



2nd WORLD CONGRESS

Vancouver, 21 - 25 June 2010

RESOLUTION ON FIGHTING HIV/AIDS

1. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a global challenge to development and social progress. According to UNAIDS and the World Health Organisation an estimated 33.4 million people are living with HIV, with over 7,000 people infected with HIV each day and 2 million deaths in 2008 alone, 70% of these in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to 22.4 million people living with HIV or AIDS and is the most affected region in terms of numbers of infections and the scale of the pandemic's impact. The harsh reality is that the HIV/AIDS scourge continues to adversely affect women, who are more vulnerable to the pandemic. Most people infected with HIV are living under circumstances of economic and social disadvantage and the majority of new HIV infections occur in low-income countries.

2. Congress notes that the consequences of HIV/AIDS have profound implications for workers, their families and dependents and the exercise of human rights, and can cause or increase poverty, inequality and social injustice faced by workers and poor people around the world. It calls on others involved in this issue to recognise the crucial role of the workplace in prevention and treatment. Congress recognises the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic reflects and reinforces other sources of disadvantage and inequality in society, including that experienced by women and girls, youth, migrants, the unemployed, refugees and gays. The particular vulnerability of women and girls makes it essential to strengthen gender perspectives in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

3. Congress expresses its deep concern at the massive human suffering caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It commits the ITUC to contribute effectively towards prevention, control and ultimately eradication of HIV and AIDS.

4. Congress reaffirms the importance of the role of the International Labour Organisation and its constituents in addressing workplace aspects of HIV/AIDS and welcomes the adoption of the new ILO Recommendation on "HIV and AIDS and the World of Work". In that regard, Congress emphasises:

- the absolute need to protect those infected with HIV/AIDS from all forms of discrimination at work and to extend to them the protections offered by ILO Convention 111 and other ILO Conventions;
- that privacy and confidentiality are essential for any successful workplace HIV/AIDS programme and that any workplace surveillance, including monitoring and managing of HIV/AIDS must take place without compromising workers' personal data privacy and confidentiality rights;

- the need for national and workplace HIV/AIDS programmes to be designed and implemented in consultation with the workers and their representatives;
- the need for workplace health programmes to be linked to public health services;
- the need for effective, tailor-made information and measures to reduce all high risk behaviour, including injecting drug use and high risk sexual behaviour.

5. Congress calls on Governments to work with their social partners in implementing the new ILO instrument, which underlines that all countries, whatever their infection rate, can benefit from a legal framework that brings HIV-related workplace challenges into the open, protects against discrimination, respects privacy and confidentiality rights, prevents risks of infection at the workplace and ensures the participation of all stakeholders from relevant institutions.

6. Congress expresses its deep concern about the impact of the global crisis on funding for HIV/AIDS initiatives and calls on all governments to keep their promises to deliver resources to meet the Millennium Development Goal on HIV/AIDS on achieving universal access to treatment by 2010, and to halt and begin to reverse the spread of the pandemic by 2015. The crisis has already put HIV prevention and treatment efforts in jeopardy. Congress notes the warnings already given by the World Bank and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in this regard and insists that the fight against HIV/AIDS must not become one more victim of the crisis.

7. Congress recognises that equitable and full access to health care, and in particular medicines for HIV, is a human right. Therefore the international community should promote effective actions and prioritise international development assistance policies and programmes. Congress insists on the need to build effective and universally accessible public systems of health care in all countries so that each state discharges its responsibility to realise the right to health of its citizens.

8. Congress supports education for HIV/AIDS prevention, through school, community-based and union-based programmes.

9. Congress fully supports the Global Unions HIV/AIDS Programme in promoting trade union action on HIV/AIDS in the workplace and undertaking a unified trade union advocacy campaign for a rights oriented approach to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

ITUC Action Programme

10. Congress instructs the ITUC and regional organisations, working together with Global Unions partners and affiliates, to:

- (a) raise HIV/AIDS to greater prominence on the trade union agenda worldwide;
- (b) support affiliates' activities to educate, promote and develop understanding and commitment among workers by developing their capacity to adopt rights-based approaches to HIV/AIDS;
- (c) promote campaigns that ensure appropriate legislation on HIV/AIDS in line with the terms of this resolution and their implementation, providing speedy and effective remedies and access to treatment;
- (d) promote the fullest and most effective implementation of the new ILO instrument on HIV/AIDS and the world of work both at the national and international level;
- (e) engage employers' organisations in joint efforts to combat HIV/AIDS discrimination in the workplace and to participate in the financing of access to healthcare for those infected with HIV as well as the aid and protection measures needed, especially in the countries hardest hit by the epidemic;

- (f) carry out a campaign for combating the discrimination suffered by HIV-positive persons and for promoting measures facilitating the access, retention and return to employment of those persons;
- (g) strengthen partnerships with, among others, the ILO, UNAIDS, the World Health Organisation, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and other concerned international organisations;
- (h) support trade union access to Global Fund financing;
- (i) address the challenges that make treatment inaccessible to workers in developing countries and other low and middle income countries, sometimes due to pharmaceutical patent protection implemented through the World Trade Organisation;
- (j) promote an effective global and regional trade union network to combat HIV/AIDS; and
- (k) integrate the gender dimension of HIV/AIDS in all activities.

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