

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

ITUC Online

176/221110

What Do We Want in Cancun? Just Transition NOW!

Brussels, 22 November 2010 (ITUC OnLine): In less than a week, negotiations around climate change will recommence, aiming at reviving the shaky flame left by the disappointing meeting in Copenhagen last year.

“Climate change remains an overriding priority for all our futures; we cannot afford to let pessimism prevail”, said Sharan Burrow, the General Secretary of the ITUC. “While the conditions for a binding climate agreement still seem far from being met, governments in Cancun have the opportunity to establish the basis for a new consensus on vital issues such as agreeing on common rules for measuring emissions and identifying innovative sources of long term finance such as a financial transactions tax”.

On the labour front, this 16th Conference of the Parties (COP 16) is a unique opportunity to move social justice proposals forward. More than two hundred trade unionists from developed and developing countries will be taking part in COP16 and actively promoting an ambitious and binding agreement which guarantees a Just Transition for workers. Trade unions have [concrete and practical propositions](#) and will voice their concerns for urgent government action.

“The outcome of Cancun needs to guarantee the protection of the most vulnerable communities and workers of the world. All countries have to act, but this must start with ambitious emission reduction and financing commitments from the developed world” commented Burrow. “However, that is not enough. A decision confirming that workers and their unions will be a full part of the transformation of our societies should already be made in Cancun, giving trade unions a clear mandate to work for the implementation of Just Transition at the national level”. Just Transition is mentioned in the Cancun negotiating text but it needs to be mainstreamed and governments must start putting it into practice.

In Cancun, trade unions will present initiatives aimed at “greening the economy”, at the World of Work pavilion (2nd and 7th December).

“There is no time to be lost. Tackling climate change can have widespread social benefits if it is done now, by creating decent jobs and reinvigorating industries while reducing their carbon footprints”, concluded Burrow.

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 301 national affiliates. See the website@ <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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