

Resolution No.7

PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS' RIGHTS

International labour migration is growing and as many as 200 million workers and their families are residing in countries other than their own in search of employment; Asia and the Pacific region account for more than 50 million.

Labour migration is closely linked to economic development – or rather absence of it. The negative effects of globalization which have exacerbated growing unemployment, lack of decent work at home, declining fortunes in agriculture, growing disparities and factors like population explosion, political conflicts and absence of democracy, natural disasters and general desire for decent work and decent life force people to migrate to foreign countries;

Migrant workers are frequently subjected to unequal treatment and opportunities as well as discriminatory behaviour; they are the worst victims of racism and xenophobia; migrant workers are paid much less than native workers for doing the same job, adding to the exclusion from social protection and other workers benefits and entitlements.

The Conference notes with serious concern the most exploitative and inhuman conditions of migrant domestic workers which in some cases amount to modern-day slavery and forced labour. They work for meager wages for long hours with no rest or compensation for overtime, no social protection, exposed to physical and sexual harassment, violence and abuse. In many countries workers fundamental rights to organize and collective bargaining are restricted or altogether denied to migrant workers.

The Conference affirms the urgent need for organizing migrant workers as the most effective way to protect and promote their interests.

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

encourage establishment of migrant labour centres/departments wherever appropriate, both in origin and destination countries to specifically attend to the migrant workers;

- establish partnership agreements between unions in origin and destination countries;
- promote and assist in organizing migrant labour in both origin and departure countries; conduct education programmes for migrant labour;
- campaign for reforms where labour laws restrict migrant workers right to join unions;
- actively involve in conducting pre-departure orientation programmes for migrant workers on their rights, labour laws and culture of destination countries;
- monitor and expose violations, abuses and exploitations;
- build alliances and work together with other civil society organizations who are active on migrant labour;
- promote ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions 97 and 143 and the 1990 UN Convention on Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; also campaign for migrant workers right to organize and bargain collectively;
- lobby together with affiliates, governments and regional groupings (ASEAN, APEC, SAARC, ASEM, etc) for protection and promotion of rights of migrant workers, ratification of ILO/UN conventions and involvement of trade unions in groupings, charters, policies, agreement, etc.;
- organize activities on migrant labour at various levels;
- actively participate in the development of the ILO convention on domestic workers;
- work with ILO and other concerned international organizations for the establishment of a rights-based multilateral framework for migration in the global economy; and promote voting rights of migrant workers in their respective countries.