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International Metalworkers' Federation

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METALWORLD



THE STRUGGLE FOR PERMANENT WORK IN THAILAND

IMF NEWS
GREENING AMERICA
WITH GOOD JOBS

SPOTLIGHT
TAKING ACTION:
THE NEXT FOUR YEARS



www.imfmetal.org



THE GS'S CORNER

METALWORKERS' WORLD NEVER SLEEPS

Jyrki Raina / IMF General Secretary
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When the sun rises in Vancouver, workers start the afternoon shift in Johannesburg, and supper is being prepared in Jakarta. The metalworkers' world from Canada to South Africa to Indonesia never sleeps – nor does IMF's global solidarity machine.

After our Congress in May I have been working to restructure IMF's operations to ensure that we can effectively put into practice our new Action Programme 2009-2013 (see pages 18-23 in this issue of MetalWorld for highlights). IMF affiliates will be consulted in the regions on concrete activity and project plans for next year.

But things happen all the time in different parts of the world, requiring rapid action. At Kawasaki Motors in Thailand, a quick intervention by the IMF and its Japanese affiliate led to the reinstatement of

900 striking workers and union leaders. Massive global solidarity helped secure an agreement at Ssangyong in Korea, but union leaders are still arrested and will be prosecuted.

Four months of struggle and intense negotiations were needed to reach a settlement at Toshiba in Indonesia. Nobody can be happy about a result where 15 union leaders lost their jobs, even though with adequate compensation. But the FSPMI union managed to safeguard jobs for 700 locked-out workers and a future for the local union organisation and their collective agreement.

In Russia, IMF and IG Metall President Berthold Huber drew the attention of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to numerous attacks and threats against trade union leaders in July. These crimes have to be investigated and punished.

I joined a delegation of parliamentary and union leaders from 13 countries on a solidarity delegation to Mexico. We told political decision-makers to stop the persecution of the mine and metalworkers' union Los Mineros, whose brave collective bargaining and strike action has irritated politicians and major companies.

The situation remains difficult in this big country because of deeply rooted corruption.

And solidarity is being built in support of 5,000 members of United Steelworkers who are on strike at Vale Inco in Canada, to resist cuts on their benefits and pensions, as the company is attempting to misuse the global crisis.

More about these and other struggles you will find in this magazine and on our revamped web site www.imfmetal.org.

The IMF will be investing in new, innovative campaigning methods. But one thing will not change: in times of trouble, we have to join our forces. When you get a solidarity call, write a protest letter, donate to our strike fund, go out and take action!

I encourage you all to participate in activities during the global week of action as part of our campaign against precarious work in October. We need to restrict temporary and contract work to a minimum and to secure equal pay, social protection and union rights for precarious workers. We need more permanent, good, unionized jobs!

METAL WORLD

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THE STRUGGLE FOR PERMANENT WORK IN THAILAND

With a rich history of struggling to improve the lives of working people, the Thai labour movement is campaigning to move temporary workers to permanent jobs.

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TAKING ACTION: THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

Organizing, collective bargaining, trade union rights, union networks and sustainable development are key areas of work as decided by the IMF Congress in May 2009.

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LALE BALTA

Sinter Metal striker Lale Balta hopes their eventual victory will inspire workers throughout Turkey to stand up and defend their right to join a union.



International Metalworkers' Federation

The International Metalworkers' Federation represents the collective interests of 25 million metalworkers from more than 200 unions in 100 countries.

The IMF represents blue- and white-collar workers in industries such as steel, non-ferrous metals and ore mining, mechanical engineering, shipbuilding, automobile, aerospace, electrical and electronics.

The IMF aims to improve metalworkers' wages, working and living conditions and to ensure that metalworkers' rights are respected.

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PRECARIOUS WORK

Put permanent jobs first!

GLOBAL Across the world IMF affiliates are participating in the global week of action against precarious work from October 3 to 10 and the World Day for Decent Work on October 7.

The impact of the global financial crisis on precarious workers is the theme of IMF's campaign action this year. Affiliates are taking the fight to governments, calling on them to ensure equal rights for precarious workers and to strengthen legislation to prevent employers from using precarious employment in place of permanent and direct employment.

This October, IMF and its affiliates around the world are calling on governments to:

- Restrict temporary and contract work to cases of genuine need,
- Guarantee equal pay for precarious workers and their right to join a union, and
- Require long-term temporary jobs to be converted to permanent jobs.

To support these and other efforts elsewhere in the world, the IMF released a new poster and leaflet, in conjunction with the International Trade Union Confederation, Global Union Federations and the European Metalworkers' Federation available on the IMF website at:

[www.imfmetal.org/
precariouswork](http://www.imfmetal.org/precariouswork)



"Some people
have disappeared,
others have
been killed
and wounded..."

**Napoleón Vallecillo, president of the Miners'
and Metalworkers' Federation of Honduras** / page 7



45,000 people participated in the action "Power for the majority of the people" organized by IG Metall on September 5 in Frankfurt. The action was taken as part of the IG Metall campaign: "Gemeinsam für ein gutes Leben" (Together for a good life). The campaign is calling for policies that reflect the concerns of the majority of people, the most important of which is job security, according to a survey carried out by IG Metall to find out what people expect from a 'good life'.

Photo: Andy Michaelis, EMF

IG Metall demands a return to secure jobs

GERMANY In August, IG Metall called on political leaders to ensure that priority is given to employment in secure, regular employment as the economy recovers from the financial crisis and that use of agency labour is limited and based on equal pay for equal work.

The union's demands were also backed up by the results of a study, "Changes in the use of agency labour", which found that enterprises are increasingly using agency labour in order to pass on business risks to workers and as a potential means of threatening the job security of permanent staff.

IG Metall vice president Detlef Wetzel warned it is likely that the use of agency labour will increase even further in the next upswing of the economy.

"It is high time to create better conditions for agency workers," said Wetzel. "We are demanding that use of agency labour be limited and the best way to ensure this is on the principle of equal pay for equal work," said Wetzel.

Metalworkers in Asia fight for job security

ASIA & PACIFIC Implementation of the IMF Action Programme for 2009-2013 was one of the key topics discussed at the 2nd Asian Metalworkers' Liaison Conference, which took place in Bangkok in June.

Unions from the region agreed that ensuring job security and reducing precarious employment both during and after the financial crisis is the first priority for metalworkers in the Asia-Pacific region. The conference discussed specific actions that unions are planning

as part of IMF's ongoing campaign against precarious employment. Organizing and building strong unified union structures were also identified as priority areas of work.

Hosted by IMF-JC, trade union representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand participated in the meeting, along with representatives from the IMF.

SOLIDARITY

Dispute at Toshiba Indonesia resolved

INDONESIA After four months of intense struggle, followed by a return to the bargaining table, settlement was reached at Toshiba CPI on August 22 with the reinstatement of 697 workers, but not the 15 local union leaders.

Toshiba CPI management locked out and dismissed the workers, members of IMF Indonesian affiliate the Federasi Serikat Metal Indonesia (FSPMI), after they went on strike on April 16

in support of a dispute during collective bargaining.

