

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Press advisory: Trade unions tell ASEM Labour Ministers to act on social protection and Green Jobs

(Brussels, 10 December 2010): On Sunday 12 December, trade unions from Asia and Europe will meet with Labour Ministers and employers' representatives on the eve of the 3rd ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference in Leiden, the Netherlands, on 13 and 14 December. The social partners' consultations take place at a crucial moment as Ministers prepare to discuss the recovery from the jobs crisis and the promotion of social protection.

Hosted by the Dutch Trade Union centres FNV and CNV, the unions will be calling on the Ministers to act on social protection and Green Jobs by proposing two ASEM projects, on "Towards Global Social Protection for All in Asia and Europe", and on "Skills for Green Jobs and Productivity in a Low-Carbon Economy".

Unions will be maintaining their long-standing demand for the establishment of an ASEM Labour Forum. The General Secretary of ITUC, Sharan Burrow, said that "an Asia Europe Labour Forum, equivalent to the ASEM Business Forum, not only would make dialogue more inclusive but would also enable trade unions to contribute their experience on issues of employment and social affairs and increase ownership of ASEM's work." Trade unions have been involved in the ASEM process since its very beginning in 1996.

The unions will propose advancing the ILO Global Jobs Pact and urge the developed ASEM partners to provide the resources to enable the implementation of Decent Work National Plans including respect for workers' rights as well as social protection and productivity enhancement. Moreover, the unions will call on the Labour Ministers to put pressure on the Burmese regime in order to achieve better results in advancing democracy in Burma, including through an ILO Commission of Inquiry into abuses of fundamental workers' rights.

Trade union leaders from the Netherlands, France, Germany, Ireland, Sweden, Japan, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia and Pakistan will be taking part.

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

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