



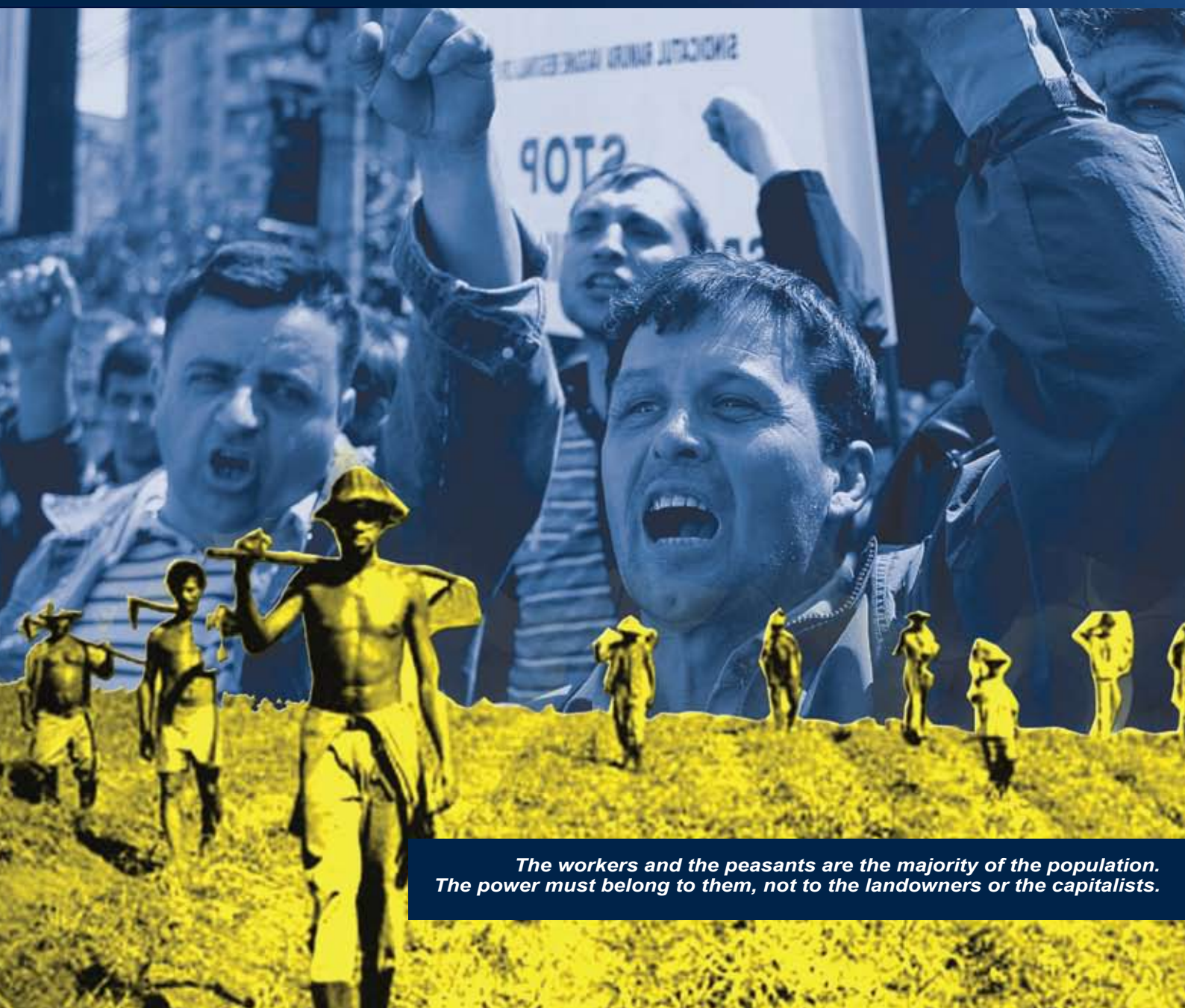
#3

September 2011

REFLECTS

World Federation of Trade Unions

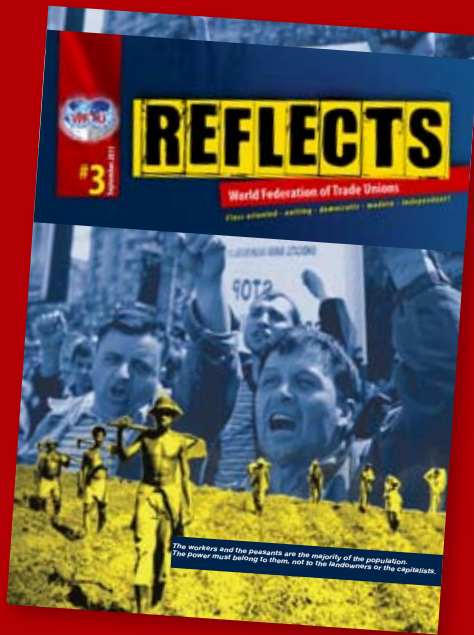
Class oriented - uniting - democratic - modern - independent!



*The workers and the peasants are the majority of the population.
The power must belong to them, not to the landowners or the capitalists.*

3RD OCTOBER 2011

International Action Day



TRIBUTE TO THE 16TH WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS

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A ceremony equivalent of the six decades of WFTU's history

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FOR THE RECOGNITION OF THE PALESTINIAN STATE
IN THE 1967 BORDERS



The Secretariat of WFTU has decided and announced that the International Action Day for the year 2011 will be the 3rd October 2011. This day was chosen as the 3rd October is the day when FSM was founded in 1945. Trade Union Organisations and Federations from many countries have already declared their participation to the 3rd International Action Day with various activities and demonstrations.

The main slogans for the International Action Day that will be heard and projected in all action all over the world are:

- Social Security for all
- Collective Bargaining - Collective agreements
- Trade Union and Democratic Freedoms
- Working week of 7 hours a day, 5 days a week, 35 hours per week. Better Salaries.
- Solidarity with the Palestinian People
- Freedom to the Five Cubans



16th World Trade Union Congress

**Athens, Greece
6-10 April 2011**

Conclusions from the 16th World Trade Union Congress

The 10 steps

By George Mavrikos, General Secretary of WFTU

With the completion of such an important event we ought to study, analyze, examine this event comprehensively in order to draw the right conclusions. If our conclusions are correct, they will help us in the present and in the future. If they are wrong, they will make our work more difficult. This is why it is a necessity for us to obtain a clear picture: An objective true and realistic assessment. This is what we will try to accomplish in the following article.