After initial attempts by the IMF and its affiliates to engage the management of the parent company failed, a breakthrough was achieved when a Japanese trade union delegation arrived in Jakarta on July 23 and persuaded the management to reconvene negotiations.

The agreement to resolve the dispute included the unconditional return of all 697 workers, the resignation and adequate compensation of all 15 local union leaders and an election of a new local union committee tasked with reconvening collective bargaining.

"This TNC does not respect local laws and rules and, to add insult to injury, the Labour Court is corrupt. What choice do we have given this scenario but to accept a compromised settlement?" lamented FSPMI president Said Iqbal.

During the dispute, IMF affiliates contributed to a strike fund set up by the IMF, which was used to support the striking workers. At its Congress in May, the IMF passed a resolution in full support of FSPMI and Toshiba workers, condemning the company for its total disregard of workers' rights.



Toshiba management locked out and dismissed 697 workers, including 15 local union leaders, after the workers, members of FSPMI, went on strike on April 16 in support of a dispute during collective bargaining.

Photo: IMF



Police forces and buses prevented KMWU members from delivering any food, water or medicine to the people on strike at Ssangyong Motor. KMWU held many of these rallies and marches in the urgent hope of delivering at least drinking water to the sit-in strikers as the strike took place during a heat wave.

Photo: Hyewon Chong/KMWU

Ssangyong Motor strikers jailed

KOREA After weeks of intense and often brutal struggle led by 700 autoworkers at Ssangyong Motor Plant in Korea, a tentative agreement was reached in early August between the IMF affiliate Korean Metal Workers' Union and Ssangyong Motor.

The tentative settlement includes the company agreeing to a "48% : 52% ratio" with 48 per cent of restructured people maintaining employment with Ssangyong Motor and 52 per cent having to accept dismissal. However, other important issues remain outstanding including the persecution of those involved in the strike and how the ratio is applied.

The strike started on May 21 after the company announced mass dismissals without notice or union input.

According to KMWU currently 71 workers who participated in the strike are in jail.

The IMF is urging affiliates to voice their concerns at Korean embassies around the world and call on the Korean government to immediately release all

imprisoned union leaders and Ssangyong workers, drop all charges, both criminal and civil, against individuals and organisations involved in the strike and take a role in ensuring good faith, genuine negotiations towards guaranteeing the KMWU Ssangyong Motor members employment security. To find out more and to take action go to:

www.imfmetal.org/korea

Solidarity mission in Mexico

MEXICO/GLOBAL Parliamentary and trade union leaders from 13 countries, including IMF general secretary Jyrki Raina, joined Mexican union leaders and legislators in Mexico City in July to call for an end to the persecution of the Mexican mine and metalworkers' union and its leader, Napoleón Gómez Urrutia.

Jack Layton, leader of Canada's New Democratic Party, raised the delegation's concerns in a meeting with Mexico's Labor Secretary Javier Lozano. "We made it clear that the government's interference in union governance, its jailing of union leaders and freezing union

bank accounts, declaring strikes illegal and failing to prosecute the killers of union leaders, are serious and unacceptable violations of basic human rights," he stated.

The delegation also visited Juan Linares, one of the leaders of the union, in the prison where he has been held for several months without charges.

Members of the delegation held meetings with the embassies of Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland,

Spain, Sweden and the U.S. to inform them about the Mexican government's actions.

Support striking workers at Vale in Canada

CANADA More than 5,000 members of the United Steelworkers went on strike in July in defence of their jobs and conditions achieved over 20 years at Vale Inco, the Canadian operations of Brazilian multinational Vale.

The workers went on strike after the company would only accept to renew the collective agreement if the workers represented by USW agreed to a drastic reduction in conditions and increased job insecurity. Despite having made US\$13.2 billion profit last year, and currently with US\$22 billion in cash assets on hand, Vale's final offer insisted on creating a two-tiered pension plan, slashing the nickel bonus and seriously damaging seniority rights.

The IMF, affiliates CNM-CUT and USW, and other unions present in Vale are continuing to work together in support of the striking USW members. To find out more or to send letters of solidarity, go to the workers' campaign website at:

www.FairDealNOW.ca



An international parliamentary and trade union delegation joined 6,000 Mexican mine workers to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Los Mineros union, marching loudly through the industrial city of Lázaro Cárdenas in July 2009.

Photo: Scott Weaver/USW



IMF affiliate Birlesik Metal Is protests against the unjust dismissal of workers at Sinter Metal.

Photo: Birlesik Metal-Is

Sinter Metal: the struggle goes on

TURKEY IMF and the European Metalworkers' Federation, together with Turkish affiliate Birlesik Metal Is, are continuing to pressure Turkish company Sinter Metal Imalat Sanayi A.Ş. to reinstate 350 illegally fired workers.

The Labour Ministry in Turkey issued a report in January upholding the union's assertion that the reason for the dismissal of the 350 workers was not the economic crisis as the employer attempted to claim, but rather their trade union membership.

However, on August 4, the judge announced that the case would be delayed again by three months. The next court hearing is scheduled for November 13.

Following the court decision Sinter Metal workers held a demonstration shouting 'Justice delayed is justice denied!' in Taksim Square.

The IMF and EMF launched a joint campaign in support of Sinter Metal workers in March 2009. For more details go to:

www.imfmetal.org/sintermetal

HUMAN & TRADE UNION RIGHTS

IMF raises rights abuse issues with Putin

RUSSIA A German delegation headed by Berthold Huber, IG Metall and IMF president, visited Russia in July to meet the country's prime minister and Russian unions.

In the meeting with Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister of Russia, Berthold Huber raised with Putin the growing concern among the IMF about recent attacks against Russian trade union leaders and asked Putin to ensure that the crimes are investigated.

In February 2009, Eugeny Ivanov, leader of the IMF-affiliated Russian Interregional Trade Union (ITUA) local union at the GM plant near St. Petersburg was assaulted outside his home and in June and July 2008 ITUA local union leaders Alexei Gramm and Sergey Bryzgalov were attacked in Taganrog. ITUA union leader Alexey Etmanov was also attacked in November 2008 in Vsevolozhsk. To date, no one has been charged with any of these violent crimes.

Honduran people resist

HONDURAS The Honduran people, victim of a military coup against the President of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, on June 28, are resisting but are subject to tremendous intimidation, says Napoleón Vallecillo, president of

the Miners' and Metalworkers' Federation of Honduras (FETRAMIMH), affiliated to the IMF.

Napoleón told the IMF that "all FETRAMIMH affiliates have joined the resistance to the coup." He said there has not been such fierce repression for 30 years and the coup was a backward step. "Some people have disappeared, others have been killed and wounded and the authorities have a black list of 600 leaders they are looking for."

A delegation of international trade union leaders, including IMF, went to Honduras in August on a mission aimed at intensifying international pressure on the government that came to power in a coup.

BARGAINING

Strike ends at Kawasaki, Thailand

THAILAND After a two week strike at a Kawasaki Motors plant in Thailand an agreement was reached on July 3 between the plant union, which is affiliated to TAW/TEAM, and management with assistance from IMF-JC and the IMF.



