

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

### ITUC OnLine

#### Development community embraces Decent Work at Busan Conference

Brussels, 1 December (ITUC OnLine): Decent Work has been included in the international development effectiveness agenda for the first time, following strong representations from the international trade union movement at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Korea this week. Concerns remain, however, about the risks arising from the way the conclusions of the Forum deal with the role of the private sector in development cooperation.

In the “Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation”, presented today at the Forum, donor- and partner-country governments, local authorities, multilateral institutions, civil society and other public and private actors have committed to a set of principles to make aid and development cooperation work better.

“It’s the first time decent work and trade unions are directly referred to in a document on development cooperation of this importance” said Kjeld Jakobsen, from the ITUC Regional Organisation for the Americas, TUCA, who took part in the trade union delegation. “It’s also the first time civil society organizations (CSOs) were invited to the negotiations as an equal partner”.

The unions, together with other CSOs united in the BetterAid platform, took an active part in drafting the outcome document, promoting a rights-based approach built on the hands-on experience of over a 1,000 organizations from around the world.

While the progress made on a range of issues since the prior agreements (the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action) is welcome, the way in which the role of private sector has been defined in the “Busan Partnership” remains far from satisfactory. The main shortcomings concern the absence of any reference to ILO standards and the role of social partners - both of which are crucial in development policy and practice.

“By embracing the private sector as an equal partner in development, the Busan Partnership risks disempowering the state, which is and should always be in charge of ensuring inclusive development and social protection for all,” says Frederique Lellouche from CFDT, France.

“Our work doesn’t end here. Busan sets a good base, but there is still a long way to go before labour rights and decent work are effectively implemented,” said ITUC Deputy General Secretary Wellington Chibebe, who addressed a Forum session on rights-based approaches. “In the coming months the ITUC will follow up on the Busan process, with a particular focus on the issue of the private sector’s role in development.”

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 308 national affiliates.

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