

>>> "ITUC Press" <[press@ituc-csi.org](mailto:press@ituc-csi.org)> 10.07.2009 15:01 >>>

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

**ITUC OnLine**

118/100709

## ITUC Launches Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons

Brussels, 10 July 2009 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC is launching today an international campaign for nuclear disarmament, in the lead-up to the critically important United Nations Review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in May 2010. A focal point of the campaign is a petition addressed to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon calling for strong and clear conclusions to the MPT Conference, and signing of the treaty by all UN member states.

The campaign is being run in cooperation with the worldwide "Mayors for Peace" group, which covers more than 2,000 cities in over 130 countries.

"Peace and disarmament are founding principles of the ITUC, and while there are positive signs from Russia and the USA on reducing nuclear stockpiles, the international trade union movement is extremely concerned about the prospect of further nuclear proliferation, particularly in North Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. The only way to deal with this is through multilateral negotiations, and the 2010 NPT Review is tremendously important in that regard," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

There are currently almost 24,000 nuclear warheads in existence, with a destructive power equivalent to 400,000 times the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. Nuclear arms account for a significant portion of global arms expenditure, which reached an all-time high of US\$1.4 trillion in 2008, an increase of 45% over the preceding decade.

The ITUC is also calling for international momentum on other agreements to curb nuclear proliferation and the spread of other weapons of mass destruction, and for effective regulation of the global trade in conventional weapons including light arms, which are responsible for at least 500,000 deaths worldwide each year.

"Success in achieving major cuts in arms spending would free up resources for urgent economic and social spending needs, to help the global economy pull out of the deep worldwide recession which is costing tens of millions of jobs. Crucially, it would go a long way towards helping the international community meet the UN's Millennium Development Goals, which look less likely than ever to be achieved. Dealing with the root social and economic causes of conflict to avoid further wars would be far more feasible if the sufficient development aid funds were available," said Ryder.

The ITUC campaign also stresses the vital importance of ensuring that the transition from military to socially-useful expenditure be done in a way which supports and protects the livelihoods of those working in the

arms industry, through "just transition" measures along similar lines to the adjustments needed to tackle climate change.

Copies of the petition and other information resources can be found on the campaign website:

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/peace>

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

Website: [www.ituc-csi.org](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

You are currently subscribed to ituc-online as: [Rainer.Gries@fes.de](mailto:Rainer.Gries@fes.de).

To unsubscribe click here: <http://forum.ituc-csi.org/u?id=7167.456048afb7253926e1fb7486e699180&n=T&l=ituc-online&o=6183>

or send a blank email to [leave-6183-7167.456048afb7253926e1fb7486e699180@forum.ituc-csi.org](mailto:leave-6183-7167.456048afb7253926e1fb7486e699180@forum.ituc-csi.org)