1. The decision to hold the 16th World Trade Union Congress in Athens **was a correct and collective decision** taken after discussion with the Secretariat and the Presidential Council of WFTU. **The economic crisis in Greece, the great massive class-oriented struggles of the Greek working people and the strong presence of PAME** were the three main factors that led the bodies of WFTU to decide on the holding of the 16th Congress in Athens during their meeting in Vietnam. The works, the organization and the quality of the Congress proved that the choice of Athens was correct. The results confirmed it.



2. The 16th Congress of WFTU was **one of the most successful Congresses** of the Organization. We conclude in this assessment by evaluating the works of the Congress, not only for the works themselves, but as part of the total effort for the reconstruction of the international class-oriented trade union movement of the last years. We evaluate the results of the Congress in direct comparison and relation to the status of WFTU before the 15th Congress of Havana, but also according to the duties which were assigned to the new leadership of the Federation after the Havana Congress. **We ought to see the Congress itself**

as the climax of an effort that took place over the last 5 years, but also as a beginning and a stockpile for new efforts. The Congress was the resulting climax of a collective effort of all our members and friends, of the Central Offices, the Regional Offices, the National Organizations and our TUI's.

3. The solemnity, the good organization, the militancy of PAME was an important factor for the success of the Congress. Without the hundreds of fighters, young, men and women, who workers with revolutionary spirit we could have not overcome the difficulties and the problems that always present themselves in such great international events. Thus, on behalf of WFTU we thank PAME for its support which is stable and constant from the first day that WFTU was transferred from Prague to Athens. **The role of many of our friends and members who supported financially the needs of the 16th Congress was also very important.** Without the financial support that we received from these organizations it would be difficult to organize and cover the needs of the Congress. As a conclusion, we understand that the common effort, the collectiveness and the coordination are elements that had a positive impact. We thank everyone.

4. The Report of Action 2006-2010 presented thoroughly the efforts of the last years for the revival of WFTU, the coordination of the activities of the class-oriented organizations in the 5 continents, **the important steps** that took place in the direction of the development of the proletarian internationalism. The important result of these five years: WFTU became a more stable **reference point** for the class-oriented trade unions worldwide, in contrast to reformism and the yellow trade unions. A characteristic element in the transformation of WFTU into a pole of attraction is **the affiliation of more than 89 organizations that entered its ranks and the undergoing process inside other trade union centers for a future affiliation to WFTU.** The Report of Action 2006-2010 was not only words, it was action.

5. All the main documents were prepared collectively. With these

basic documents there was an effort to strengthen and deepen the basic line of contradiction between the working class and the class-oriented trade union movement on the one side and the capital and its trade union representatives on the other. The voting of these documents allows us to work more methodically in order for this line of struggle to be widely understood, to reduce the illusions and confusions regarding the capabilities and the limits of the capitalist system, **to enhance the understanding of the need for internationalism and coordination between the class-oriented forces.** Moreover, we collectively prepared the new Statute of WFTU which was unanimously approved in a special voting procedure by the Congress.

6. The organizations that became affiliated to WFTU and participated in the works of the 16th World Trade Union Congress cannot be just **quantitatively** evaluated, whether

this has to do with the amount of the organizations or their massiveness. Off course, massive organizations such as CITU of India, CTB of Brazil (with a sum of 11 million members) have a special weight and can play an important role in the further global and continental growth of the WFTU's influence. The **qualitative** element, however, of the existence of less massive trade union organizations that are aligning with the class-oriented line of WFTU, has also a special importance, especially in areas which have been historically wounded by reformism and opportunism such as Europe or others, where the yellow trade unions are nowadays doing intensive efforts to integrate and buy off (in Africa, Latin America etc.)

After all, we should not forget that the massiveness of many trade unions affiliated to ITUC does not reflect the real position of wide labor masses. In contrast, it is actually a result of the domination of the trade union bureaucracy and the strata of the labor aristocracy in the trade



union centers of many countries, the complete attachment of these centers to the bourgeoisie states and the mechanisms of integration.

7. The **action** of the last five years and the new members of WFTU, **brought a fresh air in the Organization, an air of militant spirit** and contact with the wide labor masses in their countries. This must be a basic criterion in our evaluation, because WFTU suffered, before but also after the reversals of the period 1989-1991, from the inactivity and from an ossified "organizational" concept and structure. The new blood that entered the veins of WFTU over the last five years helped us to overcome bureaucratic concepts and the routine.

8. We all agree that the 16th World Trade Union Congress was **Open, Democratic, Militant**. The large number of the participants, their composition, their eagerness to take the floor (more than 115 delegates took the floor), the constant presence in all the Congress Works and the participation in the voting procedures enhance the positive picture of the Congress. 881 representatives and observers participated in the Congress from 101 countries. 811 voted in the elections. We have to remind that at the 15th Congress 503 representatives and observers from 64 countries had participated. The 16th Congress of WFTU, in comparison to the 15th Congress, was characterized by a richer contribution of the interventions, both in their geographical range (countries, continents) and in their content. There were less general descriptive interventions and more interventions that highlighted parts and needs of the class-oriented struggle. There were interventions that opened subjects such as the need for the coordination of the struggle against the transnational monopolies, the multinational companies. Interventions that highlighted the

special difficulties and the special role of WFTU in the countries of Africa. Interventions that stigmatized the role of the yellow trade unions in Europe (Spain, France, Germany). We have to underline that until the opening of the Congress about two thousand pages of proposals, thoughts and observations were sent from every corner of the planet. All these proposals were added in the files of the Congress and were distributed to all the representatives and observers.

9. The **renewal in the leadership with the election of many new members in the Presidential Council offers WFTU a new dynamic. 40 members of the Presidential Council were elected from which 24 are new members.** This renewal that reaches a percentage of 60% shows that there is internal democracy in our organizations, there is no careerism and that the National Organizations-members of WFTU move forward to the renewal of their cadres. There were smaller changes in the Secretariat, while the participation of women still remains low. There are also two new responsible in the Regional Offices (Europe and Africa). All these changes occurred in a brotherly, comradely spirit and a spirit of self-criticism without arguing and fighting. Without personal and individual tactics. All these show that step-by-step we accomplish **maturity** and we are becoming more capable in our struggle.

