

## Trade union centrals demand decent work

Through a partnership with other trade union centrals, UGT held, on October 07, a protest for the guarantee of decent work.

The centrals first gathered in front of the Paulista Mall and followed their march until the Fiesp building, at Paulista Avenue, in the commercial center of Sao Paulo. In order to hand in the unitary agenda of requests of the centrals to Fiesp, the group walked through Paulista avenue in unison: "Decent work for all of our people".



The World Day for Decent Work is celebrated on October 07 and, since 2008, organizations that act in defense of workers, recall the need to promote decent and dignifying work and defend the guarantee of achieved labour rights.

This year, UGT, CUT and FS, along with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA), gathered to bring these fight ideals that have been raised over the year to this march, joining hundreds of other protests that will take place all over the world during the World Day for Decent Work.

This year motto is not focused, as in other years, against the government, but still, against businessmen, who have adopted a position of resistance to social dialogue, despite the efforts that have been made by Brazilian trade union centrals and by the government.

A world position of businessmen against social dialogue has been seen as a tool for decent work. During the 101st International Labour Conference, in 2012, in Geneva, businessmen from all over the world got up and left the meeting of the ILO Commission of Inquiry, at the moment in which the right to strike was being discussed as something enshrined in the ILO Convention 87.

It was an unprecedented attitude in the Conference, and it marked the beginning of a position of rejection to dialogue by businessmen worldwide. *(Giselle Corrêa, UGT Newsroom)*

### Protest against Nissan on the World Day for Decent Work

Prior to the protest at Paulista Avenue, UGT, the Solidarity Center of AFL-CIO, the United Auto Workers (UAW) and other trade union centrals held a protest in front of the largest Brazilian car retailer of Nissan, a Japanese car company, in Mooca neighborhood.

Protestors handed in a letter to the manager of the car retailers that was directed to Nissan Mississippi, USA, in a protest against anti-unionist practices of this company in that region of the United States. Nissan Mississippi persecutes its employees who try to create a union in that assembly plant, a clear violation of the trade union freedom established under the current legislation of that country.

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## Ricardo Patah gives a speech at ITUC

Ricardo Patah, president of UGT, attended the 11th meeting of the General Council of the International Trade Union Confederation, which is being held in Brussels, Belgium, representing more than 7 million Brazilian workers, who are affiliated with trade unions of this trade union system central, and he gave a speech in which he pointed out that the financial system destroyed thousands of jobs worldwide.

Read the speech in full:

Colleagues of ITUC,

It is time the trade union movement recognized that the job market is being influenced by several issues, and the policy of governments is only one of them. We cannot forget that multinational companies have been determining the economic, political, social and environmental scenario in each part of the world.

And, they are indirectly responsible for millions of jobs. According to ILO, 65,000 multinational companies employ more than 90 million workers. That means one worker out of every 20 of the workforce at a world level.

Therefore, the labor movement needs new proposals of organization to recover its role as a relevant social actor.

From our point of view, in this scenario of large impacts and many uncertainties, it is the role of trade unions to propose concrete actions to transform knowledge into action if we are to rescue the vindicatory ability of workers.

Not only that, the financial industry, which almost single-handedly destroyed dozens of millions of jobs, once again seems to be succeeding in convincing governments that, unless its powers are restored, economic growth will be slower. This was understood as a reduction in the creation of jobs and there is more: it is easy to realize that the job market is not only influenced by technology and globalization, but governments are hostages of these companies.

When we talk about the creation of job positions, we must not forget that these jobs are being created and destroyed everyday. Companies are being created and destroyed at an alarming rate.

Those that were deprived of their glorious conditions, are those that resisted to changes. Recently, DOW Jones removed icons known for their low performance, such as Bank of America, Alcoa and Hewlett Packard and added others that have a high financial added value, such as Nike, Goldman Sachs and VISA. However, it is good to mention that the number of industrial companies mentioned in Dow Jones represent less than 21%.

Finally, it was possible to assume that the job market will consist of those that are able to work with sophisticated technologies and those that will be replaced.

New possibilities enabled more freedom and flexibility, allowing people to work anywhere, at anytime and with any gadget. This way, companies are fighting to deal with employees that are perfectly connected, collaborative and moveable. This also makes it harder for the trade union action because it breaks the bonds of solidarity among workers.

In order to have an idea of what we are talking about, thousands of young Brazilians took to the streets mobilized by social networks, by new technologies. Trade unions need to reach this level of mobilizations if we want to reach all workers.

Trade unions will also have to find their place in this environment of fast changes. There is no doubt that trade unions need to be educated when it comes to the meaning of such changes for their own future, otherwise they will be relegated to a non relevant condition. The question that needs to be answered is how to keep our relevance in the XXI Century.

Will trade unions be destined to represent only the non employable?



*"the labor movement needs new proposals of organization to recover its role as a relevant social actor."*





## Work with retired workers takes UGT to UN

Roberto Nolasco and Antenor Braido

Our UGT is at UN (United Nations), the largest and most important international organization that gathers 193 countries. We are part of the **Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People**. We are there to exchange experiences and build more efficient tools of human rights for older people, especially our retired workers and pensioners.

And this is not just a slogan, but a serious and real project that is being developed for about 7.5 million workers, affiliated with our more than 1,070 unions. And now we're improving this work along with our retirees through SINDIAPI (UGT's National Trade Union of Retired Workers, Pensioners and Elderly People). And there is nothing better to do so than being part of the Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations on Aging at UN Headquarters in New York.



