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Women's Day: Union takes care of over 5.000 people in São Paulo

Over 5.000 people participated in the activities made by the **Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo (GWU)** on Saturday, March, 8, at the Vale do Anhangabaú, a celebration to the **Women's International Day**. Under the nearly 40 tents settled, there were offered several services such as regularization of documents, juridical and health services, Women Police Station, retirement, leading to a job, orientation on family planning, besides bath, manicure, haircut and make up.

"Women that live on the streets received treatment worthy of every citizen during this Saturday and our proposal is that this social inclusion is put into practice on a day to day basis, offering equality and opportunity to all the excluded people", says Ricardo Patah, president of the union.

The mayor Gilberto Kassab (DEM party) hit the highlights on March, 8, second day of the "Woman with life" campaign. During an hour, in the morning, accompanied by the president of the

Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo and GWU, Ricardo Patah, the mayor covered all the sectors of the event. The audience of the evening period itself was estimated in 7 thousand people.

Kassab made sure to go in every tent and talk to the people that were receiving services as haircut, manicure and juridical / medical assistance, among other services offered at the campaign. In one of the tents, occupied by several disabled people (physical, hearing and visual), the mayor remained for quite some time hearing the problems of the class and promised to make every effort to turn São Paulo into a more just city to better serve people with special needs.

At a news conference, the mayor made compliments to the action of GWU and the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo. "Initiatives as the one from GWU that pays homage to women have full support from the city hall", said. He emphasized that this campaign that happened downtown "is an extraordinary work. These countless services given to women, especially the excluded ones, are a demonstration of the preoccupation towards the women valorization", he explained.

The **president of GWU, Ricardo Patah**, said that the celebration of the Women's International Day was positive, mainly because it was the first accomplishment in this sense. He said that the Commerce Workers Union and GWU intend to give continuation to the work, leading people to a solution to their problems. Due to the success obtained with "Woman with Life", Ricardo Patah confirmed that this social activity is now part of the official calendar of events of the union that represents commerce workers from São Paulo.



"GWU, in its first large public act proved its option for the excluded, in an action that involved over six thousand women that live in the open streets, at the Vale do Anhangabaú, in São Paulo, where we could mobilize vast sectors of the civil society and offer services that confirm the rights of the citizens and a lot, a lot of dignity to all."

Ricardo Patah

GWU encourages international event in Santana do Livramento

The role of the woman in Mercosur, in society, in the family, at work, in politics and in the spheres of power was the main subject of the activities that were held on March, 7 and 8, in Santana do Livramento, on the border Brazil - Uruguay.



The event gathered nearly 10.000 people and was fomented by **GWU (General Workers Union)** and CUT, through the **Women Committee, of the Southern Cone Coordinator of Central Trade Unions**. According to **Eleuza de Cássia Bufelli Macari**, coordinator of the project and **adjunct-secretary of the International Relationships Secretaryship of the national GWU**, it's this city in the most southern point of Rio Grande do Sul that has the highest index of cases of violence against women.

The public act counted on the participation of delegations from the four countries that are part of the Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). Several local authorities were at the event, among them, the mayor of Santana do Livramento, Wainer Machado and the mayor of Rivera, Tabaré Viera Duarte.

Cássia reminds that in the next ILO International Labour Conference expected to happen in July, one of the issues to be covered is related to Labour and family. Therefore, the event in Santana do Livramento was a way that the Women Committee of the Southern Cone Coordinator of Central Trade Unions found to foment a qualified debate aiming to guarantee the rights of the women of the nations that are part of the Mercosur.

More than 22 million women might lose their jobs

The international economic crisis might put in risk the advances related to gender equality at home or work, stated today, March, 5, the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**. The institution estimates, on its yearly report "Global Employment Trends for Women", that the number of unemployed women might increase in up to 22 million in 2009.

According to the report, from the 3 billion employed people in the world in 2008, 1,2 billion were women. The expectation of ILO is that, in 2009, the world unemployment rate of women might increase in up to 7,4% while the rate of men might increase in 7%. The institution believes that the impact of the crisis when it comes to unemployment rates is more prejudicial to women than to men, especially in Latin America and in the Caribbean.

Another negative estimation to women regards vulnerable jobs in 2009 that might oscillate between 50,5% and 54,7%, while to men the numbers will vary between 47,2% and 51,8%. The general-director of ILO, Juan Somavia, stated that equality of gender should be a fundamental principle in any public response, because the impacts of the crisis affect the several roles that women perform in society.

"Inequality of gender in the labor world is among us for quite some time, but it is likely to accentuate as a consequence of the crisis. In times of economic turbulence, women frequently go through the negative consequences quicker and benefit from the recover slower", emphasized the general director in a statement on the Women's International Day, that was celebrated on March, 6, by the organization with the motto: "Work and family: sharing is the best way to take care!".