10. The important organizational and political-ideological enhancement of WFTU in the last five years does not mean that we have overcome all our **weaknesses, we still have plenty.** Mostly, regarding the organizational strengthening of WFTU with new forces, and regarding the international coordination of the action (so that the central directions will be accomplished in unity by the TUI's, the Regional Offices and the member-

organisations). Because the line of the WFTU Secretariat is not enough for the contradistinction with the monopolies and imperialism, for the need of clear rupture with the employers trade unionism and opportunism.

There still are many trade union organizations who are our members that do not present WFTU. Some of them are afraid to mention WFTU. The lack of a united concept upon the basic, strategic subjects makes the progress and the growth of our work more difficult. Furthermore, the need for the enhancement of the collectiveness, the enhancement of criticism and self-criticism, the constant struggle against bureaucracy are characteristics that the class-oriented trade union movement must obtain nowadays in international level.

In the current conditions of the capitalist barbarity and the imperialist aggressiveness every trade unionist can be judged by his position towards the WFTU and the ITUC.

The members and the friends of WFTU are combative, simple people, who love the simple people and are ready for many sacrifices for the interest of the working class. The high-level cadres of the ITUC, on the other hand, are ready for every ideological, political, cash or careerist compromise.

These are two different worlds, two different perceptions, two different strategies.

Based on these, we believe that we held a good Congress that constitutes a positive step for WFTU. Without underestimating or overestimating our capabilities we can be optimistic for the present and the future of the Working Class.



INTERVIEW WITH BABIS VORTELINOS

“A work of 600 people”

Babis Vortelinos: Coordinator of the Organising Committee of PAME for the 16th Congress. Member of the Executive Committee of PAME, Organising President of the Trade Union of Workers of Organization of Municipalities

REFLECTS: When did the preparations of the Congress start?

Babis Vortelinos: We started the preparations for the Congress two and a half years before, which means we started on the January of 2009. This is when we formed a small team of five trade unionists who held a meeting once every month to discuss all the issues. Those five were comrades G. Mavrikos, G. Perros, G. Pontikos, Chr. Lampoudi and myself. On January of 2010 when the formal decision to hold the Congress in Athens was taken, then we held a common meeting of the WFTU Secretariat and the Secretariat of PAME. An Organizing Committee of 35 comrades, who were experienced and effective, was formed.

R: How many people worked for this Congress?

B.V: 400 cadres of PAME and 200 cadres of the Communist Youth of Greece worked for this Congress, 600 comrades. The largest group was those who participated in the safety team, more than 150 comrades worked in this team which was headed by two construction workers, G. Protoulis and G. Tasoulas. Another team was responsible for arrivals and the departures. 40 people worked for this team which was headed by G. Pontikos kai V. Stamoulis.

Another team was responsible for the escorting and the schedules of the 18 buses. More than 30 young comrades worked in this team which was headed by comrade P. Iliopoulos. The team responsible for the cultural activities was headed by Ch. Lampoudi, while the team of the Information Desks inside the Hotels was headed by comrade Antonella Malen. The team of the Press Room headed by comrade Alexandra Liberie. The teams which were responsible for the filling of the stadium with more than 4,5 thousand workers and the preparation of the venue were headed by G. Perros, Chr. Katsiotis, G. Komninos and Th. Gogos. The team of the immigrants

was headed by Ilias from Bangladesh. And of course there was also the 4 months long fundraising campaign of PAME to collect funds for the Congress which was headed by B. Tenes. Of course there were other teams of specialists such as doctors, lawyers, etc.

Of course, there was also the personnel of WFTU who I believe are heroes since they worked hard day and night for a long time, they had the responsibility to communicate with all the countries of the world, with hundreds of embassies, with the hotels, with the ministries and with the 828 representatives from 101 countries of the world. I should also mention the participation of more than 60 Greek and Foreign correspondents and also the translators from Cuba, Portugal, Ukraine and other countries.

R: Which were the main difficulties you faced during the preparations?

B.V: The difficulties were many but we faced all of them with militant and collective spirit. The youth offered its soul; the workers inside the factories offered their financial support for the funding of the expenses which were many, the technicians of the

TV, the preparations of the opening ceremony that was great, they all had difficulties which we had to face and deal with in the best possible way until the last detail.

R: Are you satisfied with the result?

B.V: Yes, we are satisfied because the participants which were almost 900 were satisfied as well. It was a great Congress, everything was on time and with the proper manner. On behalf of the 600 Greeks that workers for this Congress I need to thank all the foreign delegations, representatives and observers for the good cooperation, the discipline and the appreciation they expressed for PAME. It was an honor for the Greek working class to have hosted such an important and historic Congress.

“It was an honor for the Greek working class to have hosted such an important and historic Congress”



**16th World Trade
Union Congress**

**Athens, Greece
6-10 April 2011**

YOUNG COMBATIVE VOLUNTEERS

Dedicated all their efforts for the success of the 16th Congress

The success of the 16th World Trade Union Congress is partially due to them. They are young men and women who dedicated their efforts and time in accomplishing the best possible result in the different tasks they had undertaken in order to facilitate the best environment for the success of the Congress works. Dozens of

young people supported the hosting of the 16th Congress voluntarily by undertaking the tasks of the translation of documents, the information desks in the hotels, the preparation of the venues, the escorting of the buses and the delegations, the safety of the delegates etc.



Pavlos, Safety Team:

"PAME, which expresses the class-oriented trade union movement in Greece and is a member of WFTU for the last 11 years now, welcomed with great enthusiasm the 16th Congress. There was hard work for a long time in order to accomplish the best possible result and this was a result of the work of thousands of volunteers, workers and working women but also young workers and students

from the student movement who offered their time and efforts with self-sacrifice. We are positive that the impact of the Congress will be decisive for the organizations of our struggles to come, for the strengthening of the anti-imperialist anti-monopoly line, for the abolition of the exploitation of man-by-man."

A ceremony equivalent of the six decades of WFTU's history

The over packed stadium of Tae Kwon Do welcomed the 828 delegates and declared the initiation of the 16th World Trade Union Congress.

