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We are still in the fight!

Ricardo Patah, national president of União Geral de Trabalhadores UGT



After the presidential elections took place, we can make an overview of the electoral process. We will have the runoff soon, which will decide whether Dilma Rousseff or Aécio Neves will rule Brazil. We already have the result of the elections for federal deputies and senators and these results will define the balance of forces in Brasília.

Recently, two important business institutions publicized their demands to presidential candidates. The National Confederation of Industry issued **Propostas da indústria para as eleições 2014**, (*Industry Proposals for the Elections of 2014*) and the National Confederation of Agriculture (CNA) released its document **O que esperamos do próximo presidente 2015-2018** (*What we expect of the next president 2015-2018*).

An analysis of both documents shows that these two business institutions share the same wrong idea that the cost of labour in Brazil is high due to laws of protection of workers. "Laws and rules, whose goals would be to protect workers, end up penalizing them", as stated by the document of CNA.

These documents are not merely an electoral statement, they will surely guide the action of these two institutions and of congressmen of their sphere of influence. Both documents, when dealing with labour relationships, clearly illustrate our concern towards the business greed in the next period of government and towards the need to elect a major bench of workers and unionists for the next tenure.

We need a large bench not only to keep our achievements, but to advance in the agenda of workers, to make this country stronger and more equalitarian. There are many topics in this agenda: the decrease of working hours for shift work and the social security factor. Some of these topics were discussed during the presidential election, others were not.

Recently newspapers discussed the issue if the huge inequality in the Brazilian society increased or decreased. But we cannot think in decreasing this inequality without a tax reform, which punishes the richer and decreases the tax burden of the poorer. One that curbs tax evasion, which was evaluated in a recent study of the Tax Justice Network Group, with data from the World Bank, in 280 billion dollars, that is: 13,4% of our GDP!

UGT is proud to have two active congressmen as its vice presidents: federal deputy Roberto Santiago, always present in the DIAP (Inter-union Department of Parliamentary Consultancy) annual lists of the most influential lawmakers and Federal Deputy Roberto Lucena, recently chosen by Exame magazine as the 5th most active member of Congress. According to an evaluation of DIAP, both will be reelected.

Another reason for UGT to be proud is its plurality: our two vice presidents are members of different parties. We have members and officers of other political parties and our affiliates have different preferences for presidential candidates. And that is how it should be: unionism must have political autonomy to defend workers.



805 millones de personas sufren todavía subalimentación

Situation of Food Insecurity in the World

Brazil reduces by half the number of hungry people, says FAO.

The report 'The State of Food and Nutrition Security in Brazil: A multidimensional portrait', released on September 16 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), says that Brazil has fulfilled the goal of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger - one of the Millennium Development Goals of 2000 - and the goal of halving the absolute number of hungry people, stipulated at the World Food Summit in 1996.

According to this organization, in the period 1990-1992, 14.8% of Brazilians suffered from hunger. For the period 2012-2014, the Brazilian index fell to 1.7%, equivalent to 3.4 million people who do not eat enough daily. According to the report, this statistic places the country as one that overcame the problem of hunger.

To **Eve Crowley**, assistant regional representative of FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean (in the picture), the implementation of a set of public policies under an articulated and integrated way and of legal and institutional frameworks allowed Brazil to achieve advances in overcoming hunger.



"In recent years, the issue of food security was put at the core of Brazil's political agenda."

In the evaluation of Anne Kepple, FAO consultant, Brazil stands out as an example due to a number of articulated public policies like the Bolsa Família Program, the generation of formal jobs, the strengthening of family agriculture, the Food Purchase Program and the National School Feeding Programme.

According to the FAO representative, "there are still belts of poverty in the North and Northeast regions. Including indigenous, quilombola and riverside communities in social policies is also a challenge for Brazil", she added. "Ensuring the protection of the most vulnerable populations and continuing the policies of economic growth and social inclusion that already exist should be a priority in the next decade. We may be the last generation that experienced hunger in Brazil. With the continuity of policies, there may be, in the coming years, the complete eradication of hunger." *(Ana Cristina Campos - Brasil Agency)*

UGT new program of trade union education

On September 22, representatives from UGT's departments of Trade Union Education, Professional Qualification, Political Education, Educational Policies and Trade Union Organization and Policies had a meeting at UGT's National head office to create a new project of trade union education of UGT.

