

>>> "ITUC Press" <press@ituc-csi.org> 21.9.2009 12:19 >>>

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC OnLine

147/210909

Abolition of Nuclear Weapons at the Center of The International Day of Peace

Brussels, 21 September 2009 (ITUC OnLine): On the occasion of the International Day of Peace, the ITUC is highlighting the importance of real action for the abolition of nuclear weapons by the year 2020.

Sixty-four years after the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the danger of nuclear proliferation is acute, and growing.

"Nuclear weapons pose a threat to all of humankind and are morally unacceptable. There are almost 24,000 nuclear weapons in the world today. Together these arsenals have the destructive power to cause devastation equivalent to 400,000 Hiroshima bombs, where just one bomb killed more than 140,000 people," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

On 6 August, the ITUC launched a petition to "say no to nuclear weapons!", which will be delivered in May 2010 to UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon during the UN's Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in New York.

The (NPT) is a key global benchmark for achieving nuclear disarmament, and the ITUC is calling for the Review Conference to adopt strong and workable disarmament measures, while protecting the livelihoods of those who would be affected by the transition to peaceful production.

"The world needs to take urgent action to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, and to make the world free of them, as part of the overall drive for worldwide peace and the transfer of military spending to socially-useful ends. We are calling on people to show their support for this by signing the petition and joining the campaign for an end to nuclear weapons," said Ryder.

Global Union Federation UNI, which will hold its World Congress in Nagasaki in 2010, is highlighting the nuclear disarmament cause through a series of actions during this year and next (<http://www.uniglobalunion.org/Apps/iportal.nsf/pages/domainsearchEn>).

The petition can be found on the special web pages for the campaign on Peace and Abolition of Nuclear Weapons: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/peace>

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 157 countries and has 312 national affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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