

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

Brussels 9 September 2011 (ITUC OnLine): ITUC Welcomes President Obama's Jobs Speech

**"I reject the idea that we have to strip away collective bargaining rights to compete in a global economy. We shouldn't be in a race to the bottom, where we try to offer the cheapest labor and the worst pollution standards": President Obama, 8 September 2011**

"US President Barack Obama's jobs speech, broadcast to a world dominated by financial crisis, sends a message to the G20 countries that job growth is the way to support people and beat the crisis," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. "The ITUC welcomes the plan to put America back to work with a US\$447 billion spending package and believes other countries should follow suit.

The best way to have a strong economy is to keep people in jobs. The best way to fight a financial crisis is to keep people working.

It's good for families and it's good for the economy.

But jobs need to be decent jobs, secure jobs, with the rights and protections that workers and their unions have fought for and won over the last 100 years.

And President Obama re-affirmed his commitment to collective bargaining rights.

The IMF, the World Bank and most recently the OECD have all sent stark warnings to finance ministers and leaders that austerity measures, and the drive to cut national deficits, risk sinking economic recovery.

Now President Obama has set out his plan for jobs growth for all Americans and the world to see."

1.53 billion people around the world were in "vulnerable employment" in 2009, according to the ILO. Globally 205 million people are unemployed, an official estimate which the ITUC believes understates the true figure by tens of millions. Young people have been hardest hit by the jobs crisis - Youth unemployment in OECD countries in 2011 was 19.7% up from 14.2% in 2007, and the situation in many developing countries is much worse.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates.

<http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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