

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

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Young Working Women from Around the World to Meet in Amsterdam

"Decisions for Life" Conference

Brussels, 9 May 2011 (ITUC OnLine): Over 100 young women from 23 countries are gathering today in Amsterdam to plan the next stage of an international campaign aimed at reaching out to young women workers, and making sure international decision makers hear about the issues that affect young women at work.

Brought together by the international trade union movement, the young women are meeting in Amsterdam from 9 May to 11 May.

The "Decisions for Life campaign" has been run in 14 countries, and has reached out to hundreds of thousands of young women through unions across the world.

"The "Decisions for Life" campaign is already making a difference. Many thousands of young women are joining their union through this campaign because they see that being in a union improves your chances of having a better income, getting better working conditions and achieving work-life balance," the general secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, Sharan Burrow, said today.

"In Indonesia, 15,000 young women have joined as new members to the unions," Ms. Burrow said.

The "Decisions for Life" campaign is both about helping young women overcome their disadvantages, as well as making change within unions across the world.

Young women workers around the world face numerous issues, including:

- * Insecure jobs
- * Equal pay
- * Access to maternity protection
- * Sexual harassment
- * Lack of a voice in union structures

Ms. Burrow said that unions also recognise that young people as a group are not homogenous.

"Some groups, especially young women workers, are more vulnerable and face particular disadvantages in entering and remaining in the labour market," explained Ms. Burrow.

The ITUC points out that women's unemployment rates before the crisis were 13.2% compared to 12.9 % for men, but after the crisis women have been pushed deeper into precarious work with millions of women, not included in formal statistics, struggling in the informal sector.

"We now face the highest figure ever with 205 millions of workers all over the world looking for a job," said Sharan Burrow. "The estimates say that some additional 45 million young

people per year are going to be added to the unemployment statistics. The world simply has to see more and better jobs if we are going to tackle these huge problems," she added.

For more information on Decision for Life: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/decisions-for-life.html>
You can follow the conference via the following media:

Twitter - <http://twitter.com/#!/Decisions4life>

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=133311066703863>

Mobile - <http://m.dfl.wageindicator.org>

The conference takes place in De Burcht, Amsterdam. Women from all participating countries are available for interviews. Photos from the conference can also be provided.

Contact:

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The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates. Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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