

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

ICFTU OnLine...

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Trade Unions to Spread Action Against HIV/AIDS in 2006

Brussels, 1 December 2005 (ICFTU OnLine): The global trade union movement today announced a series of initiatives for 2006 in the fight against HIV/AIDS, ranging from campaign and mobilisation action to activities in workplaces and lobbying of governments to get them to implement pledges they have made.

Trade unions will be focusing on a series of global gatherings in 2006, including in the G8, World Health Organisation, UN Commission on Sustainable Development and the UN General Assembly.

"We want the G8 to follow through on their commitment to deal with the damage which they admit has been inflicted on health and education sectors, and to see to the training of health care workers. We want governments to follow through on the host of promises they have made but still not fulfilled" said Alan Leather, Chair of the Global Union HIV/AIDS steering group.

The union bodies are also calling on trade union members worldwide to get involved in the World AIDS Campaign (WAC), by clicking on the WAC website www.worldaidscampaign.net/community to make personal pledges to join the campaign.

2006 will see the roll-out of a series of workplace initiatives in countries which are being severely hit by the pandemic, following agreements with the International Organisation of Employers and the World Health Organisation. "Trade unions have unique capacity and credibility in the workplace to help tackle HIV/AIDS, and we welcome cooperation with employers and governments which are prepared to support this work", said ICFTU General Secretary Guy Ryder.

A new leaflet "HIV/AIDS is a Human Rights Issue, Human Rights are Trade Union Issues", launched on World Aids Day, is available at www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpT_6.EN.pdf, and country profiles to track government progress on HIV/AIDS related indicators are available at www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpT_4a.EN.pdf.

"We have taken to heart the G8 call for an ongoing monitoring mechanism", said Leather. "With assistance from UNAIDS, we have created an innovative information and organising tool that can be used by the whole HIV/AIDS community".

The Global Unions partnership includes the ICFTU, the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) and the ten Global Union Federations, which together represent more than 150 million workers. These have played a key role in drafting and implementing the Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work of the UN's International Labour Organisation.

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

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