

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

Trade Union Roadmap for Nepal Reconstruction Backed by Government

Brussels, 4 September 2015 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has welcomed the Nepal government's support for a trade union Roadmap <http://www.ituc-csi.org/nepal-forum-ii-concept-note> for reconstruction and development, in the wake of the devastating April 25 earthquake which cost nearly 9,000 lives and left some 22,000 people injured. The roadmap, endorsed today by Nepal Labour Minister Tek Bahadur Gurung, underlines the crucial importance of job creation, social dialogue and workers' rights in ensuring efficient and sustainable reconstruction and rebuilding the national economy.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said "Nepal faces massive challenges in rebuilding homes, infrastructure and the economy. Creating decent jobs with protection for workers' rights will provide a sound basis for the reconstruction effort, and help avoid the exploitation of workers which has been a factor in some previous post-disaster reconstruction efforts elsewhere. We welcome the government's commitment to work with the country's trade unions to bring this about."

Along with the terrible human cost of the earthquake and aftershocks, Nepal's economy has been hit extremely hard. Exports currently total only around 11% of imports, with the tourist sector hit especially hard. The Roadmap, drawn up jointly by the Nepalese trade union centres, addresses the immediate crisis in housing, infrastructure and related areas, and also seeks to put the economy on a sound footing for future development. Creation of decent jobs at home is seen as critical in reducing the country's dependence on remittances from workers migrating, often into extremely exploitative and low-paid work, in other countries.

To read more about the union response to the disaster: <http://www.equaltimes.org/on-may-day-we-will-be-mourning#.VemZlpfD-DA>

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