

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

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Trade Unions call on UN to work towards decent jobs for all

New York 4 April 2006 - ICFTU Online: A four-member trade union delegation led by ICFTU President Sharan Burrow will participate in a meeting of the UN's Economic and Social Council in New York from 4-5 April in the lead up to a High-Level Segment meeting of ECOSOC scheduled for Geneva from 3-5 July. Both meetings will focus on decent work under the theme: "Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development"

"We welcome this meeting as a strategic opportunity to discuss with our governments how they plan to make good on the commitment to full employment and decent work which they made at the 2005 World Summit," said Burrow. "It is unconscionable that 550 million people earn less than a dollar a day, and that 60% of these are women; that 185 million people are unable to find employment, and that 88 million of these are young people. This is the time to forge a global partnership between developed and developing countries to ensure that employment growth policies are put in place to put an end to this scourge of our times - increasing unemployment, poverty and inequality."

Burrow will give the keynote address of the afternoon session of Wednesday 5 April, on the theme of "Human rights in the workplace." Burrow who is a member of the ILO Governing Body and also participated as a Commissioner on the Global Commission on International Migration, will participate in a Round Table on the labour dimensions of migration. Another trade unionist and ILO Governing Body member, Barbara Byers will participate in a Round Table focused on measures "to improve opportunities for women and young people in the labour market". Peter Bakvis of the ICFTU/GUFs/TUAC Office in Washington will speak with representatives of the IMF, World Bank and governments to create an environment conducive to growth and employment, while Gemma Adaba of the ICFTU UN Office will participate in a Round Table on creating employment opportunities for low-income groups in rural and urban areas.

Trade unionists will be stressing the importance of policy coherence between trade, finance, macro-economic and social policies in the interests of growth that translates to decent jobs and livelihoods for all. They will call for the observance of core labour standards as an indispensable component of the decent work agenda to ensure basic union recognition, fair distribution of productivity gains, and representation at work, so that people are empowered to work their way out of poverty. They will draw attention to the increasing feminization of poverty, and call for measures within decent work programmes to address the gender dimensions of poverty. They will emphasize the importance of social protection as part of the decent work agenda, as well as discuss with

social partners industrial stability and employment growth strategies. They will highlight the importance of labour building alliances with broader social movements such as the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) where, as a co-founding member, the ICFTU has been working towards tackling the issues of world poverty through debt relief, trade justice, the decent work agenda and better governance, including through full respect for trade union and other human rights.

The full Statement to the ECOSOC meeting is available at::

<http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991223637&Language=EN>

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