

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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G20 Labour Ministers Need to Push for Job Creation

110 million jobs needed to overcome emergency

G20 Labour Ministers to spearhead co-ordinated action with Finance Ministers and Leaders

Protection of workers' rights and a Social Protection Floor critical elements of recovery

Brussels, 21 September 2011 (ITUC OnLine): A full scale jobs emergency confronts the G20 with 110 million jobs needed by 2015 just to return to the pre-crisis employment rate.

Fiscal consolidation policies have set back growth and recovery, forcing millions of people into poverty and unemployment.

TUAC General Secretary John Evans said that plans to encourage employment by G20 Labour and Employment Ministers will fail unless there is a co-ordinated approach with Finance Ministers and G20 Leaders.

"After prematurely moving away from supporting growth to deficit reduction, G20 governments must now muster the same level of collective political will used to bail out the banks. They need to launch a co-ordinated recovery effort to secure jobs for teachers, nurses, construction workers and other crucial sectors of the economy. Given the scale of the jobs emergency, Labour Ministers must raise their level of ambition in the G20," said Evans.

ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow said tackling income inequality is fundamental to recovery, and called on the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers to put in place policies to strengthen collective bargaining.

"Big business is using the economic crisis as a smokescreen to push down wages. Collective bargaining rights are the most effective antidote to greed and will foster growth. Workers know first-hand why it's important to have a decent wage, and a strong and vibrant business," said Burrow. The financial crisis pushed over 80 million more people into extreme poverty, and many are left without a safety net. G20 Labour and Employment Ministers have a moral and economic responsibility to strengthen social protection systems in all G20 countries.

"A Social Protection Floor offers a life line for half the world's workforce that is trapped in informal work activities, including the majority of women workers. Countries with well-developed social protection systems weather economic crises much better than those without, and help maintain the confidence of workers and their employers in a climate of uncertainty," explained Burrow.

Labour and Employment Ministers are meeting for the last time before the Finance Ministers in October and the Leaders meeting in November which will conclude France's Presidency of the G20 for 2011.

The ITUC, TUAC and Global Unions are also calling on the G20 Employment and Labour Ministers to:

- Insist that their governments develop alternative sources of finance to provide funding for employment policies including making domestic taxation more progressive, combating tax evasion and tax havens, introducing a Financial Transactions Tax (FTT) and, for the Eurozone, "Eurobonds";

- Set up investment in infrastructure and “green” jobs, skills development and other active labour market policies;
- Launch a G20 “Youth Pact” guaranteeing young people quality employment or education and training;
- Establish a G20 Working Group on Employment and Social Protection.

Read the ITUC, TUAC and Global Unions Statement to the G20 Employment and Labour Ministers’ Meeting: http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/No_30_Global_Unions_Statement-2.pdf

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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