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Child Labour Worsening Due to Global Crisis

New ITUC Video Spot

Brussels, 12 June 2009 (ITUC OnLine): Millions of children, especially girls, risk falling out of education and into work as the impact of the world economic crisis deepens, the ITUC has warned today, the World Day Against Child Labour.

"With rising poverty and inequality, and funding for schools under pressure in developing and transition countries in particular, the economic crisis is likely to add even more children to the 200 million who are already at work instead of getting a proper education. This is a tragic scenario just ten years since the ILO adopted Convention 182 on eliminating the worst forms of child labour," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

The ITUC has launched a new video spot <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zZXVq7ellw> to highlight the problem and press governments to tackle the exploitation of children more effectively, both through funding quality education and enforcing labour law.

Tens of millions of adults are losing their jobs due to the crisis, putting family incomes under huge pressure and making it even more difficult for poorer families to cover the costs of education.

"The consequences of child labour, often devastating for the children concerned, are also felt in terms of economic and social development in the longer term. Countries which do not ensure universal education will not have the broad base of skills and knowledge required for solid economic foundations for the future," Ryder added.

The ITUC and its Global Unions partners have also pointed to major deficiencies in the global response to the crisis for the poorest countries. While the G20 governments agreed to make special funding available at their London Summit in April, not enough money is available to support the poorest countries in particular. On top of this the International Monetary Fund, which is the main vehicle chosen by the G20 to deliver the funding, is putting similar conditions on its lending as in the past, despite G20 pledges of reform. This means that public spending on education, as well as other key areas, risks being limited or even cut at a time when it is most needed.

To see the new ITUC video spot on child labour,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zZXVq7ellw>

To see the ITUC special web pages on the crisis,

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?rubrique262>

Other useful links:

<http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/show.php?id=1042&theme=childlabour&country=global>

<http://www.global-unions.org>

<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/lang--en/index.htm>

<http://www.globalmarch.org/>

<http://www.stopchildlabour.net/>

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 312 affiliated national organisations from 157 countries. <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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