

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC OnLine

Durban Outcome: No Guarantees for the Climate as Governments Again Delay

Brussels, 14 December 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The international trade union movement expressed its disappointment as climate negotiators in Durban had agreed a platform to continue negotiations, but without any guarantees that will make the cuts to emissions demanded by science to stop a climate disaster.

Trade Unions in Durban demanded the extension of the Kyoto Agreement, a globally negotiated legally binding agreement and a plan to operationalise and fill the Green Climate Fund.

"The Kyoto Protocol, a critical piece in the climate agreement, survived the talks but without key countries, without commitments on emission reductions and with major loopholes. A Green Climate fund was agreed, but without commitments to fill the fund. And a new negotiating round was launched aimed at being implemented in 2020," said Sharan Burrow.

Scientists, environmental groups have warned the delay to 2020 puts the planet, and people at great risk of irreversible damage from rising temperatures.

"Governments must not abandon the principals of equity, social justice and historical responsibilities, as they start the new round of negotiations.

"This delay must not distract from the immediate action governments need to take to invest in a low-carbon economy and create green jobs and a Just Transition," said Sharan Burrow.

"Unions will not wait until 2020 for action to reduce emissions and reshape economies. In Rio in 2012 and beyond, workers will call for a renewed, more ambitious mandates from our governments, for green and greener jobs, and for social justice to prevail over the current economic order, that once again won in Durban.

"One trillion dollars of investment is now being directed towards the green economy, but too many nations are left out. Instead of waiting for an agreement to be negotiated and implemented in 2020, nations need to act now to deliver green jobs for the future," said Sharan Burrow.

The international trade union movement will be taking the call for climate action to the G20 Summit in Mexico and the Rio+20 Earth Summit next June as well as mobilising workers in each country.

"We have been vocal in calling for a Just Transition where workers are involved and shape the social and economic transformation to tackle climate change. Now our voice will only get louder as the urgency for government action becomes greater," said Sharan Burrow.

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

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