosnia-Herzegovina (SSHN-FBIH) a victory early this year with Global Infrastructure Holdings Ltd., a subsidiary of India-based Ispat Group. Some 1,250 members of SSHN-FBIH of Global Ispat Koksana Industrija Lukavac (GIKIL), jointly owned by Pramod Mittal's Indian steelmaking group and the Canton of Tuzla, got the back wages due them through strikes and a European-wide pressure campaign by the ICEM.

The empowerment of workers at this sodium carbonate plant – producing coke for the steel industry – was widely noted across Europe. Workers had gone without pay over the final three months of 2009. It was their strike actions in early January, and ICEM, International Metalworkers' Federation, and European Metalworkers' Federation attention that forced the company's hand.

In February, ICEM General Secretary Manfred Warda visited Lukavac and met with Tuzla Canton Prime Minister Enes Mujic and regional ministers. The government then met in session and determined that workers' strike actions were justified and legitimate.

Warda and leaders of SSHN-FBIH pressed the government to take up serious health concerns around the coke ovens, where a startling number of workers had been stricken with cancer. The government agreed, and also created a commission to make corrections to salaries in accord with a collective agreement that GIKIL had ignored.

*"The ICEM probed Global Infrastructure Holdings, the Ispat Group, and Pramod Mittal himself,"* said Warda. *"What we found was a history of depraved conduct in many countries and total disregard for global social standards, as well as statutes enshrined in European law. We will continue to monitor the company in Bosnia-Herzegovina."*



## LIBERIA: FLIWUL, ARCELORMITTAL REACH MINING ACCORD

**A** historic protocol agreement between ArcelorMittal and the Forestry, Logging, and Industrial Workers' Union of Liberia (FLIWUL) will guarantee a collective labour agreement next year when the company begins iron ore enterprise operations in the West African nation. The agreement will assure that 3,000 miners, rail transport and port workers, and others have union protections.

It also sets forth the process in which FLIWUL is now building a free and democratic trade union, called ArcelorMittal Workers' Union FLIWUL No. 4. That includes on-site elections of officers and shop stewards, as well as an extensive survey inside the various work units that will become the union's bargaining proposals later this year.

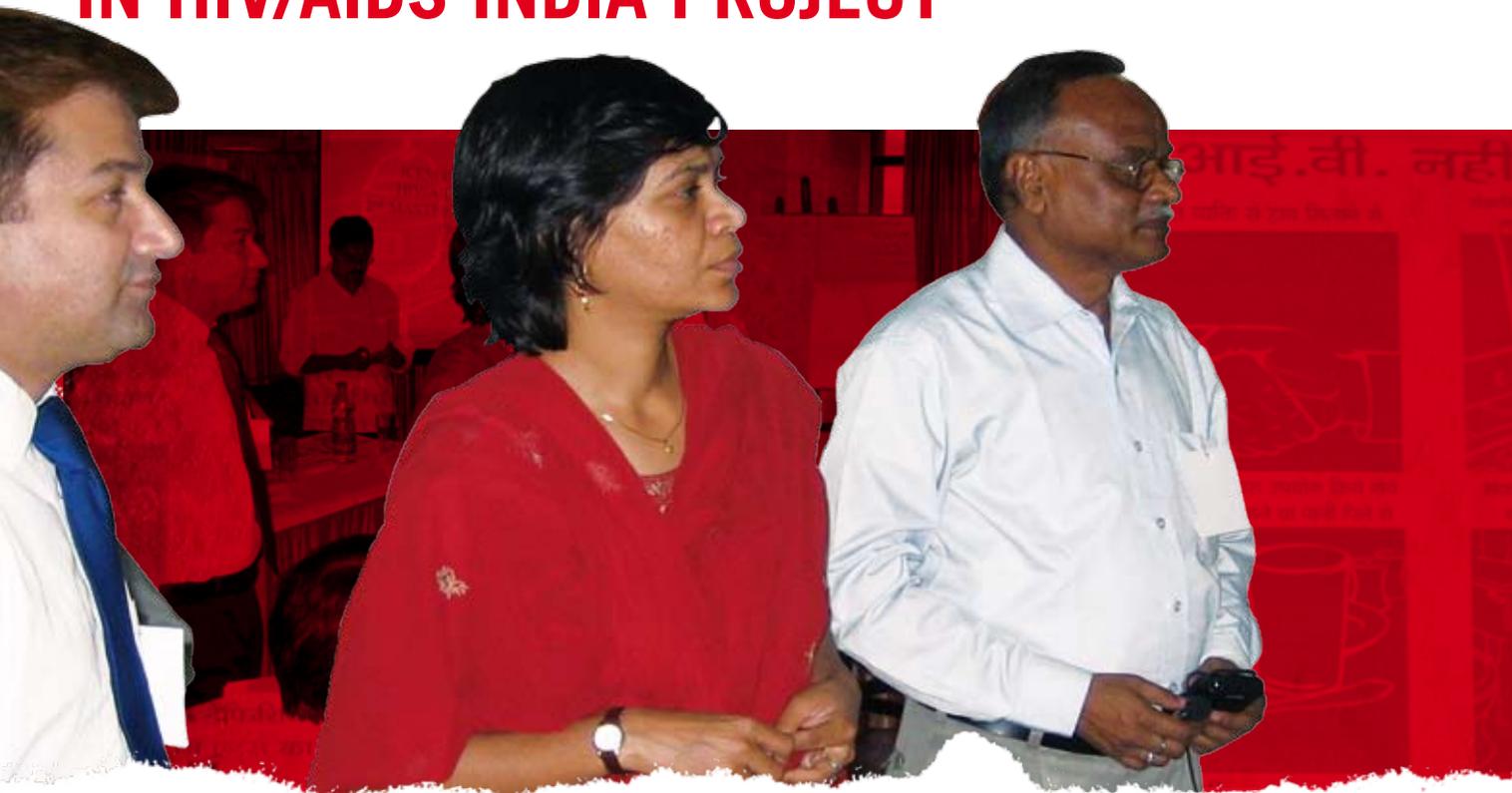
FLIWUL General-Secretary David Sackoh said the eventual contract will cover miners in northern Nimba County, where the borders of Liberia, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire meet, staff at two hospitals, and transport and port workers on the 250-kilometre rail link to the city of Buchanan on the Atlantic Ocean.

