

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

International Jobs Deficit Recognized at the G20, but the Jury is Out on Action

Brussels, 20 June 2012 (ITUC OnLine): International unions said the shift in language in the G20 Los Cabos Declaration from austerity to jobs is the right direction, but unless there is coordinated action from G20 leaders, words will not be translated into the investment necessary to get people back to work.

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary ITUC, said working families without hope will want to see genuine coordinated action which delivers jobs and secure incomes.

“There is a shift from talk of austerity to jobs, but is it enough when the global economy is on the brink?” said Burrow. “Leaders are recognizing that austerity has deepened the social crisis, but there is still an isolationist tendency and consequently government polices are being caught in the web of financial markets.”

At a historic joint meeting today, both labour and business leaders told G20 governments we need to see investment in infrastructure especially enabling green investment to create jobs and inclusion of our young people by dramatically scaling up apprenticeships.

“In the next G20 in Russia we want to see effective action to shrink the informal economy, which is withering decent work and economic sustainability.

Four years into the global financial crisis we are in a worse situation as regards employment and wages, than we were at the beginning at the crisis,” said Sharan Burrow.

Global unemployment is climbing to 210 million, with many more people in insecure work. 71% of people questioned in an ITUC global poll do not think laws protect their job security.

“An overwhelming 89% say they have lost income or it has stayed the same. This is killing economic demand and jobs,” said Sharan Burrow.

“The difference of opinion is still there, with governments divided between austerity and growth. But we know that debt melts away when you have growth,” said John Evans, General Secretary TUAC.

“Unions (L20) and business (B20) have been working together at the G20 – finding common ground, to invest in jobs and training, and we are looking to G20 leaders to do the same following this meeting,” said John Evans.

Business and Labour reached an agreement to scale up infrastructure investment, quality apprenticeships to provide jobs for youth and work to reduce informality in the labour force.

“Jobs are still at the heart of recovery, we must not be fatalistic about the jobs crisis, it can be fixed by restoring confidence through investments including in the green economy and expanding job programmes and quality apprenticeships,” said John Evans.

The L20 has insisted that under the Russian Presidency of the G20, Labour Ministers must meet prior to the leaders, and the G20 Employment task force must continue its work to prepare this.

See the L20 Letter: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/b20-l20-los-cabos-mexico.html>

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

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