

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

### Pope Francis' Link of Climate Action with Social Justice Is Key to Progress

Brussels, 18 June 2015 (ITUC OnLine): The unprecedented call for action from Pope Francis in encyclical "Laudato Si" makes explicit the terrible consequences that climate change and environmental degradation is already having on the poorest and most vulnerable.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC general secretary, said, "Pope Francis' words underline the fact that unless climate action is taken, our objectives of social progress and decent work for all will remain a dream. Human rights and social justice are threatened by the dramatic degradation of our environment, and his powerful message reinforces the need for a just transition to a low-carbon, environmentally sustainable future. The imperative for transforming our economic system so that pollution is avoided and workers and their families can access decent jobs and livelihoods is one we share."

The encyclical has received the support of other faith and environmental leaders for what they consider is an urgent and timely call for politicians, communities and people of all generations to act on climate change and social injustice.

"Pope Francis emphasises what the labour movement knows from experience: 'that in the absence of pressure from citizens, political authorities will always be reluctant to intervene' ", said Burrow.

This call for ambition and mobilisation takes particular importance in the lead-up to the climate negotiations in Paris in December 2015. To date, the ITUC is deeply concerned that the road to Paris is yet to show how the summit will deliver an agreement which will protect citizens from the catastrophic impacts of climate change and put the world on the path to decent and green job creation, healthy environments and prosperity for all.

"It is now time for environmental groups, social movements, unions and the faith community to come together in the fight against climate change, each one with its values and potential but with a common commitment to support a deep and just transformation of our economies and societies for the sake of all people and the planet which we inhabit," said Burrow.

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 162 countries and territories and has 328 national affiliates.

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