



elektron

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Presidential Council Meeting in Geneva

On June 14 2010, were carried out a meeting of the Presidential Council of the World Federation Trade Unions, in Geneva, Switzerland.



WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS
Presidential Council, Geneva, 14 Jun 2010.

Intervention of George Mavrikos, general secretary of the WFTU

Dear friends and comrades
Dear guests

Thank you for your participation here today at this meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to inform you about the initiatives and the activities of the WFTU, to hear your suggestions, your criticism and your comments to move on stronger, faster, more efficiently.

Dear Colleagues

In 2009-2010 we live in a period of global crisis of the capitalist system. This crisis is

deep and embraces all areas of the system: the economy, politics, society, culture, environment, even the personal relationships of people.

All governments are either neo-conservative or social-democrat and follow the recipes and the directions jointly decided in Brussels and Washington. Take a look at the governments of Ireland, Greece, Portugal,

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Italy, Spain, everywhere they follow the same policies: to attack on workers.

Removing trade and labor rights.
Redundancies, poverty, privatization.

The ILO data have shown a big rise in unemployment and poverty rates. In Greece, the social-democratic government reduced the wages of civil servants by 25%, it doubled the lay-offs percentages and increased the retirement age by five years for women and three years for men. It reduces all pensions by 40%. It is selling public assets, abolishes collective contracts, increases taxation on ordinary people, etc.

In Britain the conservative government follows the same policy. Two weeks ago they announced cuts in spending on public spending by 7 billion euros. In Spain already the salaries of civil servants were decreased by 5% as a first step and other measures will follow.

In Germany, the famous car industry OPEL announced 8000 layoffs in Europe and at the same time reduction of 265 million euros during 2010 in the annual salaries of workers. The same situation exists in Portugal, Romania, Denmark, everywhere. The situation is the same in the USA, in Asia and all continents.

This financial crisis of the system is very deep. We believe that in the years to follow the crisis will further worsen and become deepening. This situation creates and exacerbates the competition between monopolies and multinationals. Between states. Between the EU and the USA. The conflicts on the rate between euro and dollar rate are hard and will continue.

The strong intra-capitalism rivalries embrace the roads and pipelines of gas and energy, the control of new markets for new spheres of influence, etc. You all follow the confrontation that takes place between Germany and France about who will capture Africa and Middle East. You see what happened in Haiti immediately after the recent earthquake. The socialist Cuba has sent 1.600 doctors. The USA sent 16.000 soldiers. Take a look in Latin America, the militarization of Colombia to hit the

Bolivarian processes in Venezuela, in Ecuador, in Bolivia and elsewhere.

Look at the brutality and the crimes of Israel against the Palestinians, against the Gaza Strip, against all Arab people. Crimes are done with the tolerance and the hypocrisy of the International Organizations.

This is on titles, the picture of the capitalist system today.

Which such a political, social and economic environment, the WFTU should move and act.

In the first half of 2010, in the first six months of 2010 we held many important activities, seminars, conferences and militant initiatives.

All of them were significant but allow me to underline:

- The big solidarity campaign that we organized in Mexico City on March 11/12.
- The big event on Social Security organized in Athens on 23-24 March
- The interesting seminar on the role of Mass Media in April with many trade union students.
- The very important Forum in Beijing organized together with the ACFTU-ICATU-OATU in Beijing 25-26 February.
- The economic campaign to express solidarity and assist the victims of the earthquakes in Chile and Haiti.

We are also adding the tens of activities of our Regional offices, of our TUIs of our members in their countries and their sectors.

So far, we did it pretty well. The results are the 64 new affiliates for the WFTU in the last four years!

WFTU's finances

The only area that we do not go well is our finances. Unfortunately we do not go well at all. Although we talked all together in Vietnam and we adopted concrete decisions we are still very behind.

During 2010, the organizations that paid fees and gave financial assistance to the Central Offices are:

Brazil CTB 20.000 euros.
Greece PAME 10.000 euros.
Greece Federation of Construction Workers of Greece 10.000 euros.
Sudan SWTUF 7.547,17 euros.
Korea GFTU 5.000 euros.
TUI Metal 5.000 euros.
Turk-cypriot organisations (BES, KTAMS,KTOS) 1.500 euros.
Bangladesh Trade Unions 220 euros.
Guyana GAWU 540 euros.
Hondura FUTH 500 euros.
France Antenne FSM Marseille (Joseph Lop) 300 euros.