According to Josineide de Camargo Souza, UGT's assistant secretary of Trade Union education, the new guidelines that will define the new education program are being built under a collective way, in order to answer to a wide range of needs of the trade union central.

According to Canindé Pegado, UGT's secretary general, the new education program, which is being created, should be systematic and take into account the daily update of the current conjuncture. "It is important that the ideologic conceptions that are brought to UGT are synthesized in the UGT conception of education", stated Pegado.

The collective of education will have another meeting in the first fortnight of October, to continue the development of the new program.

Conferência das Nações Unidas sobre mudanças climáticas

Get to know everything about the participation of UGT in COP20

We did not loose the opportunity to change the world



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Against violence in Guatemala

USA opens the arbitration panel against anti-union violence in Guatemala

After more than six years of a tough battle, the USA decided to activate the arbitration panel against Guatemala for violating labor rights under CAFTA Trade Agreement between the Dominican Republic, Central America and USA.

The dispute began in April 2008, when six Guatemalan unions and the AFL-CIO filed a complaint with the United States Department of Commerce pointing out a series of concerns, particularly about anti-union violence.



The petition argued that Guatemala could not enforce its own labor laws and their commitments to respect, promote and make the fundamental rights of workers come true.

From 2008 to 2013, at least 30 murders of trade union leaders and activists were documented according to the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). In addition, there were several attempted murders, not to mention cases of threats of torture, kidnapping, theft and death. This culture of intimidation and impunity led the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to consider Guatemala as the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists.

Even so, through a commitment signed in April 2013, the United States and Guatemala agreed to a plan of 18 points for strengthening labor inspection, increasing the application of labor rights by the exporting companies, improving enforcement of court orders, among other measures.

By leading Guatemala to arbitration, the Commerce Department recognizes that little has been done by Guatemala to enforce its own labor laws.

"Currently, the United States government took the right decision to make it clear that without respect for labor rights, Guatemala cannot be inserted into the global economy," said Sharan Burrow, ITUC secretary general.

The CAFTA-DR arbitration panel will issue a preliminary report with its conclusions and recommendations. If the government fails to implement these recommendations, Guatemala could face fines and trade sanctions.

Union Strategy for Human Rights

Strengthening the trade union strategy while using the Inter-American Human Rights System

On September 18 and 19, in collaboration with the Solidarity Center of the AFL-CIO, the seminar "Strengthening the strategy of the trade union movement in the Americas while using the Inter-American Human Rights System" was held in the city of San Jose, Costa Rica.



The **Secretary of Social Policy of CSA and vice-president of the UGT, Laerte Teixeira**, and the legal counsel of the Department of Human and Trade Union Rights of CSI, **Jeff Vogt**, commented on the challenges and prospects of the Inter-American System of Human Rights as mechanism for the Protection of Labour Rights in the Americas.

The specific goals of this activity were:

- Coordinating the work that has been done with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, specially concerning the results of monitoring the theme audience in case of Chile, 2013, and the preparation of regional cases for 2014.
- Sharing experiences of trade unions on the use of mechanisms of the Inter-American Human Rights System.
- Strengthening the defense strategy of cases that are outstanding under the Inter-American Human Rights System.

The Brazilian worker in the international situation

João Felício, president of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), attended a meeting with leaders of UGT to deal with issues of common interest of Brazilian workers. This meeting took place on September 09, at UGT's head office in Sao Paulo.

João Felício said that his wish is holding previous discussions within Brazil, either in separate with each trade union central or combined with other centrals, so that the agenda of demands of the Brazilian people is a main topic of the meeting among ITUC representatives and with secretary general Sharon Burrow.