Workers from every corner of the capital of Greece, holding high up the flags of international solidarity, under the sounds of working class militant songs and crowd thunders of banners and mottos, directed a warm welcome to the trade unionists that arrived in Athens after traveling miles and miles in order to participate in the 16th World Trade Union Congress.



Photo of delegations outside the Stadium

During the presence of the representatives, with applauses and unstoppable internationalist banners, with pulse and intensification that roused the whole stadium, the Greek workers welcomed one by one the delegates of the international working class.

The initiation ceremony represented a great internationalist celebration equivalent to the six decades of WFTU. That history was honored with the projection of a video dedicated to the 65 years of WFTU and its contribution

to the history of the trade union class movement. WFTU has always been present on the side of the workers' movement at the struggle against exploitation, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid.

On the behalf of the Executive Secretariat of PAME, that bears the responsibility of organizing the Congress, George Perros directed an official salutation to the 16th World Trade Union Congress: "We see in your faces and salute the millions of workers and working women who rally and struggle from inside the rows of WFTU for the working class' interests, in the atrocious struggle against monopolies and imperialism" and he added: "We all share consciousness about under what circumstances we struggles, as well as our responsibility to come to the end as winners. We are certain that our Congress shall provide us with fresh power and endurance".

The official initiation of the congress was declared by the President of



The Greek Working Class welcome the 16th Congress



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the WFTU Mr. Muhammad Shaaban Azouz, which started with the salutations of Mr. Gr. Niotis, First Vice President of the Greek Parliament, Mr. G. Sgouros Regional Prefect of Attiki, Mr. G. Kaminis Mayor of Athens and Mr. V. Mihaloliakos, Mayor of Piraeus.

George Mavrikos, the General Secretary of WFTU, underlined in his speech: "We have come here, to the World Trade Union Congress, through great struggles on departmental, local and regional level, through an open, democratic, militant debate throughout the trade unions, the working places, the basic branches. We have organized decent central initiatives, debates, critical enquiry of our work, exchanges of opinions concerning the timeous, current matters that engage the working class around the world".

"We shall produce an open, class oriented, democratic congress, all together workers, men and women, fighters from all the branches, all of us who have voluntarily joined the rows of the class struggle against capital and imperialism". "We go on the path of class struggle. Against imperialism and capital. For a world without man by man exploitation. For a future that shall belong to the working people". The great participation, the thousands of pages - of proposals that have been sent to the congress, as well as the thousands of Greek workers who suffused the stadium in order to participate to the initiation ceremony, constitute a thunderous proof that WFTU is strong, is in action, grows stronger day by day, and signifies the workers' interests."



The delegations are entering the Stadium under the warm applause of the Greek people



Muhammad Shaaban Azzouz, President of WFTU on the floor of the Presidium

Vividness and optimism were present at all times

Enthusiasm, fraternity, solidarity and multiculturalism were the feelings that fulfilled the venues of the 16th Congress. The delegates from the 101 countries of the five continents and the historic moments of each part of the Congress program draw a clear image of the WFTU family and the strong bonds of the class-oriented trade union movement.

Following the opening ceremony, the Congress Works took place for the next three days in a venue which was always filled. 115 speakers took the floor reapproving the general direction of the WFTU's course and providing different aspects of the labour problems and the ways for the strengthening of the WFTU's leading role in the struggles of the working movement.

When entering the stadium plenty of kiosks with posters, leaflets and a variety of information from organizations around the world welcomed the participants. The need for common action and initiatives between trade unions from different countries was a subject in many discussions which pointed out the necessity for coordination against an organized and powerful enemy such as the transnational monopolies which are exploiting the workers in different countries.

Congress Facilities

An exhibition of art referring to the struggle of the working class was held in the Congress Venue. **Eva Mela**, the President of the Administration Council of the Greek Chamber of Fine Arts and responsible for this exhibition noted: *"We were greatly honored to present at the 16th Congress of WFTU our work of arts on the subject of the Shiprepair Zone in Perama City. This artworks have been exhibited before in the working place of this Zone in Perama at a festival which is being organized by the trade unions for the last five years. We were all inspired by the lives and the struggles of the working class of Perama and through our own view we presented the Zone which is fading out from the selling-out and the policy of the EU for the shiprepair industry, the Zone of unemployment and exploitation, the Zone of the working accidents and the employers promiscuity, the Zone of the great trade union struggles, the Zone which is dreaming and struggling for another prospect."*

An exhibition of the posters launched by WFTU over the



The Sri Lanka Pavillion in the pavilion facility of the Congress



Exchange of experience: important aspect of the Congress



Internationalist Event organized by the CP of Greece



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Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



Ceremony at Kesariani Shooting Range



last years and a selection of the WFTU posters through the history was also presented in the Congress Venue which were actually images of the WFTU landmarks thought its recent and older history.

During the Congress Works, a room with computers and internet access as well as a printing center was facilitating the delegated needs at all times.

Activities in the framework of the Congress

In the framework of the 16th World Trade Union Congress different activities were organized. The delegates paid their respects in some of the militant symbols of the Greek and international working class. The statue of Bolivar, the Shooting Ground of Kaisariani -a heroic memorial of the Greek working class- and the Syntagma Square in front of the Greek Parliament.

An internationalist event was also organized by the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), that invited the delegates to its headquarters. The General Secretary of KKE, Aleka Papariga took the floor and addressed a greeting towards the delegates. The speech was succeeded by a cultural event with militant songs that were accepted with enthusiasm.

Finally, the ending of the Congress was celebrated with cultural events at the hotels of the delegates. Feelings of amazement and optimism were common amongst all as the participants celebrated together with the young people who helped and supported the making of the congress in the sounds of greek traditional music.

Ceremony at the Statue of Bolivar

Common goals, common strategy

115 speakers took the floor in the Main Conference Hall of the 16th Congress. A hall which was always filled. The variety of nationalities, of sectors and age, the depth of their interventions which did not only describe but also analyzed the labor reality, offered solutions and contributed in the strengthening of WFTU's strategy and action plan kept the interest of the participants

for all the days of the Congress. It was common belief that the 16th Congress offered the opportunity for a true, open and uniting dialogue between the class-oriented trade union movement and established the common need for coordination and internationalist solidarity against our common enemy, imperialism and its outcomes, the international capitalist crisis

and its consequences for the working people.

