

2nd ITUC-AP Regional Conference

Resolution No. 4

DECENT WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Conference recognises that more than one billion people today are between 15 and 24 years of age and nearly 40% of the world's population is below the age of 20. The majority of young people, 85%, live in developing countries, with approximately 60% in Asia alone. By 2025, the number of young people living in developing countries will grow to 89.5%.

The ILO estimates that 82.7 million young people throughout the world are unemployed, accounting for about 39% of the total unemployed. About 40% of the total is in Asia and the Pacific. Youth unemployment rates are much higher than overall unemployment rates in all sub-regions. Asia-Pacific has more than 45% of the world's youth without work.

The unemployment rate of youth is 14.8% in Asia and the Pacific (ITUC-AP Youth Employment Survey 2008), more than double of the average, regardless of their educational backgrounds. In a drastically changing labour market, more and more young workers, especially young women, are working in precarious employment conditions, without adequate social protection

The ITUC-AP Youth Employment Survey 2008 shows that, in some countries, the youth unemployment rate is declining, a contradicting fact against the surging youth unemployment. However, this is because the drop-out youth from labour market or youth after the expiry of unemployment insurance are not counted as unemployed. Their situation is, in reality, worse.

Young people are an important segment of work force with great potentials for economic and social development. Sound economic and labour market policies and practice that create, ensure and promote decent jobs for youth are very important for national development. However, the situations surrounding young people are critically serious.

Adequate opportunities and access for free and / or affordable and quality education and training are not always available for youth. Many countries have their own skills training and re-training schemes, but these often do not match the needs of the changing industries and the labour market.

Employment facilitation mechanisms should be developed to assist youth in finding and making informed decisions about jobs. Although public and private job-exchange schemes are available, the endemic lack of budgetary support for efficient employment facilitation services and weak governance do not contribute to addressing the skills and job mismatch and result in wastage of productive capacity and potentials of the youth.

Problems and aspirations of young people must be given due consideration in the development agenda of all countries. All young people in the diverse Asia and Pacific Region share common problems such as scarcity of decent job opportunity, high unemployment rate, lack of education and skill training and retraining, lack of adequate social protection, and uncertainty for future.

The Conference therefore adopts the Youth Charter as guidelines for youth activities and commits the ITUC-AP, together with affiliates and the GUFs to:

- fully support activities of the ITUC-AP Youth Committee and affiliates' youth committees;
- encourage greater youth participation in the ITUC-AP structure, particularly in higher levels, and activities;
- encourage establishment of youth structures at all levels;
- undertake training and retraining activities for young workers including leadership training;
- promote greater integration of youth within union structures;

- encourage development of policies for youth employment schemes that respect decent work principles;
- prioritise gender balance in all youth activities;
- organise own or jointly with schools, relevant student societies and non-government career counselling / education, trade union, trade union education and appreciation seminars;
- develop mechanisms for young workers in vocational training or the unemployed associated membership in trade unions;
- increase national youth activities such as youth rally, seminars and leadership programmes particularly for young and youth committee members to develop their leadership potentials and capacities as future trade union leaders;
- to allocate funding for youth activities including the regular functioning of appropriate youth committees; and
- organising young workers will be one of the youth committee's priorities.