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G20 Leaders Get the Message from World Trade Unions - Jobs at Top of Agenda

Brussels, 25 September (ITUC OnLine): Meetings of world trade union leaders with G20 host President Barack Obama and other heads of government in Pittsburgh on the eve of the Summit have helped push employment to the top of the agenda for action by the world's largest economies.

"The worst of the jobs crisis is yet to come, and we've put the case to the G20 leaders that the real measure of success for this Summit is how governments are going to maintain and create decent jobs as their urgent and top priority. We've given them this message and expressed our other big concerns - financial regulation, reform of the global financial institutions, a global tax on financial transactions and an effective G20 Charter for Sustainable Growth that delivers social justice, workers' rights and corporate governance," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

The 50-strong international trade union delegation in Pittsburgh also met the heads of government of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Japan, Spain and the UK, and the heads of the ILO, IMF, OECD, WTO and the European Union in the 24 hours leading up to the start of the Summit, and the French trade unions had a special meeting with President Sarkozy the week before the Pittsburgh gathering. The meetings follow intense pressure at the national level in recent weeks, carrying on from the unions' work at the Washington and London G20 summits.

"The global economy is far too fragile for G20 governments to withdraw stimulus; we need more action to support global demand and jobs - not less. They must also ensure more balanced growth for the future with more just income distribution not a return to the policies of deregulation that got us into this mess in the first place," said John Evans, general secretary of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD.

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

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