Each interventions, each criticism, each proposal strengthened our common goal for a WFTU strong and combative able to lead the struggle for the contemporary needs of the working people, for a world without exploitation of man-by-man.

Lulamile Sotaka, NEHAWU South Africa:
"The present economic crisis is confirming this fact. All of these developments are spurring all trade unions, federations and confederations – all working class organizations including those who have differed before to realize that workers all over the world have but only the imperialist stumbling block and its lackeys to surmount. The united struggles of the working class will bring closer the birth of a new system that must replace the imperialist system – socialism"

Vladimir R. Tupaz, TUPAS Philippines
"The Athens Pact accurately presented the historical perspective, the present condition of workers and trade unionist all over the world and what is to be done to achieve our noble objective. Peace and Social Progress free from exploitation of man by man. (...) We have an immense task in front of us but we must not turn a blind eye on what we foresee as dangerous future for our workers. We must not allow to let the sacrifices of trade union leaders in the past to be forgotten"

Pambis Kyritsis, PEO Cyprus:
"The evaluation of the action of WFTU since the 15th Havana Congress leads us to say that there have been important and visible steps towards the right direction. The decisions we made and the changes that occurred since the 15th Congress are proven to have been decisive and leading us to a course of growth and progress. The organizational growth, the impact and the enhanced role of WFTU in the

international trade union movement is obvious. With collective work and action, we can bring the international trade union movement to the levels we aim, in response to the demands and the expectations of the workers"

Thanasis Pafilis, General Secretary of the World Peace Council
"It is a decisive and strategically important issue that the anti-imperialist peace-friendly movement will closely cooperate with the workers movement first and foremost and also with the movements of the youth and the women in national, regional and international level. A cooperation that will have aim to the creation of a popular front which will counterattack with the causes that give birth to these situation: the capitalist system itself. A movement that will strengthen the struggle against plutocracy, against the imperialist unions, against the anti-labor governments and will gather popular forces in the pursuit of the counterattack and the general overthrow."

Nassib Rezek, Head of Regional Office Middle East
"All these things require that the 16th Congress of the WFTU under maximized responsibilities and serious challenges will take decisions and will make recommendations that will serve the Arab and international working people. Let's unite our efforts and strengthen our rows to make this congress a start for the new take-off which will advance our national

and our organizations life."

Ramon Cardona, Head of Regional Office Latin America
It is hoped that our Association XVI World Congress, takes agreements that will enhance what has been achieved. It would be extraordinarily valuable because they guide and mobilize to respond to the interests of workers, the adoption of a brief but forceful Action Plan - as the central report said - to join us in the fight against capital by adding to that, since its condition of regular and irregular workers, unemployed, fired, peasants, indigenous, landless, destitute, homeless and poor, fight against that power regardless of political differences or whatsoever.

Julien Huck, UISTA ACT
"Every day we see trade unionists who agree with the bosses concerning lay-offs, social reversals, questioning the freedom and rights of trade unions. They are the same trade unionists who accept the capitalist system and who would like to , as they say, give it a human face. From the trade union point of view, the task of giving confidence to the young workers falls on us. It is up to us to make them see that the capitalist system is not an inevitability, that there was a before and there will be an after. "

H. Mahadevan, Deputy General Secretary, India
"The need of the hour is, of course,



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globalizations. Not the capitalist globalization, that the WTO recommends, but globalization of the struggle against the present ill effects of the capitalist Trio (WB-IMF-WTO). A broad-based democratic struggle encompassing all sectors of society must challenge the legitimacy of the capitalist globalization currently in operation and re-assert national sovereignty, elimination of poverty and lasting world peace"

Castro Abdallah, FENASOL Lebanon

"Workers and people of the Arab world are uprising against dictatorship systems which suppressed the people and stole their wealth. At the same time these systems were subject to imperialist powers, under the leadership of USA and following its project that is called "the New Middle East". It aims to, according to those who planned it, divide our people on ethnic and sectarian bases and to change our Arab region into conflicting states among each other. This facilitates the way for the imperialist coalition to put their hands on the wealth of the region, mainly the black gold.

Safiuddin Ahmed, JSFB Bangladesh

"It is clear that to combat the multinationals who are united globally, we need to act globally in the trade union front, so that the multi-nationals are forced to agree to our demands.. The billionaires of any country do not have any territorial boundary within them, for them they are global, similarly we should also act globally to combat the global enemy of ours."

Sebastiao Soares, TUI Public Services

"The crisis that we live opens up possibilities and challenges to defend, with our struggles, a new world economic order based on the progress of nations, social justice, solidarity and unity of the

international working class. Public servers of the world, all united we will win."

Joaquin Romero, Colombia

"These class battles have been headed by major trade unions affiliated to the Union World federation . Despite terrorism of state, this has not been able to crush the capitalist ruling, so they ask the Government for the installation of more U.S. military bases on national territory , for the purpose of fighting the Colombian insurgency and the growing popular discontent, and , at the same time preparing from Colombia territory the aggression against the progressive governments and peoples of the region of our America which point the way forward democracy"

Julia Amparo Lotas Garzona, UNSITBAGUA, Guatemala

"We also believe that despite the aggressiveness of capitalism the picture is not bleak, we emphasize and value in perspective, the response of the working class, that with courage we are taking courage from our trenches of struggle. In this regard, priority should continue to strengthen the fight to defend our territory, to respect the self determination of the people and the rejection of mechanisms of exploitation and dispossession of poor countries which are the targets of national and transnational monopolistic companies"

Benjamin Okewu, ATSSSAN Nigeria

"The economic meltdown is an indication of the final phase of the collapse of the capitalist system and we are happy that the WFTU is mobilizing and reawakening the entire work force of the world to take over from the capitalist. For us in the Trade Union movement in Nigeria, we are very much ready and capable of doing it and as we believe that WFTU remains the

only viable platform to realize this".

