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COP 20 United Convention on Climate Change

Fair transition with decent work

Ricardo Patah, national president of União Geral dos Trabalhadores

The **20th United Nations Framework Climate Change Conference - COP 20**, which took place from December 01 to 13 in Lima, Peru, could be a mark in the fight of workers for decent work, but it could become a negative mark for the class.

UGT and other international delegations, congregated by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), came to COP20 with the proposal of advancing in issues of fair transition and decent work, which already exist in the decisions of Cancun (COP16) and Durban (COP17).

However, the statement barely mentions these two concepts, reflecting diverse resistances to the inclusion of them in the draft, resistances expressed in the lack of disposition of governments, including the Brazilian one, of showing any proposal of text that would contemplate our demands



But after all, what do we, the international trade union movement, want? What is the meaning of the fair Transition and Decent Work that we defend?

In short, the concept of just transition advocated by the international trade union movement presupposes that the processes of change in an economy of high carbon emission rate and other pollutants into a "low carbon" economy should be taken with the main concern of protecting jobs and creating new jobs through training policies and retraining of the workers involved.

The labor dimension should also be incorporated into mitigation plans and programs, adaptation and means of implementation that will result from the agreement reached in Paris.

As for Decent Work, it is directly related to the Just Transition as a fundamental condition for this transition to be guided by clear principles of respect for labor rights worldwide. The Decent Work and its four basic axes (Quality Job Creation, Social Protection, Social Dialogue and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work), is the guideline under which employment policies should be developed in the world.

The change in production matrix in the world inevitably will imply in the readjustment of the forms of production, the energy matrices, forms of transportation of production, disposal and treatment of solid waste, access to natural resources and common goods such as water, energy, land and food and nutrition security, among other consequences.

It is for this reason that we will continue fighting so that Brazilian workers and workers worldwide have the assurance that this change in patterns of production and consumption, totally necessary, is not made so that the working class ought to pay for decades of environmental and social neglect that led to the current emergency situation.



UGT demands actions of the government

In a meeting with Izabella Teixeira, minister of Environment, on December 10, on proposals for low carbon economy, the delegation of UGT (in the picture) emphasizes the importance of a text that is concerned with a just transition.

COP20 has the goal of a starting point for the meeting in Paris, in 2015, which will draw plans for 2020, when a mark for a low carbon economy will take place, in this case, it is necessary to provide a text as a starting point, since this is a transition COP.



Cristina Palmieri, representative of UGT's Committee on Sustainability, emphasizes that trade union centrals expressed, to the Brazilian government and workers, the preoccupation with the fact that the text that is being written does not mention just transition and decent work

"The final document of COP16, UNFCCC, 2010, contemplated just transition and this new text does not make any reference to workers. We, trade union centrals, consider a setback not be defended. It is necessary to move forward on this issue. At the meeting, the ambassador maintained his position from the previous day, that is, to not agree to put the issue of just transition and decent work on the text, for considering that a trap", says Cristina Palmieri.

After a meeting on this subject, trade union centrals made another protest against the Brazilian government, but nothing is yet listed on the representativeness of workers in the document and, according to the delegation of UGT, there was not even an allusion to the movement, nor to the Letter of Belem (group of organizations and social and environmental movements, workers of family farming who share the struggle against deforestation and the fight for environmental justice in the Amazon and in Brazil).

From the negotiation meeting with **Izabella Teixeira**, UGT's delegation reports that, to the minister, Brazil needs to internally mature to a negotiation in the new global agenda. For her, due to the challenges ahead, the issue of carbon is not necessarily a question of work. "In the context of climate negotiations that are not trivial, they are rather extremely complex, it is not easy and it really is not possible to include some issues," said the representative of the Brazilian government during the exposure in the Convention. *(Mariana Veltri - UGT's Press, with information of UGT's delegation in Lima, Peru)*

In defense of Mother Earth

On December 10, more than 15,000 people attended the march in defense of Mother Earth motivated by the People's Summit, which took place in Lima, Peru, as COP20 unfolded.

Members of environmentalist movements, women, students, peasants, Native Americans and unionists (represented by the **ITUC-TUCA** delegation) marched through the Peruvian capital demanding firm and binding commitments of national and international authorities to halt global warming.

While official authorities of the world had a meeting at COP20 to discuss solutions for climate change, social movements demanded a real action to restrain irrational consumption and ensure a sustainable development of all people.

Now, the eyes of the world are aware to the evolution of negotiations at COP 20 that should reach a project of a new global climate pact that will be definitely approved at COP 21, which will take place next December in Paris.

The new climate agreement will replace the Kyoto Protocol. It is expected that the expression of people will contribute to improve the context in which negotiations are developed.

Iván González, political coordinator of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas - **TUCA**, spoke on behalf of workers. "We, from the trade union movement, had meetings with Native Americans, peasants, women, students, environmentalists, to say NO to this wild capitalism that destroys the planet, concentrates wealth, explores people and destroys the land and human kind." *(CSI-CSA)*



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2nd Meeting of CIPA members of UGT

Prevention is highlighted

In the month in which CIPA (Internal Commission for Accident Prevention) celebrated 70 years, UGT's Department of Health and Security held, on December 10, the 2nd meeting of CIPA members. It took place at UGT's head office and had a series of lectures given by professionals of the area of social welfare and technicians of security at work.