He also said that he intends to participate in the development of the agenda of the trade union centrals so that, by being near, they insert which attitudes should be taken concerning the anti-unionist practices of multinational companies.



Ricardo Patah, president of UGT, said that he is happy to receive the president of ITUC, he also said that the opening of this dialogue strengthens the representability of Brazil in theme forums of major discussions, such as ILO and G20 (group composed by representatives of the main economies of the world).

Mônica da Costa Mata Roma, assistant secretary of UGT's International Affairs Department, said that UGT wants, in fact, to be prepared to perform international representations and that the support of ITUC in this sense is essential, so that, besides their empowerment, trade union centrals are able to reach these wider discussions with proposals of practical actions in the defense and increase of the workers rights.

Laerte Teixeira da Costa, vice-president of UGT and secretary of Trade Union Policies of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA), talked about the importance of having a Brazilian in the presidency of ITUC. He also mentioned that the consistent unfolding of this meetings will take the national reality to the core of discussion on workers worldwide.

Sidney de Paula Corral, secretary of UGT's Department of Integration to the Americas, recalled that in the last meeting of ITUC, in Montevideo, Uruguay, in the beginning of this month (September 2, 3 and 4), attended by representatives of 22 countries, one of the resolutions was the creation of the document "Platform of Development for the Americas", a booklet that intends to be followed since it is totally progressive and accompanies the reality of the Brazilian trade union movement.

Annick Deruyver, secretary of International Affairs of CSC Belgium, said that she expects a more open ITUC, with more people from the Southern hemisphere. And she said that she is here in Brazil to prepare a seminar on Informal Economy with UGT, with the goal of better preparing the trade union participation in the ILO conference in June 2015. (Giselle Corrêa, UGT's newsroom / Picture: Leonardo Cassiano)

Interview with João Felício, president of ITUC





Exame magazine recognizes the action of Lucena

Vice president of UGT is the 5th most active deputy according to ranking of the Exame magazine



Congressman Roberto Lucena (PV party-Sao Paulo State), vice-president of UGT, is the fifth most active representative in Congress in the ranking prepared by the Political Atlas portal and published by the Exame magazine. Among the 573 parliamentarians cited in the list, Roberto de Lucena is also the better placed congressman of the State of São Paulo.

The ranking is based on five criteria, such as representativeness, responsible campaign, activism, parliamentary debate and party loyalty. Each item represents a score that ranks from 0 to 1, which, when summed up, make up the final score. The closer the score is to 5, the politician is better rated.

Roberto Lucena reacted with satisfaction to the publication: "I feel happy to be able to, at this point of the tenure, offer the condition of seeing my name on a list to the people who feel represented by me in Congress that does not embarrass them. I am very honored with this recognition. "

Parade against religious intolerance

UGT's State branch of RIO, through its Human Diversity Department, attended the Parade in Defense of Religious Freedom on September 21, in the Copacabana beach.

This year, the parade was attended by Ideli Salvatti, minister of the Human Rights Department of the Presidency of the Republic. Ivanir dos Santos, representative of the Commission of Religious Freedom, criticized the fact that Brazil, since slavery, practice intolerance regarding Afro-Brazilian religions.

According to organizers, this event gathered nearly a thousand people who, holding posters and banners, preached the end of religious intolerance.



UN says that Brazil has institutional racism

Brazil may not be called a racial democracy, but it is marked by an "institutional racism", in which racial hierarchies are culturally accepted", according to a study publicized on September 04, which should be approved by UN Human Rights Council on September 23.

This document was developed by Mireille Fanon-Mendes France and Maya Sahli, two independent writers chosen by UN, who visited Brazil from December 4 to the 14 last year. They had meetings with governments authorities in Brasilia, Pernambuco, Bahia, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

O UGT Global é o Boletim de Informação Internacional da União Geral dos Trabalhadores.

A UGT é uma organização sindical constituída para defender os trabalhadores brasileiros através de um movimento sindical amplo, cidadão, ético, solidário, independente, democrático e inovador.

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