

Resolution No. 11

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Conference is appalled by the wanton destruction of environment as seen in the fast disappearance of forests, intensifying pollution of water and air, depletion of wildlife including marine life affecting biodiversity, melting of glaciers, increasing damage to the ozone layer and emission of nuclear substance. Recent nuclear accidents have pointed out to the fact that we should not solely depending of nuclear energy. Sustainability of nuclear energy is now in question. Where nuclear energy is already in use there should be serious review of safety mechanisms of the reactors because nuclear radiation causes serious impact on the human health and also damages agricultural bases and marine lives. There is inextricable link between increasing poverty and destruction of the environment. The Conference is concerned about inadequate effort exerted by governments and the world community to arrest environmental degradation. It recognises the dangers that environmental degradation poses to the livelihood of workers in particular and to human life in general.

The Conference is aware that protection of environment leads to protection of employment because only “green and decent jobs” can be sustainable. Trade unions should be involved in environmental protection in national, regional and international fora, as key stakeholders in sustainable development. The Conference also notes that in some countries trade unions are already involved in such activities, in particular island states which are already victims of sea level increase and have lost their livelihood.

Climate change is a workers’ issue as industrial transformation towards green economy will entail employment adjustment. Developed nations must take the lead in initiative in reducing their own emissions and generating green jobs and offer massive financial and technological support to developing nations so that their development can also be secured through a low carbon economy.

The trade unions should be actively involved in the rehabilitation of victims of climate change and nuclear accidents including resettlement, redeployment, skills up grading, etc.

The Conference commits the ITUC-AP, working with affiliates and the GUFs to:

- carry out awareness campaign for environmental protection;
- collect and disseminate information concerning environmental protection to actively lobby governments, employers’ organisations and international and regional frameworks with a view to realise sustainable development with environmental friendly industries providing green jobs with decent work;
- urge the governments concerned to conduct thorough review of security measures to ensure the safe operation of the existing and planned nuclear reactors; to disclose all nuclear data to the public to enhance transparency; and extensively invest in alternative energy sources; and

- working with affiliates to develop strategies on the rehabilitation of victims of the adverse effects of climate change; and
- campaign for a just transition to environmentally sustainable development and adaptation to global warming, with special focus to the distributional impact on workers in the region, the introduction of a Financial Transaction Tax and effective national and global regulation of financial entities; and
- lobby governments to continue to study feasibility of the use of nuclear energy with eventual phasing out of such energy unless safety of nuclear reactors from every aspect is provided;
- campaign for commitment to Kyoto and post-Kyoto Protocols; and
- building coalition with NGOs and collaborating with regional bodies on environment issues.