

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)

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ICFTU unveils its events for the World Social Forum, Porto Alegre

Brussels, 21st January 2005 (ICFTU Online): Ahead of the fifth World Social Forum (<http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br>), the ICFTU today unveiled its programme of activities for the 6 day event (<http://www.icftu.org/www/PDF/FSM.pdf>), to be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The World Social Forum (26th-31st January) is an annual event which on average draws some 100,000 people to exchange views on globalisation, human rights and workers' rights. Over the last 12 months, the world has been reminded of the importance of initiatives to redress the imbalances of globalisation in developing and industrialised countries. As the world's largest trade union organisation, the ICFTU is attending the Forum as part of its programme to make globalisation more favourable to workers' interests and lessen the greater inequality and insecurity that it is currently generating. Running simultaneously with the World Economic Forum in Davos (<http://www.weforum.org/>), the World Social Forum provides the opportunity for civil society organisations to forge alliances on shared goals and pressure governments and international institutions to better address the social agenda.

The ICFTU will organise in 3 events in Porto Alegre, in addition to providing speakers and participants at a variety of other meetings. The fourth annual trade union forum runs from 25th-26th January 2005 and will look at the future of the trade union movement, debating issues such as the recently announced unification between the World Confederation of Labour (www.cmt-wcl.org) and the ICFTU. In addition, delegates from trade unions across the world will gather to discuss the strengthening of the Global Unions (www.global-unions.org) relationship, in which the ICFTU is a partner, which will ultimately mean that the international trade union movement is able to speak with a stronger voice for the world's working people in the global economy.

In addition, the international trade union movement will take part in an event from 27th-30th January on the social dimension of globalisation. Following the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation (<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/fairglobalization/>) which received the full backing of the ICFTU (<http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991218991&Language=EN>), the international trade union movement and civil society organisations are putting the recommendations of the World Commission back on the agenda. Hundreds of delegates from across the world will discuss topics including migration, outsourcing, the informal economy and the impact of trade agreements on a fair globalisation.

A new anti-poverty initiative will be launched by leaders of civil society organisations, including ICFTU General Secretary Guy Ryder, during the Forum in Porto Alegre. In the presence of Brazilian President Lula Da Silva, the leaders will launch a new campaign on 27th January - the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (www.whiteband.org). This campaign will link events across the world throughout 2005, including the G8 Summit which takes place in Britain in July 2005 and a UN Summit which is scheduled to review progress on the Millennium Development Goals in September of this year. The "Call to Action" is backed by a broad international alliance made up of trade unions and a wide range of other civil society organisations. The ICFTU is confident that this alliance will become a force which decision makers cannot afford to ignore.

The ICFTU represents 145 million workers in 233 affiliated organisations in 154 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a partner in Global

Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

For more information, please contact the ICFTU Press Department on +32 2 224 0206 or +32 476 621 018.