To Ricardo Patah, UGT's president, since it was created, 8 years ago, the issue of health, life and civic rights of workers have been the major focus of our trade union central, which has been carrying out several activities in this direction.



"We did a work regarding security with the union of drivers and 20 days ago we stopped Sao Paulo because of the constant attacks on buses. According to the labor union, in just one month, 129 bus were burned. In these fires, a driver was burned inside the bus and the other was helping his partner and had 60% of his body burned. To put a stop to these situations, we are fighting so that we can definitely weed out of our day-to-day insecurity, injustice and neglect with respect to the employee. Civic rights, health and safety are the most important points to be discussed here", concluded Ricardo Patah.

Cleonice Caetano Souza, Secretary of UGT's Health and Security Department, recalled the recent campaigns promoted by the trade union central: Pink October and Blue November, both concerning the prevention of cancer. Data from Ministry of Health show the growth of mortality rate among both men and women, victims of this disease. That is why she highlighted the importance of prevention and emphasized: "whoever seeks, finds, and who cares, think".

Chiquinho Pereira, secretary of UGT's department on Organization and Trade Union Policies, highlighted the importance of maintaining the NR 12 (Regulatory Standard) to set standards that ensure workers safety. "We have to keep the NR12. Since only those who suffer an accident at work can assess the pain of lack of awareness of working on prevention. Nothing is worth more than life", Chiquinho ended.o.

Unemployment should increase in Latin America

Unemployment rates in Latin America and Caribbean should increase next year, according to the report Labour Overview 2014, from the International Labour Organization (ILO), released on December 11. One of the reasons is the economic slowdown. According to this study, the fall in unemployment that took place this year should not occur in 2015.

The rate of urban unemployment in the third trimester of 2014 reached 6,2%, it should close the year of 2014 at 6,1%, below the 6,2% of 2013. In 2015, however, this sector will feel the effects of the financial turmoil. "Our biggest concern is that less jobs are being created", said **Elizabeth Tinoco, regional ILO director for Latin America and Caribbean**.

The atypical behavior of unemployment, which dropped, instead of raising, was explained by the ILO report as a consequence of people leaving the workforce, which reflected on a decrease in the level of participation and allowed the effects of the decrease in the job creation were softer. The level of participation dropped 1,2 % in Brazil from January to September 2013 and January to September 2014. Elisabeth explained that these people, however, should be part of this statistics again in 2015.

"Many of the people who left the job market temporary, in 2014, will look for a new job next year, not to mention young people who will enter the job market. This region needs to create almost 50 million jobs in the next ten years only to compensate the demographic growth."

According to the report, the unemployment rate might reach 6,3%. The 0,2% addition means more than 500 thousand unemployed people in Latin America and Caribbean. (*Agência Brasil*)



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Panorama
Laboral 2014



In defense of uniqueness

Commerce workers of UGT reaffirm their commitment with trade union uniqueness

Gathered in the Leisure center of the commerce workers of the State of Sao Paulo in Praia Grande, commerce workers of federations and trade unions affiliated with UGT reaffirmed their commitment with trade union uniqueness.

The manifest, which can be read here, repudiates "all and every initiative that has the goal of breaking the constitutional principle of trade union uniqueness, in particular in what concerns the framework to which the article 577 of the Consolidation of Brazilian Labour Laws and demands that "the Ministry of Labour and Employment fulfills its duty and the constitutional responsibility of looking after the trade union uniqueness, ceasing the irregular practice of issuing decrees that offend our Constitution, giving room to concede trade union records to institutions that were founded in a complete disagreement with what was established under the Magna Carta".

UGT in dialogue with the French movement

On December 09, Ricardo Patah, national president of UGT, received the visit of Anne-Catherine Cudennec, representative of Fédération de La Metallurgie CFE-CGC, French trade union central.

One of the main points of the meeting were the negotiations of last week that took place at COP 20, in Lima, Peru, until December 12, in which representatives of UGT, along with Itamaraty (Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs), UN and civil society participated in the discussion of the new global agenda on climate, which will be released in Paris in December 2015, at the COP 21. Patah drew strategies, even proposing a partnership concerning the participation of UGT in the conference of next year.



UGT in the UNI World Congress in Africa

4th World Women Conference of Uni Global Union, which preceded the parallel UNI World Conference, took place from December 07 to 10, 2014, in Capetown, South Africa, and was attended by Rumiko Tanaka, CONTEC finance director.

The meeting of female unionists from all over the world gathered more than 500 people on December 5 and 6. They were members of more than 150 trade union institutions from 58 countries. On the occasion, trade union representatives debated issues regarding wage disparity gender related in the world, health, equality of remuneration, domestic violence and violence at work..

Download UGT's Christmas Card

Merry Christmas with Love and Fraternity



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

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Diretor de Comunicação: Marcos Afonso de Oliveira – MTb 62.224/SP

Jornalista Responsável: Mauro Ramos