



FIFTH INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION LEADERS MEETING

TERRASSA DECLARATION 7th APRIL 2016

We, trade unionists gathered from around the world in the city of Terrassa at the Fifth International Trade Union Leaders Meeting, invited at the time of the UGT of Catalonia's 15th Congress, for the purpose of strengthening trade unionism as a tool for the defence and guarantee of labour, social and human rights.

DECLARE

FIRST. That the foundation of our grandparent's Europe, let's say, to assure peace and security in our continent, have been diluted in institutions that protect only the interests of the big corporations and often forget the needs of more than 500 million European citizens that are concerned by questions like unemployment (a rate that rises to 10.8% in EU) and the lack of opportunities for our young people. For that reason we give support to ETUC campaign "A New Path for Europe" to create quality jobs, sustainable development and to provide the necessities for citizens.

SECOND. That the refugee crisis and Europe's response is not appropriate for a Europe that is proud to be the cradle of human rights; that it's not able to guarantee to those that knock on his doors a worthy life. It's a shame that while European countries argue about the number of people that each can receive, more than one million people try to escape from the current conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and thousands of them drown in the waters of the Mediterranean sea.

THIRD. That the terrorist attacks on European territory, have as a main objective to attack our democratic system and our freedoms, and that's why it is necessary to defend them, and also to educate and fight to stop the promotion of xenophobic political parties that menace our society and coexistence.

FOURTH. That the ILO reports denounce the fact that decent work is a scarce reality, and that only one of three workers of the world enjoy it. In fact, the relative European figures on workers in poverty, those that in spite of having a

place of work are in the threshold of the poverty, are alarming, because they show that 16.6% of European workers are in poverty, and this figure rises to 22% in the case of Spanish workers.

FIFTH. That the austerity measures imposed by Brussels and the “Troika”, have often been accompanied by legislative initiatives that impose a cut to rights and liberties – such as some reforms to workers’ rights and the right to strike. The ETUC opposes this because this is not the path to develop workplaces, or grow and build more united societies. This is the reason that we support the ETUC’s campaign “Promoting respect for Trade Union rights in Europe” to defend the trade union rights.

SIXTH. That the trade unions are against TTIP, because it endangers workers’ rights, European environmental standards, consumer rights and the high quality of our public services.

SEVENTH. That the existence of tax havens allows multinationals and the extremely rich to avoid paying taxes. In the last Intermon Oxfam report on tax havens, they report that in the global economy 1% of the population accumulates more wealth than the other 99%. The unpaid taxes of all the multinationals represent a lack of investment in each country in public services, such as in health care systems and education, and a reduction in their welfare systems.

EIGHT. For all these reasons it’s necessary to develop a worldwide responsible trade unionism that follows the parameters defined by the ILO in all matters related to decent working conditions; in other words, a permanent demand for adequately paid work which is carried out in conditions of liberty, equality, security and a respect for human dignity.

For this reason, the trade unions that sign this declaration ask that governments and the political and economic leaders, as well as business organisations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations and its specialised organisations, develop a new sense of shared responsibility, face the challenge of constructing a new globalisation based on people and not simply on specific financial interests, to support and in accordance with the founding principals of the ILO:

WE DEMAND

1. The implementation of an economic policy to guarantee full employment and the improvement of living conditions.
2. A new international framework, at the service of working people.
3. The recognition of trade unions as indispensable intermediaries for economic and social progress.
4. The fair distribution of the fruits of progress and a wage that guarantees a decent life for workers.

5. The adequate protection of the life and health of workers in all occupations.
6. The implementation of social security systems that guarantee adequate funding and universal medical attention.
7. The guarantee of an effective application of equal access to education, professional/worker training, and employment for all workers.
8. The ratification and fulfilment of the ILO's international agreements, giving priority to the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work with relation to trade union freedom, collective bargaining, non-discrimination, forced labour and the eradication of child labour.
9. The democratisation of the working world through social dialogue and worker participation in all areas of national and international decision-making processes.

WE PLEDGE

- To make decent work our main goal and demand, for the benefit of society as a whole.
- To participate in an active and constructive manner in all areas of social dialogue and collective bargaining, in order to strengthen the democratisation of labour relations.
- To promote equality and non-discrimination in all of our trade unions' areas of influence, including within our own organisations.
- To work with public and private employers for the continued improvement of productivity and the quality of products and services.
- To fight for social equality, democracy and the dignity of people in our respective countries, with the same international scope, in a world which we also claim as ours.
- To continual renovation, with emphasis on the internal promotion of gender equality and the inclusion of young people, echoing their demands.

For all these reasons we declare our commitment to work together and without boundaries including in the heart of the International Trade Union Confederation, for the purpose of improving the work and living conditions of working men and women and their families, as well as our commitment to defend human rights, social justice, gender equality, peace, liberty, and democracy.