ArcelorMittal has not always been this cooperative with FLIWUL. In spring 2009, the company attempted to subvert a lawful union recognition vote with strong-arm tactics. Intervention by the ICEM, together with on-the-ground assistance by the US-based United Steelworkers (USW), which also intervened directly with CEO Lakshmi Mittal, convinced management that recognizing and working with FLIWUL was better than the alternative.

The "Interim Procedural Agreement," as it is called, has framework standards that now cover health and safety conditions, protection of the environment, current working conditions, and protection of communities. It also contains a grievance process for the 750 workers now employed on the project.

*"FLIWUL has much to be proud of,"* said ICEM General Secretary Manfred Warda. *"The assistance they received from the USW is a superb model of union helping union, and in this case guarantees that ArcelorMittal staff in Liberia will have an excellent collective agreement."*

# MOMENTUM TAKES HOLD IN HIV/AIDS INDIA PROJECT



**“The two Integrated Counseling and Testing Centres have reported a significant increase in the uptake of voluntary counseling and testing.”**

**T**hese words, by Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL) Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr Anurag Verma, indicate progress and early success of ICEM's HIV/AIDS workplace programme in India.

The project has come a long way since the final agreement was signed with Boehringer Ingelheim, the German pharmaceutical company that funds the project. The project is being implemented with technical support from ILO's Delhi Office.

*“We have trained 330 peer educators to date from ICEM affiliates in coal, chemicals, cement, and diamond sectors,”* said BK Das, project coordinator and General Secretary of the Indian National Mineworkers' Federation. *“The project is on track.”*

The goal is to train more than 500 peer educators who are competent in all aspects of HIV prevention and can carry the awareness message among their fellow workers, as well as into remote mining communities. Emphasis is on advocacy

for voluntary counseling and testing, elimination of discrimination, and the reduction of stigma, which is high in India.

To fight this stigma, the project works closely with organisations of people living with HIV and AIDS, and gives a voice to their representatives in courses and campaigns.

During a recent assessment visit, ICEM HIV/AIDS Consultant Hans Schwass had the opportunity to participate in a peer educators' course at Eastern Coal Ltd (ECL) and in the master trainers' programme in Kolkata. He also exchanged experiences with peer educators and master trainers, and joined HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns in remote villages.

ECL and BCCL are two of eight subsidiaries of Coal India Limited (CIL), which employs more than 420,000 permanent workers and 200,000 contract workers.

The master trainers' course was facilitated by SM Afsar, ILO Technical Specialist and HIV/AIDS South Asia and National Programme Coordinator, and ILO/Delhi Programme Officer Divya Verma. The cooperation of the ILO has been outstanding: not only

were two masters courses facilitated, but materials were also made available. As well, contacts with organisations of HIV+ people and state AIDS control societies were made, and CIL is being lobbied for further cooperation.

SM Afsar emphasised that commitment counts in a country with the third largest number of infections, some 2.3 million. *“Trade unions defend workers' rights and look after the welfare of workers and their families. They have access to the workplace which gives them an important role in the fight against the pandemic.”*

Afsar welcomed the initiative of the ICEM and added that a partnership with CIL in the coal sector, as well as with companies in other ICEM sectors is important for the sustainability of the project.

With companies taking the threat of the pandemic more seriously and with state AIDS control societies recognising the workplace as a major place of HIV/AIDS interventions, the prospects for sustainable HIV/AIDS work among ICEM affiliates in India are good.

# ICEM

## SITUATED AND SETTLED IN NEW GENEVA OFFICES

The ICEM Secretariat is now settled and poised for future work, complete with a full compliment of 16 staff members in the Geneva offices and one in South Africa. The move from Brussels in 2008 was rather hectic and tumultuous and after 12 months in temporary offices in Geneva, the ICEM moved to its current address in 2009. The ICEM invites trade union affiliates and friends to visit us at:

**20 rue Adrien Lachenal  
1207 Geneva  
Switzerland**



*In the group photo here, the ICEM Secretariat staff.*



*ICEM President : **Senzeni Zokwana***



*In the photo insets, Anatoly Surin, Officer for Central & Eastern Europe, and Maita Wyss, Administrative Assistant & Receptionist, joined the staff since the photo was taken, with Fabian Nkomo, ICEM's Sub-Saharan African Regional staff person, who is based in Johannesburg, South Africa.*



Equal rights for  
contract and  
agency workers