

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

ICFTU OnLine:

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Labour leaders meet with Prime Minister Blair, call for "Decent Work for All"

Brussels 28 June (ICFTU OnLine): A delegation of international trade union leaders, representing 170 million workers from 150 countries, are meeting today with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in advance of the July 6-8 Summit of the G8 countries to press the case for decent work for all. The delegation, led by John Sweeney, President of the US AFL-CIO and of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD, will express the global trade union movement's support for efforts by the UK and other governments to tackle poverty in developing countries, and call upon G8 governments to agree on more decisive steps on global poverty, environmental issues and on HIV-AIDS. The delegation includes British TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber, ICFTU General Secretary Guy Ryder and trade union leaders from Nigeria, Russia, France, Japan and Spain as well as representatives from the World Confederation of Labour, Global Union Federations and the European TUC.

Through its involvement in the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, the international trade union movement has joined forces with a broad range of other organisations to press for debt relief to the poorest countries, greatly increased international development aid, and a just global trade system.

In their statement to the Gleneagles G8 Summit, http://www.tuac.org/statemen/communiq/StG8Gleneagles2005_E_Whp.pdf, the trade union bodies point to the need for "decent and sustainable jobs and livelihoods throughout the global economy", stressing that: decent work based on respect for core international labour standards must be placed at the core of socio-economic policy and national employment and poverty reduction strategies, taking into account age, gender equality and equity. Informal work must be brought into the legal economy; developed countries must meet the UN target for allocating 0.7 per cent of GNP as official development assistance and join the proposed International Financial Facility, with 100 per cent debt relief for the poorest indebted countries that respect human rights; priority must be given to investment in education, health and access to clean water; the exploitation of child labour must be eliminated and all children be in school instead of work; trade negotiations must be accompanied by an ongoing assessment of their impact on employment, with international funding and short-term safeguard measures where necessary to address the disarray following, for example, the end of the textile quotas; there must be effective plans of action for sustainable energy use including a mix of clean and green energy sources; new jobs must be created in clean energy technologies, such as renewables, clean coal, advanced technology vehicles, nuclear power, natural gas, and conservation; economic adjustment programmes must be implemented to help affected workers and communities make the transition to good, new jobs and sustainable economic growth (to mitigate the short-term economic

dislocations that will result from climate policies, especially in the developed economies);

The statement also highlights the devastating consequences of the HIV-AIDS pandemic, and the delegation to 10 Downing Street will present Prime Minister Blair with a Joint Declaration

<<http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991221956&Language=EN>> agreed in June between the ICFTU and the International Organisation of Employers, pledging to work together to tackle the HIV-AIDS pandemic, and calling on the G8 to establish a permanent working group on HIV-AIDS to report annually to G8 leaders.

The ICFTU represents 145 million workers in 233 affiliated organizations 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 0212.

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