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CTUG calls upon CHOGM to act on democracy, human rights, development and migrants' rights

Brussels, 21 November 2007 (ITUC Online): On the eve of the 2007 Commonwealth Heads of the Government meeting (CHOGM) taking place in Kampala on 23-25 November, the Commonwealth Trade Union Group¹ (CTUG) and the ITUC organised a workshop on Realizing People's Potentials through Respect for Trade Union Rights. A statement has been issued with a series of recommendations in which it highlights a number of specific proposals for actions by the Commonwealth.

The unions have called upon the Commonwealth to keep up the pressure on Zimbabwe and support civil society there until the regime brings fundamental improvements in the human rights situation, fully respects international labour standards, and ceases harassment against trade unions.

To respect the democracy, good governance, and the freedom of independent trade unions, the Commonwealth Secretariat is being asked to take all necessary measures to ensure progress in the universal ratification by all commonwealth countries of ILO Convention 144 and initiate tripartite Consultation by the time the CHOGM 2009 meets.

The CTUG-ITUC workshop called on the Heads of Government to establish a target for all Commonwealth governments to ratify all eight core ILO labour standards before 2013. The CHOGM is also being asked to establish a fund for capacity enhancement activities by trade unions. According to the workshop, an observatory should be established to analyse the effects of international trade agreements on Commonwealth countries and to develop a strategy to mitigate any negative economic and employment impacts.

The unions also asked the CHOGM to set up a high level commission to examine the challenges of climate change in order to create structures that can deliver rapid solidarity assistance in the event of natural catastrophes and assist countries to deal with the challenges of employment transition to a more sustainable economy.

1. The Commonwealth Trade Union Group consists of trade unions centres representing over 30 million workers from 51 Commonwealth countries.

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates. Website: [<http://www.ituc-csi.org>](http://www.ituc-csi.org)

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