



SPOTLIGHT

TAKING ACTION: THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

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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/precariousswork

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

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www.imfmetal.org/actionalerts

