



Inside this number:

- UGT Against Social Security Reform 01
- Finance Minister goes to UGT 02
- UGT at the UNI-Americas Conference 03
- Moacyr Pereira represents UGT 03
- Limit to interest rate of credit cards 04
- In defense of local content 04
- Caravans against the social security reform 04

## UGT at the Congress Against Social Security Reform

UGT will mobilize workers and face the National Congress

On December 8, representatives from trade union centers had a meeting at the head office of Dieese (Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socio-economic Studies), in downtown São Paulo, to discuss the proposal of a social security reform (Constitutional Amendment Project PEC 287/16) sent by the Government to the National Congress.



**Canindé Pegado, União Geral dos Trabalhadores - UGT's Secretary General**, said that the center will promote actions to mobilize and raise awareness among workers, as well as going to the Congress to discuss it point by point and fight for the modification of any item that damages Brazilian workers.

"We are against the proposal the way it was presented. We will do a thorough analysis of this text to present alternatives to what we deem unacceptable. We will face the Congress and what is necessary so that citizens are not harmed," Pegado said.

UGT was represented at the time by its Secretary General, Canindé Pegado, and by **Chiquinho Pereira, secretary of Organization and Policies of the trade union center**.

### Minimum age and time of contribution

The constitutional amendment project establishes the minimum age of 65 for men and women to retire and a 25-year minimum time of contribution. However, in order to obtain the benefit in full, the worker will have to contribute for 49 years.

Currently, women can apply for retirement with 30 years of contribution and men after 35 years of work. In order to receive the full benefit, it is necessary to reach the formula 85 (women) and 95 (men), which is the sum of the age and the time of contribution.

In the evaluation of Dieese, the proposed rules reduce the possibilities of access to social security benefits. "The criteria that were put regarding age and time of contribution make it difficult to have access to the pension. And there is a reduction in value, probably in pensions. We can even exclude a large part of the population from social security rights," Clovis Scherer, economist from Dieese, said.



UGT em defesa dos Trabalhadores

## Finance Minister goes to UGT to explain reforms

Minister Meirelles explains social security reform proposals at UGT head office

On December 06, UGT received the visit of Henrique Meirelles, Finance Minister, and Marcelo Caetano, Secretary of Social Security of the Ministry of Finance, in its head office in São Paulo. They were there to give the lecture: "Situation of Public Accounts to resume growth with income distribution and social justice".



The visit to the head office of UGT is the first meeting of the finance minister with the working class. Ricardo Patah, president of the institution, emphasized that it is necessary to broaden the dialogue between government and society and that the way that this change is being presented, in a hurry and hastily, UGT and most likely other trade union centers will not accept it.

"When we think about changes in welfare we think of a very sensitive issue that should not be approved the way it was presented, in a very radical way. We will not accept this proposal as it stands, let us insist that these changes should not happen precisely on the people who are among the poorest," Patah said.

According to the president of UGT, Brazil is a country where the population already has a certain difficulty to reach the minimum requirements for retirement without a minimum age, with these rules that the government is proposing many people will not retire at all, because there are states in which the life expectancy of the population is 70 years, according to studies of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

Patah emphasized that UGT understands that there must be a reform in retirement, but its main focus is the unification of the whole system, so that there is no longer differentiation between classes. "We need to end privileges, we are all equal but we cannot equal retirement between men and women, since our female workers, in addition to earning a lower salary than their male peers, in many cases are obliged to perform double or triple shifts," the officier from UGT said.

Henrique Meirelles highlighted that the social security system is collapsing because the deficit in the sector has been increasing at a fast pace, so it is not possible to expect the worst to happen, something must be done now. "This is a proposal that aims to benefit future governments, because currently the minister is Meireles, tomorrow it will be another, yesterday we had a president who has already changed and soon the current president will also be another, so our proposal considers the sustainability of the country and of the system".

"Our country needs to ensure several things, among them there is the need of economy growing again and jobs being created," Meirelles said and cleared out that the visit to UGT is the beginning of a conversation between government and society.

According to Marcelo Caetano, the idea of the government is that the entire social security system is unified so that there is no group being benefited.

The secretary emphasized that the fragility of public accounts reinforces the need for reforms. "The government has sought not to increase taxes, but instead has been aiming to review fiscal waivers and correct a structural deficit, since people in Brazil are living longer." (Fábio Ramalho - UGT Press / Photo: FH Mendes)



Visit of Minister Meireles in the National TV

## President of UGT attends 4th Conference

During the participation of the president of UGT and of the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo, Ricardo Patah, at the 4th UNI-Americas Conference in Medellín, Colombia, on Friday, December 9, there were talks on the need for change and the importance of UNI and young people for this constant transition.

The president thanked the essential role of Adriana Rosenzvaig, UNI-Americas regional secretary and of Philip Jennings, UNI Global Union secretary general.