International trade union representatives visit Honduras in solidarity with the Honduran people to verify rights violations and demand the restoration of democracy and a return to constitutional order.



IMF assistant general secretary Hiroshi Kamada addresses striking Kawasaki workers in Thailand.

Photo: Arunasalam/IMF

About 900 workers at the Kawasaki plant in Chonburi/ Rayong Eastern Seaboard Industrial Zone went on strike in June after management unilaterally changed the working time and then sacked all 11 shop stewards who opposed the change.

Both parties agreed on the reinstatement of all 872 workers, including the 11 union leaders, and workers returned on July 6. The agreement sets out further discussions on adjusting working time, subject to the approval of the workers by a vote in August.

Unions campaign for wage increase

ZIMBABWE The National Engineering Workers' Union (NEWU), affiliate of the IMF, and Zimbabwe Metal, Energy and Allied Workers' Union (ZMEAWU) have launched a campaign to force employers to pay workers decent wages.

Since September 2008 when the three political parties including the ruling ZANU/PF signed a power sharing GLOBAL

AGREEMENT, the situation with wages started to improve for Zimbabwean metalworkers and their families.

In April NEWU won an arbitration award compelling employers to increase workers' minimum salaries from US\$100 to US\$150. However due to the resistance of the employers to comply with the award unions have launched the campaign and are directly engaging with employers to ensure payment of the increased wages.

Bosch and Brembo workers strike in India

INDIA Workers at a Bosch plant in Pune, India, went on strike in July demanding equal pay for equal work. Precariously employed workers, trainees and permanent workers are in unity in the fight, which is being lead by the Bosch Chassis Systems Kamgar Sanghatana (Employees' Union) and supported by IMF affiliates in the region.

The union was formed after Bosch Chassis Systems took over the plant in 2006. The plant consisted of two units producing four

wheeler and two wheeler brake systems. A collective agreement between the union and Bosch was entered in November 2007 lasting until 2010 giving protection to workers transferred to a new company, Brembo, which took over one of the units, and giving an average wage rise of 60 per cent and rises for each year of the agreement.

The union stopped work after both companies failed to implement wage rises, Brembo in 2008 and

2009 and Bosch in 2009, and following the suspension of the union's general secretary.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Six shipbreaking workers die

INDIA Six shipbreaking workers died from burns received in a fire in an engine room when dismantling a vessel at the Alang shipbreaking yards on August 4, 2009.

Alang Soshiya Ship Recycling and General Workers' Association (ASSRGWA), the local trade union representing 5,000 shipbreaking workers, called on the Factories Inspector to investigate the incident and the Chief Minister and High Court of Gujarat to undertake a judicial enquiry and immediately intervene on the health, safety, welfare and environment at the shipbreaking yards.

The Workers' Association believes the employer did not take adequate measures to ensure the engine room was safe and demands the government of Gujarat ensures strict compliance with the Supreme Court of India's directions on safe ship recycling, and conducts a judicial inquiry into the fatal accident of the six workers. The union also called for compensation of a million rupees (US\$20,000) to the family of each deceased worker.



The family of deceased workers Dinesh Balabhai Koli and Munna Balabhai Koli mourn the loss of the two brothers at their home at Piparla Village, 15 kilometres away from the Alang shipbreaking yards.

Photo: ASSRGWA



Trade union and company representatives met in Geneva in August to look at ways to improve health and safety at ArcelorMittal.

Photo: Alex Ivanou/IMF

Gerdaу workers demand safety policy

GLOBAL Recent plant closures in the U.S. and Colombia, job losses in Peru and Spain and the dismantling of unions prompted the Gerdaу Group Global Committee of trade unions to write to Gerdaу management in July, requesting a meeting to discuss plant closures and the company's safety policy.

The committee first proposed a global agreement on health and safety in 2008 requesting that the company discuss and agree its safety policy with the committee.

In December last year and June 2009, the committee wrote to the company stating its concern over the effects of the financial crisis and proposed a meeting to discuss the situation. However, Gerdaу preferred to hold discussions with local unions and not the world committee.

The committee said that as Gerdaу is a global company it must develop modern industrial relations policies with unions, for example, by recognizing the Gerdaу Group Global Committee and establishing an international framework agreement.

Improving OHS at ArcelorMittal

GLOBAL The ArcelorMittal Joint Global Health and Safety Committee met in August to carry out a review of the committee's work so far and develop plans for the future in order to improve occupational health and safety in the company.

The meeting received reports on recent fatalities in the company and agreed to develop a union safety communications network within the company to improve the flow of information, particularly when a fatality

had occurred, and to exchange journals and safety information produced by the unions.

Results of a survey of committee members showed a good level of understanding among unions about the global health and safety agreement and that in the majority of cases joint union-management health and safety committees were now in place.

Four potential areas identified for future work included measures to prevent increases in fatalities, maintenance of plant and machinery, skills and awareness training, and employee security.

Improving health and safety in the Balkans

BALKANS IMF held the second phase of its health and safety project for affiliates in the countries of the former Yugoslavia

in June. The project, which is carried out in close cooperation with IMF Spanish affiliate MCA-UGT and the Spanish Trade Union Institute of Cooperation for Development, targets the steel and non-ferrous sectors and aims at training health and safety shop-stewards and improving health and safety at the workplace.

Prevention was the main theme of the seminar. A survey on health and safety standards revealed a high level of accidents often due to lack of proper training and awareness on OHS hazards, and low trade union involvement.

Health and safety experts from Spain gave presentations on risk analysis and prevention techniques and emphasized that commitment to OHS only occurs by involving everybody in the process: trade unions and management. As an outcome of the seminar, the participants committed themselves to start developing OHS programs locally.



The "Made in America" Jobs Tour in Indiana on September 1, one of 50 stops across 22 states organized by the Alliance for Climate Protection's Repower America campaign, in partnership with the Blue Green Alliance and its labour and environmental partners.

Photo: David Solimini

CLIMATE CHANGE

Greening America with good jobs

USA Unions and environmental groups embarked on a nationwide "Made in America" jobs tour in August, highlighting the benefits to American workers and businesses of transitioning to a clean energy economy that will create millions of jobs.

The tour, stopping at 50 locations across 22 states, is organized by the Alliance for Climate Protection's Repower America campaign, in partnership with the Blue Green Alliance and its labour and environmental partners.

"In confronting the challenges of recession, global warming and energy independence, we have an opportunity to transform our economy and create good jobs that truly are

'made in America'," said United Steelworkers international president Leo Gerard.

A recent Blue Green Alliance report found that if the U.S. instituted a national renewable energy standard, more than 850,000 manufacturing jobs at firms already in existence could be created manufacturing the parts for wind, solar, geothermal and biomass power. To find out more go to:

www.repoweramerica.org/us/tour

Cutting Emissions, Transforming Jobs

GLOBAL The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 15) is taking place in December 2009 in Copenhagen.

The international trade union movement is playing a role in this process to support a binding international agreement that will provide a framework for combating global warming, while at the same time safeguarding employment and workers' rights.