Wasantha Samarasignhe, Inter Company Employees Union, Sri Lanka:

"Workers around the world as well as in Sri Lanka are entitling for decent work. But the global capitalist system does not allow that. Where there is no decent salary there is no decent work. The need for a workers to be paid a decent salary to live a comfortable life has to be an integral aspect of the struggle for decent work. "

Quim Boix, CSU Spain

"We believe that WFTU should support the struggle of these groups, the pensioners, in various places on the planet. Today there is an important task of class unionism, the collective defense of a large number and growing number in absolute numbers, the pensioners. We propose that the WFTU, in the period from this Congress until the 17th Congress, is capable of putting up a TUI bringing together pensioners worldwide. This TUI will for sure be victorious."

Brazil CGTB Antonio Neto

"From the union point of view, we believe it is necessary to further strengthen the unity and mobilization of the working class to consolidate the rights of workers, killing the nest a new wave of flexibility that begins to emerge in Europe with the intention to move the world like a tsunami that tries to crush social rights."

Report of Action and Election of New Bodies

Regional Meetings for all continents were held in the framework of the 16th Congress.

Besides the 115 speakers who took the floor in the Main Conference Hall there were also dozens of speakers who took the opportunity to discuss the specific regional issues that concern the class-oriented trade union movement. Rich discussion took place in the regional meetings and the meeting of the Youth Committee, referring to

the need for greater coordination and efficiency in the struggles for the acute contemporary labour problems and the modern demands of the working class.

The regional meetings concluded in a report of action and the election of new bodies, while there were efforts for the establishment of a women's and a pensioner's committee.



EUROF Meeting

10th Meeting of the European Regional Office

The European conventioners, from the social-democratic Sweden with its notorious "model" to the bisected Cyprus, all of them referred to the capitalist reformation in their countries (privatizations, cutting offs from wages and pensions, layoffs, unemployment, abolitions of collective agreements), to the advancing capitalist crisis and to the



Meeting of the Regional Office of Middle East

Dozens of speakers took the opportunity to discuss the specific regional issues that concern the class-oriented trade union movement

penalization of the struggles. They committed themselves to work together for the mass development of WFTU with unity and class oriented struggle. By underlining the imperialist role of the EU, they turned down every form of social dialogue. The following organizations were elected at the new regional office: PEO from Cyprus, PAME from Greece, OSMCS from Czech Republic, USB from Italy, OGB from Austria, Serbia TU from Serbia, LAB from the country of Basques, CGTP-IN from Portugal.

Asian-Pacific Regional Meeting

The Asian meeting which consists of organizations from India, Nepal, Japan, Philippines, Bangladesh, Australia, Pakistan

and Sri Lanka, was concerned mostly about the difficulty of organizing the workers' struggle in a vast area full of disorders and huge objective difficulties, such as civil wars, earthquakes, tsunamis and regular military interventions. A quite intensified debate followed concerning the factual expression of internationalist solidarity in between the trade unions mostly towards disaster areas such as Japan.

Inter alia it was decided to form a helping committee for a better coordination as well as a women's

committee. Despite of whatever disagreements that were expressed, the conventioners committed themselves to empower WFTU and to take the responsibility, each and every one of them, to organize new forces into the struggle and to make WFTU accepted and heard by wide masses of workers in their countries.

Latin America and Caribbean Regional Meeting

Organizing issues also concerned the regional meeting of Latin America with reference to the effectiveness of the duty to enlarge WFTU by organizing new affiliates. Until now, the American region is counting hundreds of new affiliates that mostly come from Latin America. The



16th World Trade Union Congress

Athens, Greece
6-10 April 2011



Meeting of the Regional Office of Latin America



Meeting for the Women's Committee

conventioners reelected comrade Ramon Cardona for the head of the regional office, and they will meet again at the Nicaragua meeting in August where they will elect their representatives from their sub regions after discussions with their bases.

African Regional Meeting

On 10th of April 2011 the WFTU African members held their Regional meeting chambered by Prf. Ibrahim Ghandour the president of Sudan Workers Federation Trade Union and the president of O.A.T.U.U. The meeting was attended by George Mavrikos the General Secretary of WFTU.

The meeting discussed the report of the Francophone office stated at Dakar, Senegal and the problems faced by the regional office and how the African members can solve it.

The First and crucial one was the financial status, so there were many suggestions submitted in the meeting such as that SWFTU will host a regional meeting for all Africa members to discuss in details obstacles, challenges and the future plan of action, dated initially to be at the beginning of 2012 at Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, and SWFTU also proposed to sponsor one or two initiatives for the regional office to be held in any pace inside Africa.

Women's Meeting

During the 16th Congress of WFTU took place a meeting of working women which began with the recommendation of Osiris Oviedo de la Torre, deputy General Secretary. She said: "WFTU has fully taken on the task of defending the economic, political and social rights of working women as a moral obligation question that has been approved in its Congress resolutions." Women from Colombia, Maghreb, India, South Africa, Palestine, Central Africa, Brazil, USA and France rose to step to affirm that the women issue regardless continent has the same root, the exploitation of working class which brings double oppression on women. All these women wanted to express how thankful they are about the great opportunity that WFTU gives to new trade unionist women to exchange such an important experience.

Common place of their speeches was the big rates of illiteracy, unemployment, poverty and discrimination that keeps them from finding jobs, as well as the inability to participate in trade unions. The conclusion of these processes is that with a strong struggle against capitalism, a tight trade union movement and revolutionary optimism emancipation of women will be real parallel with the release of whole working class in another social community.



Meeting of the International Youth Committee of WFTU

Youth Meeting

Young delegates from Guatemala, France, Nigeria, Tunisia, USA, South Africa, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Peru and other countries from all the continents got together in the framework of the 16th Congress -once again after the 1st International Conference of Youth that took place in Peru, December 2009- as a initiative of the International Youth Committee to discuss the future developments of

their activities in order to empower the youth movement which at the present time is very weak. In an atmosphere of enthusiasm as well as deep concern, the participants committed themselves to intensify their activities in the future within regional frames and to strengthen their in between relationship. Exchange of political information, mobilizations, initiatives and proposals on a regular basis is very important for the positive development and efficiency of the youth movement in each country. The need to fight against corrupted capitalist media is crucial.

Pensioners Meeting

In 16th WFTU Congress it was raised the need to organize pensioners and retirees in trade unions. People who reach this condition due to age or health reasons, receive a monthly allowance from the state in most countries, but the differences are huge between different countries. The common feature is the condition of wage earners from the state, but with the particularity that they cannot be dismissed. Those employees have to struggle for: minimum pension (which decent living), free health care, transport and entertainment, free care for people who cannot fend for themselves. WFTU will help to organize them in unions.





