



ZARAGOZA STATEMENT

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFERENCE: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR WORKERS Zaragoza, 11-13 September 2008.

Trade union organizations from all around the world and its international confederations accepted long time ago the challenge to fight the climate change and the consequent need of reducing carbon emissions. The last Climate Conference (COP 13) held in Bali in December 2007 gathered the largest and most active trade union delegations which attended any of the previous conferences. The ILO has recently also included climate issues in its working agenda.

The fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), whose Summary Report was presented in Valencia in 2007, stated out with outright explicitness that there are no longer doubts that the threat of a climate change is real and that it is caused by human action, and also indicated that it is possible to avoid global warming to exceed 2° C and to achieve the stabilisation of CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere in 450 ppm if enough measures are devoted, using the technologies now available.

It is therefore necessary to promote new non-pollutant production and consumption patterns, particularly for energy disposal, reorienting the use of raw materials and fuels. To boost these changes in energy, industrial, agricultural and transport models it is necessary to consider the unequal situation of developed countries with respect to the Southern ones.

In this context, the trade union organisations commit themselves with the world process to develop a new agreement in Copenhagen 2009, which provides continuity to the Kyoto Protocol, whose first compliance period ends in 2012, and which might be useful to avoid a catastrophic climate change. We also present some demands that we consider to be essential from a social perspective.

1. The signatory countries of the International Convention on Climate Change must reach a commitment for the reduction of emissions in the medium and long term, in line with the agreement considered in Bali and the IPCC recommendations, with criteria about spreading the load, based on equity and on common responsibility that is nevertheless different among countries. This implies a commitment on reductions to a minimum of 20% and which, according to the IPCC, should reach from a 25 to a 40% by 2020 with respect to 1990 for the industrialized countries, and limitations or voluntary reductions in emissions for developing countries, particularly the so-called emergent countries. The goal for 2050 should include more ambitious objectives on the emissions reduction and the "decarbonisation" of our production and consumption system in line with the resolutions adopted by the ITUC and the ETUC.



2. The governments of all countries must urgently implement plans and measures to reduce the energy consumption and to use cleaner and renewable energy sources, as well as for improving the energy efficiency. These efforts should be undertaken in all sectors and spheres, but in a particular way in industry, transport, building and agriculture. The trade union organisations commit themselves to boost this kind of measures in working sites and in the transport mode of workers to their workplaces.
3. The international community should provide enough funding to finance adaptation measures which permit to avoid the negative social effects provoked by the climate alterations, particularly in developing countries and in a very special case in the less developed countries. The climate change influences some key mechanisms for the human development, such as agriculture and food security, the hydrological cycle and the access to hydric resources, biodiversity and health.
4. The governments of countries with high industrialisation levels should adopt social protection and training measures, called “measures for a fair transition”, in order to avoid the negative social effects on workers from those sectors which could be affected by the necessary measures for emissions reduction, and to improve and firmly support the economic and productive sectors based on the use of clean and renewable resources and technologies. This should be done by means of tripartite social dialogue processes, as the one established in Spain, based on Social Dialogue Tables for the compliance with the Kyoto Protocol and the National Allowance Plan.

Finally, the trade union organisations will continue with our commitment, reinforced in the next stage, for increasing workers awareness about the threat of climate change and promoting individual and collective behavioural changes for a more rational use of energy and transport in all activities, and to demand from governments and businesses the adoption of policies and measures to reduce emissions, considering the necessary change of energy and transport models as a chance for advancing towards a more sustainable productive model with quality employment.