This alliance was founded in 2011 and it is the result of efforts of collaboration among the nine organizations that are part of the coordination and that are funding institutions. UGT participated as a member of the alliance for a few months now, and our goal, among others, is that elderly people - not necessarily retired workers and pensioners - from Brazil and other parts of the world, are listened by the UN.

Data from IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) point out that elderly people in Brazil should represent 26,7% of the population, that is 58,4 million people sooner than 20 years from now. Which is a tremendous number.

Currently, nearly 6,3 million people, or 7,4% of the population, are in this stage of life. In practical terms, this means establishing as priorities for the elderly, access to health and Social Security, two eternal problems that we are not able to manage in our country.

Our trade union has the goal of performing a role of serving retired workers and not being limited to the trade union action. One of the most important tasks is establishing agreements with institutions of society to ease the life of the retiree.

## UNI Secretary general at UGT

Philip J. Jennings, UNI Global Union Secretary General, attended a meeting of Brazilian trade union officials, on October 07, in Sao Paulo, at the head office of SENTRACOS (National Secretariat of Commerce and Service Workers).



He was received by Ricardo Patah, national president of UGT and made a speech focused on changes that are taking place in the job market, due to the effects of the world financial crisis, and how technology is stimulating a "revolution" in the global trade union movement.

"Working with unionism nowadays is not as it used to be 20 years ago, occasion in which the working class was mobilized in front of factories. This changed and trade union institutions must follow such changes", explains the official.

This meeting, which was attended by Rumiko Tanaka, secretary of UGT's department for children and teenagers, as well as by other representatives of UGT, was also attended by representatives of Força Sindical, CUT, and Nova Central.

Philip emphasized that one of the main challenges of the trade union world is increasing the focus of institutions in order to reach an institutional growth, in line with available resources. "Currently, institutions hold congresses, seminars or plenary sessions, in which certain issues are discussed, debated and talked over, but no one gets anywhere. It seems like we are stuck in this vicious circle, however, it is necessary to keep the focus and advance."

UNI's secretary general emphasized that this institution will hold its next congress in Nairobi, Africa, from September 16 to 18. (*Fábio Ramalho - UGT*)



UNI Commerce  
Global Conference  
9-11 October 2013  
Buenos Aires,  
Argentina

## Decent work and international cooperation

UGT launches its 1st course of trade union education on decent work and international cooperation, a course that aims to protect and guarantee a productive and dignifying life to workers and their families.

UGT promotes its 1st course of trade union education on decent work and international cooperation, with the goal of reaching cooperation and solidarity among countries. This course was launched on October 08 at the House of Representatives, in Brasilia, Federal District. This project was created due to an unprecedented partnership between UGT and European trade union centrals.

This course will last seven months, with on-campus and online classes divided into 7 units, the penultimate one is in Austria, in a combined action with students of other countries that are partners of this project. This first class will take the course at the National Confederation of Workers of Credit Companies (CONTEC), in Brasilia.

This course is part of the project "**Multiplying decent work - decent life**", idealized by UGT's **Department of Foreign Affairs**, and it is being made according to the Brazilian reality and needs, through a partnership with the **Institute of Social Promotion (IPROS)**, the **Institute of High Studies (IAE/UGT)** and UGT's Department of Political and Trade Union Organization. And, in Europe, trade union centrals and organizations of the civil society from Austria, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Poland and Romania will attend this course.

## Trade union freedom and collective bargaining

Representatives of the Trade Union Self Reform Group and of the Continental Juridical Team of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) had a meeting in Sao Paulo to evaluate their activities and to join forces in the TUCA Continental Campaign on Freedom of Association, Collective Bargaining and Trade Union Self-Reform.



On the opportunity, several publications were issued. Esther Busser, Assistant Director, of the International Trade Union Confederation Office in Geneva, presented the ITUC book "**Tercerización Mediante Agencias de Trabajo Temporal en América Latina**" (Outsourcing via Temp Work Agencies in Latin America), which points out the growing violation of social rights through outsourcing.

In this meeting, studies that substantiated the TUCA continental campaign; "**Estrategias Sindicales por una Mayor y Mejor Negociación Colectiva en América Latina y Caribe**" (Trade Union Strategies for a higher and better collective bargaining in Latin America and the Caribbean) and the **IV Libro sobre Autorreforma Sindical**, (IV Book on Trade Union Self-Reform), both produced by the Trade Union Self Reform Group.

Laerte Teixeira da Costa, UGT's vice-president and TUCA secretary of social policies, ended the meeting with an overview of the work performed, recognizing the importance of the meeting of the TUCA team, and the GTAS and EJC teams.

## "World needs to turn plans into urgent action"

ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, called on delegates attending the Third Global Conference on Child Labour to turn the plans agreed at the conference into action that is widespread, systemic and sustainable.

"You made the link between the fight against child labour and the need to move forward on the Decent Work Agenda, implement fundamental principles and rights at work, prioritize employment creation, in particular for youth, extend measures of social protection and strengthen the rule of law and judicial systems. What we need now is to translate this link into urgent action," said Ryder during the conference's closing session.

The ILO chief said that clear lessons emerged from the plenary sessions that demonstrated a growing understanding of what needs to be done to eliminate child labour in a sustainable way, and that not only governments but also other actors – workers' and employers' organizations, businesses and civil society – are taking up their responsibility and showing increasing leadership.

### See the Brasilia declaration

"The União Geral dos Trabalhadores reaffirms its historic commitments to the working class, while seeking to expand its methods of action, with ethics, courage and the certainty that Brazil can be better and more just." Ricard Patah – UGT's President

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