In order to discuss and put forward a common industrial workers' position, IMF, International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF) are holding a joint meeting entitled "Cutting Emissions, Transforming Jobs" in Germany on October 14 and 15.

At this event the IMF aims to arrive at a common position on climate change to take forward to the United Nations COP 15 conference.

IMF NEWS

Impact of FTAs on Chile

CHILE In July 30 leaders of IMF affiliates in Chile participated in a debate on the impact of trade agreements as part of a series of seminars and workshops organized by the IMF Trade Union Strengthening Project in Chile.

The workshop analysed the impact of free trade on employment and labour rights, and discussed the results of a study that highlighted the open nature of the Chilean economy. With nearly 30 free trade agreements already signed by Chile, the country has little protection. Free trade agreements signed by Chile with the U.S. and Asian countries resulted in unequal competition and promoted the outsourcing of the workforce.

Metalworking has been one of the sectors most affected.

The number of metalworking companies subcontracting work rose substantially resulting in a high incidence of outsourcing and this casualization of the workforce has led to poorer health and safety and working conditions.

The workshop recommended unions take action to promote analysis of the issues, disseminate information to workers and mobilize workers to focus on the country's strategic development.

Communicators to debate global union campaigning

GLOBAL Union communicators from around the world will meet on November 17 and 18 at the first joint IMF-EMF Communicators' Forum in Frankfurt to discuss union campaigns, innovative communication strategies and new media techniques.

During two days the union communication professionals representing IMF and European Metalworkers' Federation's affiliates will primarily focus on new media techniques and web-based campaign tools which help trade unions to achieve both union building and organizing as well as to make breakthroughs on issues like climate change and the spread of precarious work.

To find out more please contact Alex Ivanou:

aivanou@imfmatal.org

Fiat workers pursue global action

ITALY The IMF Fiat Working Group, involving over 30 union representatives of Fiat workers from around the world, met in June and stressed that there must be no involuntary dismissals, plant closings, spinoffs, or precarious employment as a means to restructure. Restructuring challenges require company and coordinated government policies that fully engage trade unions. All

alternatives should be considered and, if restructuring does occur, it must be done in a sustainable and socially acceptable manner.

The Working Group agreed to establish a Fiat Trade Union Network to provide support and exchange of information so as to defend and promote worker and trade union rights and to strengthen organizing the unorganized and collective bargaining. A top priority is the negotiation of an international framework agreement with the Fiat Group.

PUBLICATIONS

Subcontracting in Brazil

BRAZIL As in many parts of the world, subcontracting in Brazil has resulted in widespread precarious employment. Although described as modern and competitive, in practical terms subcontracting has meant a reduction of wages and benefits, an increase in hours of work and has created job instability.

Terceirização no Brasil (Subcontracting in Brazil), published by national trade union centre CUT, brings to light all the consequences of subcontracting in Brazil, explores its impact in eight sectors of the economy and also looks at the important contribution unions are playing in responding to the practical reality of subcontracting.

In a section on the metal sector, Valter Sanches general secretary of IMF affiliate CNM-CUT, speaks

of the historical changes caused by the implementation of subcontracting in the sector, citing examples of how metalworkers are trying to prevent subcontracting through collective bargaining agreements. Sanches also explains how international framework agreements can be important instruments in the fight against precarious work.

Making the Global Jobs Pact real

GLOBAL New guidance was released in August on how to use and promote the International Labour Organisation's Global Jobs Pact with the objective of maintaining and creating employment in response to the global financial crisis.

Prepared by the International Trade Union Confederation, the guidance outlines how national unions can use the Global Jobs Pact as a basis for initiating discussion with governments and employers.

According to the guide, unions are advised to advocate a number of policy responses to the crisis outlined in the Pact, including boosting effective demand, maintaining wage levels and avoiding deflationary wage spirals, keeping people in jobs, expanding social protect, and providing old-age security.

The guide also urges using the Pact to ensure that responses address root causes of the crisis by emphasizing the important role of the state and the need to reduce inequality.

A copy is available on the IMF website at:

www.imfmatal.org/trade

Next issue...

METAL WORLD No.4 / 2009

Special edition on climate change to coincide with the world's debate in Copenhagen on cutting emissions.

www.imfmatal.org/metalworld

CALENDAR 2009

SEPTEMBER

23-24

Seminar on CARICOM Trade Agreements *Curaçao*

28-01

IFA monitoring and TNC networking mission to Morocco *Morocco*

30-01

SEA Asian Regional EPZ Organizing Conference *Batam, Indonesia*

OCTOBER

03 - 10

Global campaign against precarious work

05-06

Training for TNC Organizing of Indian Autoworkers *Bangalore/Hyderabad, India*

07

World Day for Decent Work

14-15

IMF Meeting on Climate Change *Bad Orb, Germany*

21-22

Sub-Regional Meeting for South-East Europe *Belgrade, Serbia*

28-30

Tenaris Global Meeting *Dalmine, Italy*

29-30

Workshop on organizing non-manual workers *Frankfurt, Germany*

NOVEMBER

11-12

Workshop on migrant workers as precarious workers *Bangkok, Thailand*

11-12

Shipbuilding Action Group Meeting *Vietnam*

16-20

Mechanical Engineering Conference *Orlando, USA*

17-18

IMF-EMF Communicators' Forum *Frankfurt, Germany*

24-25

Siemens World Meeting *Frankfurt, Germany*



THE STRUGGLE FOR PERMANENT WORK IN THAILAND

Text & Pictures / **Anaya Latter**



After three years of temporary employment at Ford/Mazda in the Rayong Province, Duangmanee Sopeng is now a permanent employee thanks to the efforts of the Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand.





With a rich history of struggling to improve the lives of working people, the Thai labour movement is at the forefront of the global campaign to move temporary workers to permanent positions. →





"More important than the extra money is to feel secure. It is no longer as easy to lose your job, you have the protection of the law so you feel much more secure," says Duangmanee about her change from temporary to permanent work.

Photo: Anaya Latter



Duangmanee Sopeng is 29 years old. She lives with her husband in a one-room bed-sit with just enough space for a mattress, a TV and a wardrobe. She works at Ford/Mazda in the Rayong Province, about two and a half hours' drive from Bangkok.

For the past three years she has been employed as a subcontract worker at Ford/Mazda, along with her husband who has been at the company for four years. In May 2009 the Sopengs' luck changed. Due to the efforts of the Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand, they were elevated to permanent worker status, which is no small thing.

Her home is one of a brightly painted row of rooms – almost like a dormitory. Inside her husband is sitting cross-legged watching TV, but ducks out of the way urgently as we enter. He is shy, and is wearing a cast on his left arm.

Mrs Sopeng explains that he severed an artery in his arm whilst cooking at home and the 50,000 Baht (US\$1,400) surgery to repair it was covered by their new permanent worker benefits. One of the benefits of permanent worker cover is that it includes injuries incurred at home as well as work.

If this accident had happened whilst he and Duangmanee were still subcontract workers, they would have struggled to find enough for the surgery on their own.

