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Asem-8: Progress On Labour Priorities But Over-Emphasis On Deficit Reduction

Brussels, 6 October 2010 (ITUC OnLine): Trade unions have welcomed the section on “Social Cohesion” in the Chair’s statement to conclude the ASEM-8 Summit of 46 Asian and European countries, held in Brussels on 4-5 October.

“We welcome the Leaders’ support for the Global Jobs Pact, ILO fundamental principles and rights at work, the need for equitable distribution of income, and dialogue between social partners,” said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

Reacting to the ASEM Leaders’ declaration on economic governance, ETUC General Secretary John Monks stated, “We are extremely concerned that ASEM Leaders failed to take on board the need for continued fiscal stimulus and jobs creation when they discussed the global economic crisis.”

The Leaders’ Statement supports further actions on social protection. “The Leaders’ interest in developing a global social protection floor is significant,” Burrow concluded. “We call on ASEM Labour Ministers to go further when they meet at Leiden in the Netherlands in December 2010, and develop practical strategies to achieve universal social protection.”

Trade unions had called for strong references to decent work and social protection in their Statement to the Summit:

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/trade-union-statement-to-the-asem.html>

as had civil society organisations meeting in the Asia Europe People’s Forum:

<http://www.aepf.info/news/articles/122-recommendations-to-asem8-from-the-asia-europe-peoples-forum-.html>

The final statements of the ASEM-8 Summit can be found at:

<http://www.asem8.be/sites/default/files/ASEM%20Chair%27s%20Statement.pdf>

<http://www.asem8.be/sites/default/files/ASEM%20Brussels%20Declaration%20on%20More%20Effective%20Global%20Economic%20Governance.pdf>

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