

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

ITUC OnLine

208/011208

Trade Unions Demand New Effort to Successfully Conclude Doha Financing for Development Conference

Doha, 1 December 2008: As negotiations reach an impasse at the International Conference on Financing for Development in Doha, Qatar, the ITUC has expressed its concern that crucial commitments to mobilise financial resources for development could be compromised.

"At the current stage, the trade union delegation is working hard to convince official delegations at all levels not to back down on core issues pertaining to Decent Work and to ensure that there is a strong follow-up mechanism under the auspices of the United Nations," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

Key questions, including, the impact of international trade on development, the future of the international financial system and the urgency of confronting climate change are provoking major debate between the G77 group, the US, the EU and Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Japan. There are three major issues on which disagreement persists: first, opposition was voiced by the US and to a certain extent by the EU to strong draft language on the way trade policies affect development.

Second, there is no consensus among governments on the way forward to review the international financial and monetary architecture and global economic structures. Third, a number of countries, such as the US and Russia, contend that the issue of financing climate change belongs to the UN's climate change (UNFCCC) process and should be excluded from the discussions.

"So far we have witnessed only very weak commitment to the process and to the Doha Outcome Document from government delegations. Doha could be a historic chance to pave the way for a profound reform of the institutions of global governance by giving greater voice to developing countries," Ryder stated.

"It is of the utmost importance that the world listens to the aspirations of the developing world, because they suffer the worst impact of the current crises: job losses, downward pressure on working conditions and deterioration of living standards," Ryder added.

Apart from actively lobbying government officials at this critical point, the ITUC delegation together with the other members of the Decent Work, Decent Life Campaign hosted a parallel side-event "Financing Decent Work – An Imperative for Sustainable Development" at the Conference. The event, which was attended by the President of the United Nations General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, Minister-Counselor Giulherme Patriota of the Permanent Representation of Brazil to the United Nations and numerous conference participants, emphasised that investing in decent work must be integral to the policy response to the multiple crises in the global economy, and at the heart of the Financing for Development process.

The President of the General Assembly gave the broad endorsement of the United Nations to the Decent Work /Decent Life Campaign by signing the Call to Action.

To contact the ITUC delegation in Doha, call the ITUC Representative to the United Nations, Gemma Adaba: +974 304 7605.

To Read The Daily Diary from Doha:

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?rubrique239>

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 155 countries and territories and has 311 national

affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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