PRECARIOUS WORK IN PRECARIOUS ECONOMIC TIMES

The Auto Subcontract Union has been striving to get a provision at Ford/Mazda to get all subcontract workers

the right to seek permanent status after one year of subcontracted work.

In essence, subcontract workers do the same job as permanent workers. They take their breaks at the same time, clock in and out in unison, and they work on the same machinery. The difference is that permanent workers receive better rates of pay, access to crucial social security benefits, and wider protection from the hiring and firing whims of employers.

In Thailand employers recruit subcontracted workers from sub-contracting companies, a separate entity to the big name companies such as Toyota, Ford/Mazda or Isuzu that physically utilize the workers' skills.

It is both a cost saving measure and a means of splitting up the workforce in an attempt to reduce the bargaining power of unions, as Yongyuth Menta Pao, General Secretary of TEAM explains.

There are around 300,000 union members in Thailand overall and around 1,300 unions countrywide. TEAM, or the Confederation of Thai Electrical Appliances, Electronic, Automobile and Metalworkers, is an unregistered one, he explains with a smile, because it allows them to work without the Government interfering.

He outlines four reasons why employers prefer subcontract workers:

- Employers only want to reduce costs, they don't want to have to pay social security;
- Everything is done according to the contract companies and doesn't have to be managed by the employers themselves;
- They are seen as 'flexible', when the company has work they call in the subcontract worker, when work is not available, they don't; and
- They attempt to reduce the bargaining power and industrial strength of unions.

PRECARIOUS WORK IN THAILAND

Bangkok is full of workers busy selling wares, clambering over construction sites or walking past in neat uniforms. Many of these workers are precarious workers, the casual, subcontracted and informal workers who must live and survive under the constant knowledge that they may not have work tomorrow, and do as much overtime as they can in order to make ends meet. These workers are found in nearly every industry – in particular, electronics and electrical, garment and textiles, and automotive industries.

Arunasalam, IMF Regional Representative in South East Asia and Pacific region describes precarious work as a global epidemic. "It is all over the world and it is spreading. It is being abused by employers; they want 80 to 90 per cent of their workforce in precarious employment, and be able to fire workers at any time."

Thailand has a rich and varied history of union struggle: against the Government; at times the Military; or against employers who undermine the unions' successful campaigns and wage gains by pursuing ever-cheaper labour.

Sitting at a long table in the upstairs room of the TEAM union office in Samutprakan Province, one hour's drive from Bangkok, were TEAM General Secretary Menta Pao, TEAM Vice President and Electronic Industry Union

President Charlie Loysoong, and TEAM Information Officer and Automotive President Visut Ruangrit.

"In 1992 there were 300,000 workers in Auto," says TEAM General Secretary Menta Pao. But the effects of the Asian economic crisis in 1997 drastically decreased output. "They used to sell 600,000 vehicles but since 1998 they could only sell less than half of this."

His dark eyes focus on the thought as he says, "30 per cent of workers were laid off after that."

From 1999 onwards, export to overseas markets helped the industry and economy to recover. In 1998 the Government passed a labour protection law that improved the situation for workers, but there were loopholes. Prior to the 1998 law, companies could only go to one subcontracting company, but the new laws meant anyone could supply subcontract workers.

"Now, in 2008 there are more than 350,000 workers in the automotive industry 50,000 are sub-contracted or precarious workers. The employers call them "flexible workers" to make them look good. But they go first when jobs are lost," Menta Pao explains.

From the outset, unions in Thailand have campaigned against the exploitation of these vulnerable workers, but the Government is keen to attract overseas investors and is reluctant to do anything to jeopardize this.

Like many other countries, the global financial crisis has seen a spike in Thai companies shutting down, without the money to pay workers their rightful compensation. Further, many companies are using the crisis to lay off older more experienced workers to relieve themselves of the responsibility of larger wage and social security payments.

TEAM Vice President Charlie Loysoong points out that precarious workers are in the highest risk group: they are the first to be fired, or told to stay at home when work is slow.

"As a subcontract worker you can go to work and clock in, only to be told that you are not required tomorrow, there's no security," he says.

RESPONDING TO THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

The Government's lack of response to the crisis and its effects on unemployment, and even companies using it as an excuse to reduce their workforce, prompted TEAM and the Thai Labour Solidarity Committee (a coalition of unions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) to establish independent Appeal Centres.

"To receive instruction from the workers themselves – we couldn't depend on the Government to supply the information but we had to do something ourselves," says Visut Ruangrit, Information Officer for TEAM

There are seven centres across Thailand and they operate almost like tribunals. Any worker, union member or not, can raise a grievance here, and get advice on how to pursue mediation or legal hearing.

"We opened the centres on January 21 this year, and 80 per cent of the workers making submissions are subcontracted workers."

"Most cases are about unpaid compensation that employers refused to pay despite the law that demands it. The centre takes the evidence to the auditors at the Labour Federation who will then try to get employers and workers to resolve their problem.

"Subcontract workers face more difficulties, as often [these] workers receive less compensation than they are supposed to get," says Visut Ruangrit.

For concerns about wages or compensation the Appeal Centre directs them to the local Labour Relations Committee. This is a tripartite committee of representatives of government, employers, and the workers. Workers do not usually know their rights, and will most often accept the committee's ruling on how much they should be paid.

Since their establishment in January 2009, the Appeal Centres have received 11,988 cases of complaint, against 43 companies. So far, 180 of the subcontract workers have received compensation at this first level of appeal. The next tier of appeal for these workers is the Labour Protection Office (Ministry of Labour). Finally, the Labour Court is the highest level of appeal. Right now there are two cases in this higher court of appeal.

Menta Pao explains with a wry smile, saying, "in many cases the employer does not want to go to Labour Court, they say: "If we pay you half is that ok?" This is because the court takes time. Most often, workers will settle for half."

"Normally, the decision is in favour of the workers, except in cases where there may be lack of evidence. Employers have full time lawyers and resources to spare, not so for the workers," says Charlie Loysoong.

Ms Wilaiwan Saetia, President of the Thai Labour Solidarity Committee explains: "The Government does not have a good strategy to deal with the global financial crisis. This is why we try to push the government to take action, to put up more committees so that workers, employers, industry and government can work together to find a solution."



From left to right:
Yongyuth Menta Pao,
TEAM General Secretary;
Charlie Loysoong, TEAM
Vice President; and,
Visut Ruangrit, TEAM
Information Officer.

Photos: Anaya Latter





The Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand meets on a Saturday to discuss strategies and plan campaigns to move workers from temporary to permanent employment. There are 291 subcontract workers at Ford/Mazda. The union has managed to get the company to recognize a great deal of their members as permanent workers. From an initial 400 members in 2007 when the Union was formed, many members have now transferred to the permanent workers' union due to their successful negotiations.

Photo: Anaya Latter



ORGANIZING PRECARIOUS WORKERS IN THAILAND

Thai unions face some difficulties in organizing precarious workers. Thai Labour Relations Law from 1975 covers only formal sector workers and does not cover subcontract or casual workers.

