

Von: "ITUC Press" press@ituc-csi.org

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PROGRESS ON CLIMATE AND JUST TRANSITION IN CANCUN, BUT UNIONS DEMAND GREATER GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WAY TO DURBAN

Brussels/Cancun, 12 December 2010 (ITUC OnLine): Trade unions have welcomed the final agreement reached at the UN climate conference in Cancun, one that includes trade union demands for a just transition, while calling on all governments - particularly the most developed - to raise their sights by the time of the next meeting in Durban, South Africa in one year's time.

"In particular, we want developed countries to commit to ambitious emission reductions under a legally binding framework. Climate finance needs to respond to the needs of the poorest of the world," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. "Millions of workers and their families face destruction of their lands and livelihoods from extreme weather events and some 220 million are unemployed and desperate for a secure, decent and green job."

Trade unions particularly welcome the references in the text to Just Transition which creates decent work and good quality jobs, a crucial concept for building workers' support for climate action.

"At the same time, governments must raise the level of ambition," concluded Sharan Burrow. "They must return to the negotiating table as soon as possible, and rectify the imbalances and omissions following Cancun. Durban must be the destination for serious climate action with a fair ambitious and binding agreement, and a commitment to just transition must sit at the heart of this."

For more information contact the ITUC Press Department in +32 2 24 0210 or +32 476 621 018.

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