**16th World Trade
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INTERVIEWS

“Reflections” of the Congress Delegates



**Extracts of Interview with
CL-CGT, Mattie Bolle Redoat**

“The target today and the responsibility of all unions is to keep WFTU alive for it to be heard, to be credible throughout the world. To be able to manage large campaigns in the future for the elimination of the debt, for the survival of third world countries, for the withdrawal of NATO and the European Union from occupied countries, for the withdrawal of international trade treaties are imperialist piracy but also for the support of the movement, especially in the northern countries. Because the problem is not only in the southern countries. The problem is global. To support the countries of the north fighting against the power of monopolies, against the power of the parasitic economic

and repressive governments and support the implementation of workers’ power and workers’ control over production, because today, the problem is twofold, in the north and south, in the third world but also in the developed countries as they are called. We see people sleeping in cardboard and the misery pushes women to give up their babies in the trash. This is called “growth”.

What I see, according to this is that there is a convergent battle and as long as we do not free our countries from imperialism, which are the bases of imperialism, as in the south we will have difficulties. So it is

a battle convergent.

Within the CGT an ideological struggle now exists. Therefore it is a particularly difficult struggle especially after the fall of the Soviet Union with the disappearance of many Northwest communist parties, mainly in France where they follow a reformist line, by calling themselves modern and supporting that the idea of socialism belongs to the past. These forces grow stronger and stronger inside

“The class struggle does not only occur in the road and our businesses. It occurs inside the trade unions, as well.”

the trade unions and therefore it is an everyday struggle. This is the existing situation. There are trade unionists and class oriented trade union organizations that today

“Reflections” of the Congress Delegates

intervene in the ranks of CGT with a context of requests that defend the rights and interests of workers so as to rejoin the WFTU. For this reason, today, we invite members of the various organizations of CGT to work, learn and renew the trade unionism in France. The class struggle does not only occur in the road and our businesses. It occurs inside the trade unions, as well, between the class oriented forces that conduct anti-imperialist action bound to the heritage of WFTU and those forces who would like to transform the CGT to an organization integrated in the capitalist system. That is the kind of trade unionism that is accompanied with capitalistic reforms. So there is a struggle within the CGT that influences the trade unions as the bourgeoisie has infiltrated into their ranks.

The majority of trade unions in CGT and CES as well supported the Lisbon Treaty which aims to put back the Confederation without a referendum. Therefore, nowadays we are in a great concern. We, the majority in CGT, are against the values of the ETUC, against the values of ITUC and against the direction that back all these moves without discussing and consulting, claiming that ETUC and ITUC's policy is modernism.”



Tiago Viera, General Secretary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY)

“The reinforcement of the class trade union movement is a vital condition for the success of the struggles of the workers”

“The congress of WFTU successfully identified the main problems of the young workers, as unemployment and precariousness, which have been substantially deepened in the framework of the international capitalist crisis.

Together with that, the need for the intensification of the struggle of young workers as part of the general struggle of the workers' movement was a guideline that deserves from WFDY the warmest welcoming, as it goes in line with our perspective and the needs of the days we live.

Last and not least, the reinforcement of the class trade union movement, which is occurring over the last years, is a vital condition for the success of the struggles of the workers, in general, and of the young generations, in particular.”

“Imperialist interventions in North Africa and Middle East, Internationalism and the role of the trade union movement”



The International Conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions entitled “The challenges of the countries of North Africa and Middle East. The role of the Trade Union Movement. Solidarity to the Palestinian People and the struggle of the Swazi people” was conducted on the 13th and 14th of September 2011 in Strasbourg, France.

Representatives of trade union organizations from Libya, Algeria, Palestine, Iran, South Africa, Senegal, RD Congo, France, Portugal, Greece, Peru, Cuba, India and the International Confederation of the Arab Trade Unions (ICATU) etc. participated in the International Conference of WFTU and unanimously agreed on resolutions regarding the developments in Libya, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Swaziland.

The important and interesting interventions of all the participants condemned the imperialist intervention in the area of North Africa and Middle East and demanded the end of the invasions and the need for the people to decide on their own for their present and future.

The role of the USA, the NATO, the EU and the

imperialist character of Israel were denounced, while the representatives of the international working class aligned with the International Campaign of WFTU for the recognition of the Palestinian State on the 1967 borders and the end of the Israeli occupation in the Arab territories and demanded democratic social and trade union rights and freedoms for all the people in the Arab Region. In solidarity with the struggle of the Swazi people, the International Conference of WFTU agreed on a resolution in solidarity with the Swazi cause for the end of monarchy, the establishment of a multiparty democracy with the direct unbanning of the political parties, the release of those imprisoned and the return of those in exile.

Nicaragua

IV Trade Union Meeting “Nuestra America”



The IV Trade Union Meeting “Nuestra America” was held on 25-27 August in Managua (Nicaragua) with the presence of more than 300 trade unionists from 134 organizations in 27 countries of America.

Comandante Daniel Ortega was present at the closing ceremony.

The meeting was hosted by the National Workers Front (FNT) of Nicaragua. The WFTU is the only international trade union organization that supports this initiative. On the first day of the meeting there was an important event of solidarity for the liberation of the Cuban 5 that remain

imprisoned in U.S. prisons.

Besides, hours before the start of the Nuestra America Meeting, the WFTU had a meeting of affiliates and friends with the presence of the WFTU Deputy General Secretary Valentin Pachó, comrade Ramon Cardona of the Regional Office and several Vice-Presidents of the region. The meeting approved the creation of the sub-regional office for Central America that will be under the responsibility of comrade Luis Chavarria from Costa Rica. They also expressed the solidarity with the Palestinian people within the solidarity campaign organized by the WFTU.