The fact that there are a number of subcontracting companies for corporations such as Ford/Mazda to choose from, who may have workers across different industries, can make it difficult for the union to stake any sort of organizing claim based on industry. The subcontracting companies can be quite large and spread over a great distance, so locality and organizing activities are hard to coordinate.

The companies try to redefine the categorization of their workers to stop the unions' attempts to get better conditions for precarious workers. "When you try to recruit them to the union the company will say they are in the services industry, but your union is for auto workers," explains TEAM Information Officer Ruangrit.

Despite the law which requires companies to put aside a minimal social security contribution from workers to pay out when they are laid off or if something goes wrong, the companies often neglect this duty. They take the workers' money from their wages, but don't pay it when required.

Another problem is wages. Very few companies pay more than minimum wage, which is arbitrarily based on the living requirements of a single person, set at 203 Baht per hour (US\$5.90). For families dependent on a single wage, this rate is barely sufficient. As a result subcontract workers must do substantial overtime simply to make ends meet.

A PATH TO PERMANENCY

The Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand, which represents subcontract workers at Ford/Mazda, meets at the Branch office in Rayong Province on a Saturday. It is the only chance these workers will have to vote, discuss strategies and plan campaigns.

The new President Watchapin Insonajai is a subcontract worker with Ford/Mazda, a softly spoken young man with long black hair that frames his face. He begins by saying that none of the subcontract workers are happy with their status, they want to be permanent workers. "We do the same job, why should we be paid less? We know it is unfair."

"The reason we set up a union for subcontract workers is to ask for better benefits and better pay," he says.

Ex-President Artit Panomma spent four years as a subcontract worker, until successfully negotiating permanent status at the company, and will now switch to the permanent workers' union at Ford/Mazda.

Artit Panomma explains that before the union the difference between the wages was very big. After the union was set up the gap has narrowed, and the benefits have improved.

"Permanent workers receive rent support of 1,500 Baht (US\$44), compared to 1,000 Baht (US\$30) for subcontract workers. Discrepancies like this are common with benefits. Now we have achieved better benefits for subcontract workers."

Under the labour protection law from 1998 all workers should be treated equally if doing the same job, but employers do not put this into practice.

"In November last year I asked the employers to treat subcontract workers equally. Permanent workers make the left side of the car, subcontract workers make the right side – but it is the same job, they are equal," Artit Panomma explains.



New President Watchapin Insonajai and ex-President Artit Panomma of the Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand discuss ways to improve conditions of subcontracted workers at the Ford/Mazda plant.

Photo: Anaya Latter



An average subcontract worker's wage is 8,400 Baht paid monthly, not including overtime. However the expenses they must pay each month include:

Rent and utilities:	2,000 Baht
Food:	3,000 Baht
Personal expenses:	1 to 2,000 Baht
Total	7,000 Baht

With overtime, a subcontract worker can potentially take home 10,000 Baht which equates to US\$293 a month.

JOB SECURITY IS MOST IMPORTANT

For Duangmanee Sopeng, she and her husband could not save any money with a subcontract workers' wage. They send money back to her mother, who looks after their four year old son. The Sopengs can't afford to have their son live with them in their single room which costs 1,800 Baht (US\$53) per month.

"If it is possible I would like to go back to my home town, a room like this is not healthy for a child to grow up in, so it is better that he lives with his grandparents. Ideally, in the future, my goal is to save enough money to go home with my husband and set up a small business there."

Mrs Sopeng relates an experience that made her realize the instability of being a subcontract worker. "I got suspended for two months by my employer. They said it was because of economic problems, but I could see the company was still recruiting other new employees who were doing overtime, so I felt that this was really bad," she says.

Has her recent move to permanent status made it easier for her then? "Yes, it is better, but more important than the extra money is to feel secure. It is no longer as easy to lose your job, you have the protection of the law so you feel much more secure."

SOLIDARITY THROUGH STRUGGLE

The solidarity and passion of the unions in Thailand, and their concern for subcontract workers is palpable. TEAM and the Labour Solidarity Committee dedicate time, energy and resources to helping subcontract workers become permanent. "They are our brothers and sisters, so we must help them too," articulates TEAM General Secretary Menta Pao.

The unions have a strong history of advocacy on social justice issues and workers' rights. Wilaiwan Saetia captures this ethos well: "The problems have always been solved by workers uniting and pushing the government to create change."

An issue that is in their minds and campaigns at present is convincing the Government to ratify two fundamental International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions. The Right to organize and collective bargaining convention (No. 98) and the Abolition of forced labour convention (No. 105). This is one common interest for all unions in Thailand. In October, as part of the World Day for Decent Work, the unions will be uniting to mobilize and put pressure on the Government to commit to the protection of workers' rights by adopting these labour standards.

TEAM and the Labour Solidarity Committee call on other unions and international affiliates to help raise awareness about their ILO convention adoption campaign and their struggle to protect precarious workers.

TEAM Vice President Loysoong's comments reflect the challenges they face. "The Government and employers are increasingly anti-union. Out of 390,000 companies, only one per cent is organized. It is a miracle that we survive against these forces, but it is also why we must continue the fight. If we don't try to stop the problem of precarious work, our sons, daughters, grandchildren, our descendents will face the same difficulties."



SPOTLIGHT

TAKING ACTION: THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

Text / Jyrki Raina, IMF General Secretary

Photos / IMF photo collection



GLOBAL ACTION AGAINST PRECARIOUS WORK

During the past years we have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of temporary, casual and contract jobs at the expense of permanent jobs. Around the world, unions are mobilizing, organizing and bargaining for better, more secure work. In 2008, 78 affiliates from 49 countries participated in a global week of action against precarious work. The campaign is continuing with another week of action from October 3 to 10, 2009. See the video and find out more at: www.imfmetal.org/precariouswork

The IMF Congress in May 2009 adopted a new Action Programme that sets out the direction of our work for the next four years. It is an **Action Programme for everyone**. The global IMF family is committed to working towards our united goals. Organizing, collective bargaining, trade union rights, union networks and sustainable development are key areas of work.

The global trade union movement is confronted by an increasingly hostile political, economic and social environment, aggravated by the financial crisis. Neoliberal policies promoted by governments, business and international institutions have resulted in increased economic inequality, precarious employment and a reduction of bargaining power around the world. In order to turn the tide, trade unions around the world have to speak with one voice and take joint action. The things that unite us are greater than the things that divide us.

FROM CRISIS TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

As a global union federation our goal is to improve workers' wages, working and living conditions, and to ensure that workers' rights are respected. How we aim to do this is set out in one policy, the IMF Action Programme 2009-2013. The Programme was debated and adopted by the IMF Congress in May 2009, setting the direction of our work for the next four years.

The global financial and economic crisis is a bankruptcy declaration for a globalization model driven by neo-liberalism, deregulation, privatization and financial speculation. Now we have a historic opportunity to change this model to one with a real development agenda. Together we must tackle global problems such as precarious employment and climate change. And we will do more in defence of workers' rights.

