

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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IV EU-Latin America-Caribbean Summit

Brussels, 18 April 2008 (ITUC Online): More than 80 trade union leaders from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean ended the IV EU-Latin America-Caribbean trade union summit in Lima (Peru) by calling for stronger economic, political and social dimensions in the current regional and sub-regional integration processes.

Recognising the imbalances that exist between the countries of the EU and those of Latin America and the Caribbean, they demanded that the heads of State and Government, due to meet in Lima in May, take action to correct those imbalances, and promote the full implementation of the three pillars of the EU's association agreements with this region (political dialogue, cooperation, and trade) adding a fourth chapter on a social and labour dimension. This last proposal from the trade unions is currently being studied by negotiators from some of the sub-regions.

Discussions focused in particular on the lack of participation of civil society and organised labour, and the need for institutional mechanisms to monitor these agreements. The trade union group also emphasised the need to take part in studies on the social and environmental impact of these agreements, both before and after their negotiation.

The contents of the trade pillar remains one of the principal causes of concern. Delegates stated that trade was not an end in itself and that the inclusion of WTO+ type elements in the agreement was not acceptable.

The Trade Union Summit also expressed its solidarity with workers facing severe attacks on their rights in countries such as Colombia and Guatemala.

Guy Ryder, General Secretary of the ITUC noted that "the trade union document contains many proposals, which demonstrate the new trade union internationalism promoted by the ITUC. They reflect an active trade unionism, full of innovative and interesting ideas for these bi-regional agreements and for the regional and sub-regional integration processes. In the interests of political coherence, decent work must be at the centre of the discussions and of the conclusions of the official Summit."

The ITUC, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) have submitted the conclusions of this IV Trade Union Summit to the Foreign Affairs Minister of Peru and have asked that the Heads of State Summit receive a delegation from the Trade Union Summit.

Read the final declaration: http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Cumbre_sindical_Lima-final.pdf
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Cumbre_sindical_Lima-final.pdf>

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 155 countries and territories and has 311 national affiliates. Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org>

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