We know that, regardless of governments, technology is advancing and causes unemployment. So we have to discuss politics. It is part of the game, but technology advances regardless of the color of government.



Ruben Cortina re-elected president of UNI-Americas

## Moacyr Pereira represents UGT

UGT's Secretary of Finance shows his concern about environmental causes

Moacyr Pereira, president of SIEMACO-SP (Union of Employees in Companies Serving Services of Care and Maintenance, Urban Cleaning and Maintenance of Green Areas of São Paulo) and Secretary of Finance of UGT, showed his concern about environmental causes at the 4th Conference of the UNI-Americas, in Medellín, Colombia.



Representing the center, he gave a speech on the influence of climate change on job creation and maintenance, which follows:

Our structure and trade union practice means defending workers, which means a lot of work considering so many threats that take place everyday. But how can we defend labor?

If the trade union does not create jobs, how do we defend the future of workers and their families? How can the trade union movement have a larger role in society?

There are several paths we may follow, but one thing has mobilized the world society that can harm us all and reduce the possibilities of work: climate change.

For many it may seem strange in an environment where the expectation is to discuss directions and organization of the trade union movement, we are talking about climate and its changes. But one of the tasks of this conference is to plan the period of 2016-2020. That is, talk about future. We cannot speak of the future without evaluating the recent past where several lost their lives and many lost the possibility of working precisely because of climatic issues.

We are currently facing some deserts where there is no water to drink. The change in atmospheric temperature may cause more intense rains in certain regions and more prolonged droughts in areas that are already punished by the water shortage.

Natural disasters as well as those caused by men lead to new disasters. There is immigration as a result of environmental issues, which also affects labor and union relations. In African countries and closer to us, in Haiti, there is strong immigration due to environmental issues that affect the level of employment of the countries that receive them. Many of these countries are not prepared for it.

But what do we, workers and organized trade unions, have to do with this? It has to do with the future of the workers, our future! We are organized and society expects much of our action.

What is important is the creation of a network with affiliates, with UNI Americas, counting on a technical support structure that can disseminate and aggregate data regarding local and sectoral activities, thus allowing UNI to plan its activities.



CONTEC participates in the 4th Conference



## Limit to interest rate of credit cards

On November 29, the Senate Economic Affairs Committee approved a bill that stipulates a limit for credit card interest in Brazil. The ceiling would be double the rate of the Interbank Deposit Certificate (CDI), that is, approximately 28%, since, currently, the CDI is around 14% per year.



The bill, written by Senator Ivo Cassol (PP party - State of Rondônia), is now following legal channels at the Senate and UGT is waiting for the text to be approved.

In September 2016, the average annual rate of card interest in Brazil was 436%, but back in 2012 UGT had already launched a national campaign against this abusive rate, which represents a robbery to the consumer's pocket and to the country's economy. At the time, the interest reached 600%.

On the occasion, UGT mounted a guillotine, which passed through different Brazilian states, to symbolize the constant threat that loomed over consumers who were in debt due to their credit cards.

"The middle class, the basis of the consumption pyramid, made up of a large number of workers and retirees, uses credit cards and ends up being massacred by the abusive collections of interest," Ricardo Patah, UGT's president, explained.

## In defense of local content

Institutions that represent industry sectors and companies from seven states began a campaign to defend local content in Brazil's industrial policy today, December 8. Representatives of the industrial federations of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, Bahia, Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina had a meeting at the head office of the Federation of Industries of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Firjan).

Local content is the proportion of national investments applied in a given good or service, ensuring participation of the domestic industry. In the oil and gas sector, the percentage of local content to be used by enterprises has a minimum set by law, and proposals of larger proportions are considered as a criterion in the definition of winners of exploration and production field auctions.

The National Energy Policy Council (CNPE) has a meeting scheduled for December 14 and can discuss changes in the local content law for the exploration of oil and gas. The possible changes concern the group for the risk of loss of space of the national companies in the market, since they made investments to guarantee the offer of obligatory local content. Businessmen also say that ending the local content policy would lead to unemployment.

## Caravans against the social security reform

Security operators prepare caravans against social security reform

Civilian police officers, delegates, clerks, experts and prison agents, among other categories that make up the public security system in the state, attended the call of their class entities - many of them affiliated to UGT's State branch of Minas Gerais - and participated in a demonstration in the courtyard of the Legislative Assembly of Minas Gerais (ALMG) in the afternoon of December 07.

The goal was to protest against the Constitutional Amendment Proposal (PEC) 287/2016, which contains the Social Security Reform, sent by the government to the National Congress. For the different classes who were at the act, the measures provided in the PEC are extremely damaging to the servers and an immediate reaction is needed to halt their approval.



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The UGT union is an organization formed to defend the Brazilian workers across a broad trade union movement, national, ethical, supportive, independent, democratic and innovative.

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