As the Action Programme states, we are focusing our efforts on:

- Building strong national unions
- Strengthening collective bargaining
- Defending and protecting workers' rights
- Building a counterweight to the power of transnational corporations
- Fighting for sustainable trade, development and employment

We are also committed to improving the working methods of the IMF. A more dynamic and results-oriented IMF must be visible, transparent and offer all affiliates the possibility to influence decision making and participate in joint action. One such opportunity is the continuation of the campaign against precarious work.

GLOBAL ACTION AGAINST PRECARIOUS WORK

During the past years we have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of temporary, casual and contract jobs at the expense of permanent jobs. Precarious workers are faced with job insecurity, low wages, limited or no access to social benefits, increased health and safety risks and the denial of rights at work, such as the right to join a union.

Around the world, unions are mobilizing, organizing and bargaining for better, more secure work. In 2008, 78 affiliates from 49 countries participated in a global week of action as part of our "Precarious Work Affects Us All" campaign to stop the rise in precarious employment.

The campaign against precarious work has been solidified in our Action Programme for the next four years. This year the second IMF global mobilization against precarious work will take place from October 3 to 10, 2009 in conjunction with the International Trade Union Confederation's (ITUC) World Day for Decent Work, and in cooperation with other Global Union Federations (GUFs) and the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF).

This October we are taking the fight to governments, calling on them to strengthen legislation to limit the use of precarious employment, and to ensure equal rights and protection for precarious workers. The economic crisis has made this demand all the more urgent. Precarious jobs have been the first to be lost. There is already evidence that companies are using the crisis as a justification to replace permanent jobs with precarious jobs.

CUTTING EMISSIONS, TRANSFORMING JOBS

Climate change affects us all. The IMF family needs to take a proactive role in the climate change process to show that industry is not a threat, but part of the solution. We need to ensure a fair deal for the world's metalworkers at the United Nations conference in Copenhagen in December 2009.

A resolution adopted by the IMF Congress calls for "a binding international agreement that provides for significant and rapid carbon reduction targets, whilst recognizing that the central debate must be on how to reduce emissions (a social cost) without sacrificing employment (a social benefit)."

In order to maximize the influence of industrial unions, we have agreed to cooperate on joint actions with our colleagues in the chemical, paper, energy and mining industries. We will also work with other Global Unions, European industry federations, ITUC, European Trade



ORGANIZING WOMEN WORKERS IN INDONESIA

At one of Indonesia's largest Export Processing Zones, IMF affiliates Lomenik and FSPMI have made organizing a priority. The majority of workers are young women with no job security earning less than the US\$100 per month. The unions encourage workers to join by negotiating collective agreements that shift them from contract into permanent jobs. This work began in 2001 and has resulted in more than 50,000 EPZ workers joining a union. See the video and find out more at: www.imfmetal.org/organizing



Union Confederation, and selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In October the IMF is holding a meeting in co-operation with International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), EMF and European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF) to develop a united position in preparation for December.

A sustainable low-carbon future is possible, but the conversion has to take place over a sufficient amount of time, involving improved efficiency, technology transfer, joint development mechanisms and training. New and sustainable technologies offer considerable potential for new jobs. But green jobs have to be good jobs, with decent working conditions and respect for fundamental workers' rights.

BUILDING STRONG NATIONAL UNIONS

Successful action on precarious work, climate change, union rights, and improving wages and conditions requires strong national unions. Therefore organizing and union building has been placed at the very heart of our work around the world. We are determined to provide practical support to unions attempting to organize workers. IMF affiliates have stated their commitment to offering solidarity support for organizing, particularly along the supply chains of TNCs.

Trade union strength is greater when workers act in unity also at the national level. All IMF affiliates should have a look at their structures to ensure that they are the best possible for serving the interests of the working people. The IMF will offer its support to building unity. Union building projects in developing countries will strengthen the capacity of unions to organize and train workers, bargain collectively and defend the interests of workers.

STRENGTHENING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining is a core activity of trade unions and the most effective way to improve wages and conditions and solve problems at the workplace. We work with affiliates around the globe to ensure that collective agreements continue to provide a framework for decent wages, working time, work organization, and health and safety.

As companies increasingly operate globally, international bargaining is fast becoming a goal. Following the groundbreaking global agreement on health and safety with ArcelorMittal, we will examine possibilities for such agreements with other companies and in other areas such as training, equal rights and information and consultation. The IMF will also look at developing mechanisms for sharing information and building common ground for positions on questions like precarious employment.



BUILDING SUSTAINABLE UNIONS IN AFRICA

Swaziland Amalgamated Trade Union is one example of work to build strong, self-reliant unions. The union was created when several smaller Swaziland unions were assisted by the IMF to merge. Covering five sectors, SATU is a stronger organization now able to coordinate campaigns and lead strikes against foreign companies. See the video and find out more at:
www.imfmetal.org/buildingstrongunions



DEFENDING AND PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS

When fundamental trade union rights are violated, the IMF swings into action, launching international solidarity campaigns in support of workers. We pressure governments that violate ILO conventions and challenge employers that try to deprive workers from their right to organize and bargain collectively.

In recent weeks and months we have been engaged in solidarity action in support of workers at Ssangyong Motors in South Korea, Toshiba in Indonesia, Kawasaki in Thailand, Sinter Metal in Turkey. In July, a major international trade union delegation travelled to Mexico in defence of the persecuted mine and metalworkers' union. We will sharpen our tools of solidarity and make it easier for IMF affiliates to participate in support action.



DEFENDING LABOUR RIGHTS IN MEXICO

Since 2006 Mexico's largest mining company, Grupo México, and the Mexican government have systematically violated Mexican law and international standards in an attempt to crush the National Miners' and Metalworkers' Union of Mexico (SNTMMSRM, Los Mineros). IMF and its affiliates are campaigning for an end to the persecution. See the video and find out more at:
www.imfmetal.org/mexico





SOLIDARITY AT ARCELORMITTAL

In 2008, the world's largest steel company, ArcelorMittal, and trade unions representing its employees worldwide signed a groundbreaking agreement to improve health and safety standards throughout the company. The agreement was achieved through the solidarity of trade unions from 20 countries that first established the ArcelorMittal World Council in 2007. Find out more at: www.imfmetal.org/arcelormittal



BUILDING A COUNTERWEIGHT TO THE POWER OF TNCs

Transnational corporations (TNCs) dominate IMF industries. They place and shift their production, research and development and other operations according to the logic of a borderless world, in the search for even bigger profits. Avoiding competition between workers and a race to the bottom requires a real sense of global solidarity.

The modern company runs on global knowledge and communications systems. So the modern union must match this approach by building its own capacity to link and communicate globally. By building trade union

networks for exchange of information, joint initiatives and joint action, we will put into place mechanisms of solidarity among workers through TNC supply chains and across industrial sectors. Networks are also a tool for organizing unorganized plants.

Through global union networks and world works councils, we give workers and shop stewards an opportunity to participate in day-to-day international trade union work. We will develop guidelines for this work and present them to the IMF Executive Committee for adoption. In developing countries, we will help unions to bridge the digital divide.



