

3rd ITUC Asia Pacific Conference Resolution No.12

INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The Conference stresses that distributive and re-distributive aspect in trade and economic integrations for inclusive growth should be strengthened through trade union participation as networks of bilateral/multilateral FTAs and EPAs are rapidly being built among major economies and economic groupings; regional/sub-regional and inter-regional economic integration become more influential in formulating domestic policies; and international financial institutions (IFIs) continue to have strong influence on labour market policies in recipient countries.

The Conference identifies four main areas for trade union engagements to ensure a balanced and inclusive growth in trade development and economic integration as follows;

- International Trade Negotiations : such as WTOⁱ, FTAs, TPPⁱⁱ, RCEPⁱⁱⁱ
- Regional and Inter-Regional Economic integration : such as APEC^{iv}, G20, ASEM^v
- Sub-Regional Economic Integration : such as ASEAN^{vi}, SAARC^{vii}, PIF^{viii}, GCC^{ix}
- International Financial Institutions : such as World Bank, IMF, ADB^x and others^{xi}

In particular, the Conference is concerned about increasing income inequality among countries which hinders the full realization of harmonious regional integration and subsequently shared prosperity of its gains. Without any adequate regulatory mechanism and institution, globalisation and financialisation which erode the government ability of policy implementation and workers' bargaining power have threatened inclusive growth with disparities in incomes and living standards fast growing

The Conference realises that in the past decades, trade union participation in the integration process has shown certain progress, largely depending on the strength of national lobbying action. Thus, in order for structured participation of trade unions in such trade and economic integrations to be realised, trade union strength and united voice at all national levels are essential.

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

- Pursue recognition of trade unions as counterpart of business groups in the process of international trade negotiations and regional/inter-regional economic integration;
- Take part in the ITUC actions in lobbying the G20, APEC, ASEM and APEC;
- Support and work with affiliates in their association with the regional integration processes, such as ASEAN and SAARC; and
- Lobby the IFIs:
 - To include decent work agenda in their operations;
 - To remove labour chapter from “Doing Business”;
 - To have consultation meetings nationally in the country loan structure and their labour market policy;
 - To continue regional dialogues specifically on their labour market policy; and
 - To adopt labour safeguard policy in addition to their commitment to be in compliance with the ILO Core Labour Standards.

ⁱ World Trade Organization

ⁱⁱ Trans-Pacific Partnership

ⁱⁱⁱ Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

^{iv} Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

^v Asia-Europe Meeting

^{vi} Association of Southeast Asian Nations

^{vii} South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

^{viii} Pacific Islands Forum

^{ix} Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf

^x Asia Development Bank

^{xi} A couple of multilateral development banks relevant to our region, as alternative infrastructure investment funds to existing World Bank and ADB, were established and are expected to operate soon. AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) established with 57 founding member countries is expected to be operational by the end of 2015 with initially authorized capital stock of \$100 billion. NDB BRICS (New Development Bank BRICS) started its operation in July 2015 with the initial capital of \$100 billion.