All this year, ILO is making a world campaign that has the objective of highlighting the importance of gender equality on its Decent Work Program, on the government activities and employers and workers organizations. The campaign consists of 12 topics of the program, that will be analyzed with a vision of gender to illustrate how the various aspects of the labor world might affect in a different way men and women, particularly when it comes to access to rights, jobs, social protection and dialogue. (*Adital, 05.03.2009*)

Chiquinho criticizes companies opportunism

To the secretary of Organization and Union Politics of GWU (General Workers Union), Francisco Pereira de Sousa Filho, aka Chiquinho, Embraer made an enormous mistake by firing more than 4 thousand employees last week. The statements were made during the debate "Crisis and Unemployment" provided by the leadership of the PPS party in the House of Commons, that happened in the morning of this Tuesday, in Brasilia.

Picture: Tuca Pinheiro



To him, Embraer destroyed the life of entire families, besides making a mistake while deciding on the closure of job positions as the only alternative to move away from the problem it claims to be going through due to the world financial crisis.

The company is one of the largest ones of aircraft construction in the world and its activity is practically all towards the exportation of these products. Chiquinho also remarks that there was no dialogue with the unions and that the government has its share of guilt in this situation.

Flexibilization

The unionist of GWU also used the meeting to vociferate against the Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo (Fiesp). Chiquinho Pereira labeled as "opportunism" the attempt of the referred institution to propose a flexibilization of the labor legislation, even with reduction of salaries to the workers in a moment that the country is trying to find viable and intelligent solutions for this period of economic turbulence.

Mea culpa

The representative of GWU recognizes that some union centrals, through the close relationship they keep with the federal government, have ignored the real effects of the crisis, and that ends up damaging the whole society. "There is an exaggerated link and they omitted the weight that everyone has over the crisis", he said.

Despite this picture, Chiquinho believes that the alliance between union and political parties might result in solutions to the unemployment problem. "This is the opportunity that allow us to take advantage of the moment to review attitudes over what is our daily life", he concluded. (*Portal do PPS, 03.03.2009*)

Time to reconsider the model of state and assert on a strong, agile and flexible social-democratic state

"The chief-minister of the Civil House, Dilma Rousseff, stated that the housing plan, that will be released by the government on the following days will aim towards families with incomes up to 10 minimum wages. Borrowers will only pay after receiving the property, says Dilma about the plan.

"I think it is a measure of extraordinary effects on the economic quality of life of workers and populations of low income. With the investment on popular houses, that will be paid with subsidized shares, besides generating hundreds of thousand of jobs, will help decreasing the pressure of paying the rent that has as the main victims the low income families.



We will be able to consolidate in Brazil a policy of extraordinary investment at obtaining own homes, without having to go through poor credit lines, just like what happened in the United States, the crisis that currently crushes the whole world and was known as subprime." **Enilson Simões, o Alemão** (*Blog do Patah, 09.03.2009*)

GWU will participate in the solemnity of a German foundation in Brazil

GWU (General Workers Union) will present itself, through its vice-president Laerte Teixeira da Costa, at the 40 years of activities commemorative solemnity of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany) in Brazil. Laerte was even designated to interfere on the first panel which main topic is "40 years of Brazil's political development" lessons from the past and challenges to the future - the role of international cooperation". The ceremony is expected to happen on March 19 and 20, in Rio.



GWU vice-president,
Laerte Teixeira da Costa

Laerte Teixeira, that will have the responsibility of representing the whole national direction of GWU, considers important this participation of the union central at an event of international importance. That, according to the vice-president, contributes to strengthen even more the relationship of GWU with organizations from abroad and getting it to be more well known in other countries.

The president of KAS (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung), Dr. Bernhard Vogel, confirmed his presence, besides other political and business personalities, such as Eduardo Paes, mayor of Rio; Wilhelm Hofmeister, director and representative of the Studies Center of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Brazil; Friederich Prot von Kunow, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Brazil; João Pacheco, Ambassador, Chief of the European Union Delegation in Brazil and the ex-President of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, among others.

GWU participates in awareness act on RSI

Due to the International Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Awareness Day - , representatives from GWU (General Workers Union) along with other union centrals and different unions from Curitiba participated in an act in the state of Paraná on February, 28, to aware the population on the disease. During the whole afternoon, there were distributed informative brochures.

This kind of injury is the second main cause of workers dismissals in Brazil. In 2007, more than 22 thousand workers were dismissed according to the National Institute of Social Security. Comparing to 2006, the number of cases raised in 126%. Besides dealing with such a hard pain, the person has to face limitations in simple tasks.

Also defending the workers affected by RSI / WRULD (Work Related Upper Limb Disorder), the main union forces got back together on March, 3, at the congress. The audience had the participation of Social Security representatives, the Regional Labor Superintendency, Regional Labor Court and the Medicine Regional Council.

The First Adjunct-Secretary of Health and Security at Work of GWU, Adir de Souza participated in the activities representing the national GWU.



"The General Workers Union 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. " Ricardo Patah – UGT's President

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