TRADE, EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Since 2004, IMF's work on trade in Latin America has brought together unions in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay to explore the employment repercussions of trade liberalization. The trade unions' concerns have then been taken up directly with labour and trade ministers in the region by IMF and its affiliates together arguing for the indispensable link between sustainable development and the creation of stable quality employment. Find out more at: www.imfmetal.org/trade



The IMF has signed 19 International Framework Agreements (IFAs) with major TNCs to guarantee fundamental union rights and decent working conditions. We will use IFAs more efficiently for organizing and target new companies for more agreements.

FIGHTING FOR SUSTAINABLE TRADE, DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT

The growing inequalities between and within countries generated by neoliberal policies and free trade without a social dimension show that workers are not receiving an equitable share of the wealth they create. The IMF is fighting for sustainable growth and development based on good jobs, regulation of global financial markets, fair trade rules and democratic reform of international financial institutions.

Promotion of quality employment, sound industrial policies, and labour and social rights must be part and parcel of all trade agreements. The IMF will work closely with the ITUC, other Global Union Federations and like-minded social movements in the pursuit of this goal.

COMMITMENT FROM ALL

The preparation of this Action Programme prior to and at Congress was lively and democratic. We share common challenges and experiences, and a common analysis of the situation facing the world's workers. In Gothenburg, we agreed on common goals for the next four years.

The difficult bit starts now. Turning words into concrete action will require a commitment from all. We will only be strong if we make international solidarity a living reality and part of day-to-day trade union work, involving union leaders, officers, shop stewards and rank-and-file members. Let us do it together.

Download a copy of the IMF Action Programme 2009-2013 at: www.imfmetal.org/AP2009-2013

Get involved and sign up for IMF Solidarity Action Alerts today at: www.imfmetal.org/actionalerts



IN MEMORIAM JACEK GĄSIOROWSKI

On August 3, 2009 Jacek Gąsiorowski, former chairman of the interplant Commission of the IMF affiliated union "Solidarność" at ArcelorMittal in Warsaw, member of the Council of the Secretariat of Metalworkers in "Solidarność" and deputy chairman of the Council of Steelworkers of "Solidarność" died at the age of 53.

Fully dedicated and determined activist of "Solidarność", Jacek Gąsiorowski worked at the steel plant Huta Warszawa from 1977 until 2009. He will be remembered for his input and efforts put in preventing the closure of the enterprise in 1994. He was the one who managed to find consensus with owners and managers of Huta Warszawa, even in very hard times.

From 1998 to 2003, Gąsiorowski was a president of the Mazovian Regional Board of "Solidarność", member the National Commission of "Solidarność" and member of the European Works Council of ArcelorMittal.

PEOPLE



IN MEMORIAM HANS MAYR

Hans Mayr, former President of the IMF, died on August 3, 2009 aged 87. Hans served as President of the IMF and Chairman of IG Metall from 1983 to 1986.

Hans played a central role in some of the toughest labour disputes in Germany during the post-war period and was involved in union campaigns that lead to the introduction of the 35-hour working week. Hans was born in 1921 in Freudenberg, near Ulm (Baden-Württemberg) and his first job was with Junkers, an aerospace company.

Hans joined IG Metall in 1946 directly after the war and his release from being a prisoner of war. From 1951 to 1955 Hans was the chairman of the local German Trade Union Confederation, in Göppingen and became chairman of IG Metall's local in Göppingen in 1955.

Hans joined the national executive committee of IG Metall in 1962, was elected IG Metall vice chairman in 1970 and then chairman in 1983.

BUILDING TURKEY'S LABOUR MOVEMENT, ONE REINSTATED WORKER AT A TIME

Sinter Metal striker Lale Balta hopes their eventual victory will inspire workers throughout Turkey to stand up and defend their right to join a union.

Text / **Kristyne Peter**
Photo / **Elif Sinirlioglu**

Lale Balta joined the union, Birlesik Metal-Is, on December 19, 2008. Three days later, she was fired.

A CNC operator at Sinter Metal Imalat San. As, Lale, aged 23, is one of 350 workers fighting for the right to belong to a union and at the centre of the biggest struggle in Turkey's massive Dudulu Organized Industrial Zone in the last 20 years.

In October 2008, Birlesik Metal-Is began an underground organizing drive inside the auto components manufacturing plant. "It was a very secret process because it was obvious that if the employer would learn of this he would fire the union members," explains Lale. "On December 19 the employer learnt of the union activity and fired our 38 friends and then almost all of the workers went to the notary to be a union member in reaction to the dismissals," Lale says, pointing out that this is how she entered the trade union movement.

On December 22, the company fired another 312 workers, including Lale. The company claimed the firings were due to the global financial crisis, however almost all of those dismissed were trade union members. Weeks later the Labour Ministry in Turkey issued a report upholding the union's assertion that the reason for the dismissal of the 350 workers was not the economic crisis as the employer attempted to claim, but rather their trade union membership.

Still, workers remain at the company gates defending their

right to union representation and demanding their immediate reinstatement. "We are fighting for our honour and for the future of our children," Lale says. "This resistance became an issue of honour for everybody who is still in front of the factory. We want to leave a decent life to the generation which will come after us." However the nine month strike is taking its toll.

"Some people have lost their wives, because their wives didn't understand the importance of our struggle and left them. Some people's family relations went bad, some people could not go to the doctor to treat their children who were ill," Lale says adding she too feels pressure from her family to give up the struggle.

In Turkey, workers are regularly dismissed for their trade union activities on a massive scale and it is one of the biggest challenges trade unionists face today. Often, the fate of the dismissed workers remains in the hands of the courts who repeatedly delay rulings at the pressure of the company or government. "Being a union member is very difficult because the employers are very insatiable. Turkey is not a democratic and social state. The laws are not in favour of the workers, and even these bad laws are not implemented so workers are always unjustly treated."

Inside and outside of the country, the Sinter Metal struggle has come to symbolize the enormous challenges Turkish workers face when trying to form a union. "All workers are looking to us,"

PROFILE

LALE BALTA

Country / **Turkey**

Position / **Union member**

Union / **Birlesik Metal-Is**



"We want to leave a decent life to the generation which will come after us," says Lale Balta on the picket line at Sinter Metal.



Lale says, "because if we win, it will be hope for them also. Every day workers in Dudulu Organized Industrial Zone come to us and ask questions on the situation and they say that they are with us." She hopes that their eventual victory will empower other workers to resist repressive anti-union behaviour at other companies and inspire more workers to fight for the right to be in a union. "We chose resistance in a crisis atmosphere. All workers are experiencing similar problems in their work but they don't have the courage to resist against it because they are afraid of losing their jobs. Our glory will give them the courage and hope to struggle against employers who try to use the crisis as an opportunity."

Sinter Metal workers are calling on the international labour movement to lend solidarity and tell the world about their struggle. They are also asking unions to put pressure on clients of Sinter Metal, such as Copeland and Getrag. "By this way," Lale emphasizes, "we can show that workers are a class in the world and how powerful we are when we are organized."

The IMF and the European Metalworkers' Federation are jointly campaigning in support of Sinter Metal workers demanding their reinstatement.

For more information go to:

www.imfmetal.org/sintermetal

