

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

Marrakech Climate Conference: Real Progress on economic diversification, transformation and just transition, but more ambition and more finance needed

Brussels, 18 November 2016 (ITUC OnLine): Unions around the world are pleased to see governments standing together in their resolve to implement the Paris climate agreement, with the impending threat of a US withdrawal from the agreement under a Trump Presidency. The unions have welcomed governments' commitment to ensure economic diversification, transformation and just transition, including through the establishment of a 'technical expert group'.

“We also welcome their commitment to urgent action. That sense of urgency needs to translate into new, concrete and ambitious commitments to cut emissions and increase climate finance before 2020. Our combined efforts now will determine our chances of success in saving the planet,” said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow from Marrakech.

Unions are calling for governments to now ensure that Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC's) are turned into transparent plans with for human rights and just transition measures at the centre. Consultation with trade unions, business and communities must be part of the process. Just transition measures - including employment plans as a part of carbon reduction emissions plans - are necessary to deliver a transition that is fast enough, deep enough and fair.

“We will not accept workers or communities being stranded,” said Burrow. “Short- and long-term financing commitments pledged by governments so far are not sufficient. Economies must be supported with adaptation support and a climate fund that affords all countries a real choice for sustainable development, economic diversification and a just transition. Job creation programs, investments in social and physical infrastructure, renewable energy and cleaner industrial and construction processes must all be part of the mix. These measures, with skills retraining and redeployment support, underpin real economic diversification as the foundation for a new economy and are essential to offer hope to people. People's fears that the transition required to reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions will leave them behind must be addressed.”

The unions have welcomed the following commitments made by Governments:

“The transition in our economies required to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement provides a substantial positive opportunity for increased prosperity and sustainable development.

The Marrakech Conference marks an important inflection point in our commitment to bring together the whole international community to tackle one of the greatest challenges of our time.

As we now turn towards implementation and action, we reiterate our resolve to inspire solidarity, hope and opportunity for current and future generations.”

The government has already decreed the KCTU's planned strike to be illegal. The ITUC represents 180 million workers in 162 countries and territories and has 333 national affiliates.

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