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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Labour Movement Gains Official Recognition at UN Climate Change Conference

Brussels, 8 December 2008: In recognition of the important work on climate change conducted by the trade union movement, the UN body dealing with climate change (the UNFCCC) has granted the ITUC the select formal status of being an "official constituency" in the Climate Change process for the ITUC's contributions and its participation from now on.

"Trade unions believe climate change is not only an environmental issue, but also is about social rights and rights to development, and that is the contribution we bring to the UN process," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "Combating climate change will imply huge transformations in production, ones that are necessary in order to change our unsustainable, carbon-intensive societies to address climate change challenges but which require significant government intervention. It is how well this economic transformation is managed that will determine whether the new jobs created will be more numerous than those lost, whether it is socially just or traumatic, and whether it is broadly supported or encounters resistance from labour."

Trade Unions specifically call for a "Just transition framework" to be introduced into the negotiations. This means promoting the opportunities offered by the 'Green Economy' (the promotion of green & decent jobs and the greening of workplaces, based on sustainable industrial development and an equitable share of losses and gains) and the design and implementation of accompanying measures for all the productive sectors that will have to adapt to the constraints arising from a low-carbon economy.

"The UN must place workers and workplaces at the core of its strategy to tackle climate change," said Ryder. "Unions are calling for innovative multilateral solutions, without which the main victims of climate change will be the workers, in particular in developing countries."

The ITUC recognises the urgency of taking action and supports the 2020 and 2050 targets set in the IPCC conclusions on the need for a reduction of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of at least 25%-40% by 2020 below 1990 levels in order to attain a global reduction of 85% by 2050. The ITUC's groundbreaking policy statement to the UNFCCC conference in Poznan clearly affirmed its commitment towards reaching a socially fair and climate-engaged agreement by the end of 2009, and put forward concrete demands to ensure a fair transition. [Insert URL to Statement]

"The necessary transformations in production to meet these targets are of such magnitude that they cannot be effected without a basic consensus in society and involving workers," concluded Ryder. "Formal social dialogue with trade unions, employers' organisations, and other civil society actors needs to be integrated and ensured at international, national and workplace levels."

If you want to know more about the trade union position on the Green economy, read the full Trade Union statement for COP14, or interview a Trade Union Delegate, please contact Judith Carreras at jcarreras@sustainlabour.org, tel. +34 649179986.

The Trade Union delegation at COP14 is composed of more than 100 delegates from 40 countries.

For the full trade union statement for COP14 visit:

[http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/No_45 - TradeUnions_ClimateChange_COP14.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/No_45_-_TradeUnions_ClimateChange_COP14.pdf)

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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