

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Global debate on migration, development and human rights should return to the UN

Brussels, 10 July 2007 (ITUC online): Trade unions and other civil society organizations supporting migrants' rights have criticized the direction of this week's meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Brussels as ignoring the rights and interests of migrants, focusing instead on a narrow agenda dealing only with temporary forms of migration and the contribution of migrant workers' remittances to economic development. Representatives at a preparatory meeting on 9 July objected to the fact that, apart from the chance to present a statement to the Global Forum, civil society is being excluded from the Forum's main discussions. The agenda for the Forum also ignores many of the most urgent and serious migration issues.

In a letter

http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Draft_Press_Statement_VIII.pdf to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon on the occasion of the Global Forum, the ITUC, together with Migrants Rights International and the "December 18" group expressed their criticism of the intergovernmental Forum and called for the discussion to be brought back within the UN framework, to ensure that the human rights issues are properly dealt with. The UN's consultative processes would also ensure that the debate takes account of the views of migrants themselves.

"The World community has to act effectively and together to help the millions of migrants who are suffering under inhumane living and working conditions," declared Guy Ryder, ITUC General Secretary. "This global debate started in the United Nations, and must now return there" he added.

The UN framework offers benchmarks against which national and regional migration policies and legislation could be measured, and the civil society representatives urge the UN Secretary General to reclaim this process, which is "so critical to sustainable economic growth and well-being and to the lives of millions of migrant workers and their families."

Founded on 1 November 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 304 national affiliates.

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