

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION
ITUC OnLine

Davos: Global Alarm Bells Call for Emergency Response

Brussels, 16 January 2017 (ITUC OnLine): World trade union leaders at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos are calling for an emergency response to worsening inequality and economic insecurity. Pointing to the rise in populism and xenophobia, the labour leaders are demanding that governments act to hold corporations responsible for their global supply chains, adopt policies and regulations to ensure the benefits of digitalisation flow to workers and their families, crack down on company tax avoidance and put in place just transition measures in the fight against climate change. The unions are also highlighting the threat to democracy and livelihoods from cyber-attacks, and calling for a humane and rights-based approach to the refugee crisis.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said: "The WEF Global Risks Report, which puts economic inequality at the heart of many of the problems people and communities face, is not so much risk as reality today. Populist politicians are harvesting public discontent, and stoking xenophobia to capture political office. Their 'solutions' are empty, and will only worsen the lives of vast numbers of people, including their own supporters. Political leaders need to turn vague warnings about corporate globalisation into urgent action. It's time to change the rules of the global economy."

The union leaders are calling specifically for:

A global pay rise to stem the flow of wealth to the 1%

Investment in infrastructure and the care economy

An end to sham short-term and "zero-hours" employment contracts

Regulation of the digital economy to promote jobs, rights and formal business models

An end to tax fraud

The right to disclosure for workers to know where their pension money is invested

Just transition measures for industrial transformation to combat climate change

Safe haven, resettlement and the right to work for refugees, and courage from politicians to combat xenophobia and hate speech.

To read the Labour Leaders' message at Davos:
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/labour-leaders-in-davos-2017>

The ITUC represents 181 million workers in 163 countries and territories and has 340 national affiliates.

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