We have decided that each member organization to pay immediately the fees for two years (2010 and 2011) the amount of 2.000 euros.

Each TUI to pay for two years (2010 and 2011) the amount of 5.000 euros.

For those organizations that are stronger there is a concrete amount.

We call everyone to pay as soon as possible their fees. You all know that the WFTU's only income is the fees of its members and friendly trade unions.

The expenses of the Congress have already begun.

From now on, we have many things to do.

The first important task of is to successfully prepare the 16th World Trade Union Congress to take place in Athens Greece on April 2011. We want this Congress to be a new major, positive step for the class trade union forces. We want a Congress that will be open to all trade unions, open to all trade unionists. A democratic Congress where everyone will express his opinion and everyone will have a role. A Congress where the major players will be the problems of workers in all continents, all countries.

And together we will take major decisions on strategy and tactics of the class trade union movement for the next five years.

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I urge everyone to work together, not in words but in acts. With actions and concrete results mainly because the results stay.

In our course for the 16th World Trade Union Congress we plan:

- Many activities for the 65 years since the establishment of WFTU.
- We hold on July 6/7, in Strasbourg France, a seminar with the ILO.
- We hold on July 22/24, the third Conference of Nuestra America in Venezuela
- We have on September 24-30, Conference in South Africa with local affiliates and friendly organizations.
- We celebrate on September 7, the International Day of Action of WFTU with main motto on the crisis. We ask you all to act on September 7, with strikes, rallies, demonstrations, conferences etc. Everyone to be in streets, everyone to be in the struggle of September. Last year, in 2009, many important initiatives took place in 48 countries. Let's this year, make it more and even important ones.
- On 4/5 October in Brussels we also hold an International Seminar inside the European Parliament.
- In November we plan activities of solidarity with our comrades in Colombia.
- We are planning Seminars in Egypt with our members in the Mining and Commercial Trade Union Federations.

Many other interesting initiatives of the Regional Offices and TUIs are planned to take place during the year.

Dear Friends

A special action of WFTU is a three-day strike, which was declared in June at all ports of the world against commercial vessels of Israel. It is a struggle of Solidarity with the

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Palestinian people and we want you all to act. Everyone to become Palestinians. Not to permit to the commercial vessels from and to Israel to load or unload for three days.

Comrades and friends

The road to the 16th World Trade Union Congress will be long, with difficulties and obstacles. But we 're fighters. We are experienced and we will succeed. Together we can achieve.

We ask you to inform your countries about the Congress, its aims and documents. To make publications, to write articles, to update all employees, workers, youth, women, immigrants in the workplaces.

To gain new members, new friends, new allies.

We can do it, together we can do much.

I would like to finish this intervention of the Secretariat with two subjects related to the releasing of the government of Colombia on one hand, and the condemn of the government of Venezuela on the other hand. Both decisions confirm the strong criticism that we have made and we still make about the role of the Workers' Group of the Governing Body, about the lack of representativeness and democracy. In the end, what is the role of the ILO? Where are the justice and equality?

It is unacceptable the decision of erasing Colombia from the list of the countries that violate the trade union freedoms, when 29 trade unionists have been assassinated in the last 12 months. Shame on those trade unionists that agreed and participated in the secret negotiations with the employers and the government. It does not matter that they try to to hide their

responsibility behind childish excuses because they will not succeed. They must give up and go home.

From the WFTU, from the class-oriented trade union movement, we want to send a solidarity message to the people of Colombia that struggles in every way for freedoms, for democracy and social progress. We greet the people of Venezuela and their struggle to decide by themselves, and not the imperialists, about their present and their future. In the WFTU we are proud of the position held by our affiliates on these subjects, both our affiliates in Venezuela and in Colombia. We congratulate them for their militant, honest and working class position held.

To finish, we make a call upon all workers in every country to judge and to get their own conclusions on which one is the role of the ITUC and which one is the role of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

Thank you.



WFTU Presidential Council Meeting

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Energy Workers' Front, FTE, in México