

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

ICFTU OnLine...

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Trade Union Unification at the international level - an historic first

Brussels, 6 September 2005 (ICFTU OnLine): A meeting of international trade union leaders from the ICFTU, the World Confederation of Labour, the respective regional organisations of the two international bodies, as well as the European Trade Union Confederation was held on 2 and 3 September. The outcome of the meeting is set out in the following ICFTU/WCL joint statement:

"Trade Union Unification at the international level - an historic first

For almost two years now discussions have been taking place between the democratic and independent world trade union organisations the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World confederation of Labour (WCL), with a view to setting up a new world trade union organisation, open to other democratic and independent national organisations. There are also currently discussions going on with a view to unification at the regional level.

On September 2 and 3, the General Secretaries of the respective regional organisations met in Brussels with the leading executive officers of both world trade union organisations within the framework of the development of this new world organisation.

Present were*:

For the ICFTU, AFRO (from Africa), APRO (from Asia and the Pacific) ORIT (from the Americas); For the WCL, BATU (from Asia), CLAT (from Latin America and the Caribbean) ODSA (from Africa)

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is also discussing its place within the new structure, and the General Secretary of the ETUC participated in this high level meeting.

The approach which was decided on, reflecting a unanimous wish to strengthen trade unionism in face of unfettered globalisation, will lead to the drafting of statutes that will be submitted to the respective bodies of both world organisations in the months ahead.

At the same time consultations will be organised with democratic and independent national organizations willing to join this new international trade union structure.

Furthermore, relations with the International Confederation of Arab trade unions (ICATU) will be continued and strengthened.

The meeting on September 2 and 3 is a first in the history of the international trade union movement, and constitutes an important step forward in the current unification process.

Willy Thys
General Secretary
WCL

General Secretary

Guy Ryder

ICFTU

*Present:

CLAT (Central latinoamericana de trabajadores): Eduardo Garcia ORIT (Organización regional Interamericana de trabajadores): Victor Baez BATU (Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unions): Necie Lucero APRO (Asia and Pacific Regional Organisation): Noriyuki Suzuki ODSA (Organisation démocratique syndicale des travailleurs africains): Adrien Akouete AFRO (African regional organisation): Andrew Kailembo ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation): John Monks"

The ICFTU represents 145 million workers in 234 affiliated organisations in 154 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a member of Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

For more information, please contact the ICFTU Press Department on +32 2 224 0245 or +32 499 198 294.

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