

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Trade Unions Call for Accelerated Commitment to Climate Negotiations

Brussels, 15 December 2008 (ITUC Online): At the close of the annual UN climate change meeting in Poznan, Poland, trade unions have expressed their concern that negotiations towards a post 2012 framework are going too slowly.

"The economic meltdown should not divert us from the fight against climate change," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "It is vital that over the course of the next twelve months, governments commit themselves to strong action to achieve the emissions reductions recommended by the IPCC, at the same time as investing in 'Green Jobs' and providing the necessary financial and technological support to enable developing nations to meet the climate challenge."

Trade unions are arguing that the next agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has to include a just transition framework, such that governments and international organizations integrate employment concerns into their economic and social policy planning for dealing with climate change.

Addressing the closing plenary session on behalf of the ITUC, Bheki Ntshalinsthali of COSATU, South Africa, told UN delegates that "trade unions believe that we can repair and rebuild national economies on the basis of a green new deal, which will create wealth, jobs and protect the environment".

"The transition will not be easy," he added. "Change will be painful and the new economy we all want to build cannot leave people aside. Workers and their organizations have to participate in decision making. Social dialogue is a necessity for effectively tackling climate change and social development. It is a tool. Use it to build consensus."

The ITUC statement to COP14 is available at:

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> .

To see the speech of Bheki Ntshalinsthali, Deputy Secretary General of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU):

http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/COP_ClosingPlenary.pdf

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 311 affiliated national organisations from 155 countries. <http://www.ituc-csi.org>

<http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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