

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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World AIDS Day – Global Trade Unions Carry Forward Action Programme

Brussels, 1 December 2006 (ITUC OnLine): With the HIV/AIDS pandemic continuing to wreak havoc in the world of work, the ITUC and its Global Unions partners are intensifying their actions in workplaces around the world and in campaigning at the global level for more effective and comprehensive prevention and treatment measures.

A new Global Unions video "Before It Is Too Late" has been produced, focusing on trade union HIV-AIDS activities in Lesotho as an example of how unions are tackling the issue. Extracts of the video can be seen at: http://www.ituc-csi.org/video/hiv_en.wvx

Through its cooperation with the International Labour Organisation ILOAIDS Programme and UNAIDS, and its participation in the World AIDS campaign, the global trade union programme also links trade union action with other initiatives, and reinforces the involvement of trade unions in national and international coalitions to fight the pandemic. The global trade union agreement with the International Organisation of Employers to cooperate in tackling AIDS also lays an important foundation for union/employer cooperation at the national level.

"With some 40 million HIV-positive people in the world, and around 1 million new infections each year, HIV-AIDS must remain at the top of the international agenda, and we will continue our part to help stop new infections and ensure that public services, in particular health, are properly equipped," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder, adding that "it is nothing less than a scandal that many millions of HIV positive people still have no access to retroviral drugs or decent healthcare".

The ITUC, with its Global Unions partners, will be stepping up pressure on the G8 group of major world economies to set up a high-level G8 Working Group to overcome failed promises made in the past, especially concerning universal access to treatment. The unions are calling for next year's G8 Summit, hosted by Germany, will build on progress made on infectious diseases made at the Russian G8 Summit in 2006.

Founded on November 1 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 304 national affiliates.
<http://www.ituc-csi.org>

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