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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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## Doha Ministerial Conference Falls Short of Taking Decisive Action on Crises

Doha, 3 December 2008: The Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development concluded on the 2nd of December 2008 with no more than the confirmation of the Monterrey FfD commitments taken in 2002.

In the beginning of the negotiations, the EU and the G77 agreed to step up and engage in tackling systemic issues such as the global financial architecture, trade and tax policies and proposed development financing for the outstanding commitments on decent work, gender equality and human rights, as well as on the emerging challenges such as climate change. However, a small group of countries around the US opposed any improved or new commitments on these issues, resulting in a compromised deal.

The Financing for Development Review Conference fell victim to the the last weeks of the outgoing Bush administration, which has openly challenged the international community in its reaffirmation of commitments, questioned the UN's central role in the multilateral system of governance, and watered down all proposed new commitments into non-binding proclamations of good will. The absence of other major players such as the top leadership of the IMF and the World Bank, as well as heads of state of many of the industrialized countries, reinforced the impression that there is a lack of willingness to work within the inclusive framework of the UN and involve the voices of all developing countries, including the poorest, as well as civil society.

Some major issues remain unresolved and will have to be taken up in the follow-up process that has to be designed by the UN in the first quarter of 2009, including:

- \* The need for a new financial architecture that allows the improvement and regulation of the international financial governance
- \* Improved mechanisms to ensure more effective tax policies, allowing domestic resources to be mobilized for development, including assertive action against tax evasion and tax havens

"Despite efforts by some countries to prevent the UN playing a major role in designing a new global economic governance system, multilateralism won the day and a decision to hold a conference at the highest level on the world financial and economic crisis and its impacts on development was taken, reaffirming the legitimacy of the UN," stated ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

"We are also heartened by the decision that a strong and effective follow-up process to ensure the implementation of the agreed Doha

Declaration will be put in place," he concluded.

The 30 trade unionists from all continents taking part in the ITUC delegation to the Doha FfD stressed the limitations of the commitments taken, but underlined nevertheless the growing attention for decent work as a fundamental element in development strategies.

The full ITUC statement can be downloaded here  
[http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Trade\\_Union\\_Statement\\_to\\_Doha\\_FfD\\_review\\_ConferenceV3-clean.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Trade_Union_Statement_to_Doha_FfD_review_ConferenceV3-clean.pdf) .

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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