WFTU Seminar on Safety and Health



The WFTU participated in the 4th National Congress of CEPPWAWU on 31st August - 4th September in South Africa represented by cde. Swadesh Dev Roye, member of the WFTU Secretariat and President of TUI Energy. On behalf of the WFTU, cde Devroy extended a warm fraternal greeting to the CEPPWAWU Congress. In his greeting speech he noted the framework of the Congress:

"The ideology of class struggle teaches us that in order to insulate from the impact of repeated crisis, capitalist class takes the repressive recourse to shift the burden of crisis

on to the shoulders of labour. Thus the working class, today, particularly in developing countries are facing the onslaught of wage freeze, restrictions on collective bargaining, ban on right to trade union and right to strike, enactment of legislations in favour of the capitalist class and also the anti-labour role of judiciary. All these steps are taken to protect the interest of the capitalist class from the impact of the economic crisis and save capitalism from collapse. However, history of past social systems teaches us that capitalist social system at best can delay its death but definitely cannot escape the historically destined demise and permanently stop emergence of new social system with new production relations corresponding to the developed productive forces based on Scientific & Technological Revolution (STR). "

WFTU Seminar on Health & Safety

On the framework of the Congress, the WFTU held a seminar on Health and Safety. In his introductory speech cde Devroye stated: *"Occupational Safety and Health is a fundamental human right of workers. Because occupational hazards arise at the workplace, it is the responsibility of employers to ensure that*

"The capitalist social system at best can delay its death but definitely cannot escape the historically destined demise and permanently stop emergence of new social system with new production relations corresponding to the developed productive forces"

the working environment is safe and healthy. The employers must prevent and protect workers from occupational risks" and continued: "Better Safety and Health in work life means to do away with hazardous working condition and introduce and protect healthy and conducive working condition. OSH is compromised by the employers' class in order to reap incremental profit. Therefore OSH is deeply rooted with social conflict between labour and capital. It is, therefore, imperative that desired degree of safe and healthy work place will have to be achieved through bitter class struggles. OSH is not considered by employers' class as tool for production and productivity and not a question of safe and sound human society and fundamental human right. To the capitalist class, the inhuman path of class exploitation is primary and OSH is secondary. "

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE
RECOGNITION OF THE PALESTINIAN STATE

Recognize the Palestinian State with the borders of 1967 now!

The World Federation of Trade Unions continuing its long lasting solidarity with the Palestinian people and its resistance against the occupation announced, on August 2011, the launching of an international campaign for the recognition of the Palestinian State with the 1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital.

Dozens of trade union organisations and federations from many countries of the five continents responded to the call of WFTU and expressed their solidarity to our brothers and sisters in Palestine.

All the messages demanding the immediate recognition of the Palestinian State in the 1967 borders were forwarded to the General Secretary of the United Nations, Mr. Ban-Ki-Moon.

You can find above the initial letter of the General Secretary of WFTU to the General Secretary of the United Nations and the trade union organisations all over the world.

"It's high time that important steps are being made for the end of the Israeli occupation and the barbarity of the Israeli's army forces. The Palestinian People are suffering because of the Israeli occupation, the occupation of the territories after the 6-day war of 1967, the separation wall built by Israel, the organized attacks against the West Bank



**RECOGNITION
OF THE INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE
IN THE 1967 BORDER NOW!**

الإعتراف فوراً بالدولة الفلسطينية



WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS
At the moment of 11th World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen, 1995
A trade union movement, international solidarity, peace and development

International
Campaign
Poster

and the Gaza Strip. We call on the governments to support the recognition of the Palestinian state, as a member state of the UN.

The WFTU demands:

- The end of the settlements and the withdrawal of all settlers who have settled across the borders of 1967.
- The demolition of the separation wall in Jerusalem.
- All the Palestinian refugees to be granted the right to return to their homes, based on the relevant decisions of the UN.
- The elimination of any exclusion against the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza strip.
- The immediate release of imprisoned Palestinians and other political prisoners kept in the Israeli prisons.
- The withdrawal of the Israeli army from all the occupied territories of the 1967, including the Golan Heights and the Shebaa area of Southern Lebanon."

“World Union Body condemns court’s Eskom ruling”



Mail & Guardian Online - JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA - Sep 19 2011 16:49

A Labour Court ruling in favour of Eskom in a wage dispute shows it is aligned with the interests of big capital, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) said on Monday.

“The WFTU supports the National Union of Mineworkers’ charter of demands, among them the salary increase of 13%, and we denounce the court decision,” the Athens-based federation said in a statement.

“We extend militant support and solidarity greeting with your struggle against Eskom, in courts, in the streets of struggle and wherever is necessary.”

The federation, with a membership of 82-million, said it supported the fight for the rights of workers both in the sector and the working class in South Africa. One of these was the right to “stable salaries and increases ... that correspond with contemporary workers’ needs.”

No rights available

On Monday, the Labour Court in Johannesburg turned down an urgent

application by NUM to stop Eskom from introducing a unilateral 7% pay rise. Judge Graham Moshwana ruled the application did not satisfy the requirements of an interdict.

“The implementation of the last offer is not tantamount to exercise of economic power ... the parties have deadlocked and there is no constitutional right available to the applicants,” he said.

The application was dismissed without costs.

NUM would argue for leave to appeal on Wednesday. “We are very disappointed ... this has never happened in Eskom. It might set a precedent,” NUM energy sector coordinator Job Matsepe said. It is just unfortunate that all these wars we are waging will result in a paralysis [in] industrial relations and otherwise at the parastatal.”

Serving in the interest of the ruling class

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), a joint

applicant, said the judgment undermined the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike.

“This judgment has proven our ideological correctness and views that in a capitalist or bourgeois society, like South Africa, the judiciary will act and serve the best interest of the ruling class,” spokesperson Castro Ngobese said.

Eskom legal spokesperson Nerina Otto said the judgment was a sound one. It would contest an appeal.

The utility’s lawyer Addil Patel said it was due to put its pay offer into effect after a deadlock and conciliation.

Wage talks with NUM, Numsa and Solidarity recently deadlocked, with a demand of 13% placed on the table. Eskom’s last offer was 7% at the end of August. The dispute was conciliated on September 7. The increase, backdated from July, would take effect in September. It would affect about 22 000 workers in the bargaining unit. -- Sapa

A blue-tinted photograph of an industrial facility, likely a refinery or chemical plant. Large, insulated pipes run diagonally across the frame, supported by metal structures. In the background, several tall distillation columns or cranes are visible against a clear sky. A thick plume of white steam or smoke rises from the bottom left corner, partially obscuring the lower part of the pipes. The overall scene conveys a sense of large-scale industrial operations.

REFLECTS
SEPTEMBER 2011