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ITUC General Council Adopts Action Plans on Global Crisis and Climate Change

Brussels, 19 December 2008 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC General Council annual meeting in Brussels this week adopted a far-reaching plan of trade union action to get governments to revitalise and restructure the global economy, based on regulation and decent work along with major institutional reform to change the way the world economic system is run. Along with fiscal stimulus measures and a new framework for effective financial regulation, the plan which is based on the global trade unions' "Washington Declaration <http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/0811t_gf_G20.pdf>", puts investment in green jobs at the heart of the new global economy.

"The world is now inches away from a deep and long global recession with tens of millions of jobs under threat in the new year. We are facing a massive rise in poverty and the prospect of wide-scale social disruption. Governments need to shut the door on the voodoo bankers and economists who led the charge to dismantle regulation, and take up their responsibility to govern. Decent work and the better living standards it brings are the best way to get the world back on track and keep it there", said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

While banks and businesses continue to seek bail-outs from public funds, ITUC member unions will be pressing their governments to put the Washington Declaration into effect. The ITUC and its Global Unions partners will be pushing the same agenda on the global institutions at a series of top-level meetings in the coming weeks and months. The Declaration sets out the economic priming and national and global regulations needed to avoid a long recession and ensure that the incompetence and unlimited greed which caused the crisis are a thing of the past. The world's major economic institutions need to work together in a new global governance that would include a structurally central role for the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the only tripartite global institution where workers' views are represented.

The General Council further adopted a flagship policy statement on "Equity, justice & solidarity in the fight against climate change" and committed the full strength of the world trade union movement to achieving an effective long-term global agreement to reduce carbon emissions, incorporating far-reaching just transition and green jobs commitments, when the world's environment ministers assemble again in Copenhagen at the end of 2009.

Resolutions on Pakistan<
>http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/4GC_E_21_c - Pakistan-2.pdf>
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/4GC_E_21_c - Pakistan-2.pdf> and South African investment company INVESTEC
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/4GC_E_21_b - FEDUSA_Campaign-2.pdf> were adopted, and the Council authorized a special statement on Zimbabwe <
>http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Zimbabwe_draft_resolution.pdf>
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Zimbabwe_draft_resolution.pdf>

The General Council also undertook an in-depth examination of the situation of migrant workers around the world, leading to an ITUC Action Programme to support the rights of migrant workers, and build further cooperation between trade unions in countries of origin and destination.

Four new member organisations, from Guatemala (UNSITRAGUA), Liechtenstein (LANV), Nicaragua (FNT) and Sri Lanka (SLNSS) were accepted into affiliation to the ITUC at the Council meeting.

Based on the success of this year's World Day for Decent Work on October 7, the Council decided to organise a World Day for Decent Work on the same day again in 2009. The 2008 Day involved action by over 200 ITUC affiliates in 130 countries. More than 600 individual events, including rallies, marches, workplace meetings, seminars, electronic and media activities took place, with close to one million workers taking part.

The Council also discussed the particular problems faced by young workers, noting that the economic crisis was worsening an already dire situation for many, especially those in precarious and low-paid jobs or facing unemployment. Acknowledging the innovative out-reach work of the ITUC Youth Committee and similar action by many affiliates, the Council gave the green light to the launching of a special campaign focusing on young workers and trade unions in 2009.

Other key points of the Council's agenda included the holding of the first ITUC World Women's Conference in Brussels in October 2009, and the preparations for the second ITUC World Congress in Vancouver in June 2010.

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

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

For more information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on:
+32 2 224 0204 or +32 476 621 018.

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