



## IX Southern Cone Union Summit

Southern Cone Union Summit preaches unity in search of quality jobs, peace and democracy in the region.

The **IX Southern Cone Union Cumbre** (Summit) ended on December, 07, with a speech of **José "Pepe" Mujica**, elected president from "Frente Ampla", leftist, who won the presidential elections in Uruguay and with the "Montevideo Declaration".

In the afternoon, the speeches of unity in action were supported by **Antonio Cortizo**, vice-president of **GUW**, who participated in the event representing **Ricardo Patah**, national president of **GIJW**.

While ending the summit, **José "Pepe" Mujica** made a speech stimulating unity in action all over Latin America. And that currently, "Latin America is going through an extremely rich moment in which it may assume the interests of its population, especially workers, as long as it invests in wealth creation combined with culture and much knowledge."

### Montevideo Declaration

At the end of the meeting, the "**Montevideo Declaration**" was read, highlighting that "the consolidation of democracy is an unequivocal condition towards the construction of Mercosur". The document charges the world capitalism for the world financial crisis, but also for the climate crisis that the world is living in, with malign consequences to create food and the social crisis that it generates.

The Declaration states that, despite the advances Mercosur has reached, "a little or almost nothing has been done towards the workers of that region, especially when it comes to protecting their rights".

He also lists that the "**ILO Global Jobs Pact**", adopted by the International Labor Organization, that made a call to governments and civil society, especially business and union organizations, to sum up efforts in order to create decent jobs.

### Peace and democracy

The text emphasizes the importance of integrating peace with democracy in this region. "We want to affirm that, in order to reach a sovereign and solidary integration, a peaceful environment in the region is essential.

The document finishes with a request to the "unity in action of the union movement as an essential condition for the working class being able to play a major part in processes of social and political improvement.

GUW participated in the meeting with a significant delegation led by Antônio Cortizo and Valdir Vicente de Barros, National Secretary at the GUW Public Policies Department.

Trade Union Centrals from **Paraguay** (CUT Autêntica and CNT), **Brazil** (GUW, CTB, Força Sindical and CGTB), **Argentina** (CGT, CTA), Chile (CUT), **Uruguay** (PIT-CNT) and **TUCA** participated in the IX Cumbre. *(By Marco Roza, from Montevideo)*



### Children of Brazil

GUW promotes exhibition of film on the story of the President Lula



GUW (General Union of Workers), promoted, successfully, an exhibition of the film “Lula, child of Brazil” to its chairpersons, unionists, workers and special guests. It was a way, according to the president Ricardo Patah, that the central found to prestige the national cinema.

“Our country deserves national changes in every sector. We hope that this film, that will certainly turn into a blockbuster, make it as an incentive to the president Lula, its mains character, so that he can go through the changes that the working class so long has been waiting for”, Patah said. He emphasized that Lula is a symbol of humbleness and was always a person focused in facing challenges.

The exhibition of the film, on December, 5, at Sesc, had the presence of the director Fábio Barreto, nominated for an Oscar with the film “O Quatrilho”, the actor Rui Ricardo Dias, who played Lula in his youth and as a union leader and the writer Denise Paraná, author of the book that tells the story of the president Lula and that was the inspiration to shoot this cinematographic production. Its official release will be in January, 2010, in all cinema theaters of South America.

“Ever since other generations, there’s been a lot of talk about Brazil, country of the future. We want a country of the present. With a fair income and perspective distribution of a qualitative life”, the president of GUW cleared up. He informed that, starting next year, GUW intends to participate more actively in actions towards culture, and even collaborating in publicizing the Brazilian cinema.

### Line of credit for motorcycle couriers

The board of directors of **Sindimoto-SP (Union of Deliver, Motorcycle, Cycle couriers and Moto-Taxi Drivers of São Paulo)**, an institution affiliated with **GUW**, received, on November 27, the visit of the Carlos Lupi, minister for Employment and Work.

On the occasion, the release of R\$100 million line of credit, to finance brand new motorcycles, was announced. The money comes from FAT (Aid Fund to the Worker) and it is already available to motorcycle couriers in every CEF agency.



**Ricardo Patah, president of GUW**, thanked the minister for another benefit to this class of workers and announced that he has been developing negotiations with the city hall related to an enlargement of exclusive lanes for motorcycle drivers in order to give them more security. “GUW defends the lives of workers that use motorcycles as their tools and even intend to create, at a national level, a Motorcycle Couriers Department”, Patah said.

There was a reception to the minister, who was accompanied by the secretary of the Employment Department, Luiz Antonio de Medeiros, and it was in charge of the unionist “Gil”, president of Sindimoto, having the presence of Ricardo Patah, national president of GUW and Canindé Pegado, General Secretary, and also union chairpersons from several Brazilian states and cities, politicians and businessmen related to the production and sale of motorcycles.

### Retired People Union is founded in São Paulo

During an assembly that took place at the Braston Hotel, in São Paulo, on November, 26, SINDIAPI-GUW (Union of Pensioners, Retired and Elderly people of the General Union of Workers) was founded.

Retired people and unionists from all the states covered by GUW were present. On the occasion, Social Statutes were approved, and the first board of directors was elected, José Edmundo Benedetti, a retired unionist is the first president.

**Ricardo Patah, national president of GUW**, opened the meeting highlighting the importance of this union on the fight for the legitimate rights of those that once were workers and achieved the right to retirement.

"GUW is now stronger, due to the foundation of this union, because we already have many retired workers and so many others that are getting ready for this benefit", Patah said.



Patah reminded that Sindaipi will have the responsibility of joining the fight against the social security factor, one of GUW ideals as well as the recover in salary losses. He quoted that, in Brazil, there are thousands of workers that, were able to retire with seven minimum wages and nowadays are receiving between two and four. "Currently, it is practically impossible for a worker to quit working and get by only with their retirement money, and many of them still suffer from discrimination because they cannot get back to work", Ricardo Patah emphasized.

After inaugurating, Edmundo Benedetti, elected president, talked about his plans for the first board of directors, informing that he expects, until next March, to have founded some state branches and, until July, in every state where GUW is present.

The main proposals form the board of directors are the following ones:

- a) Recover of the buying power to pensioners and retired people that are entitled to an amount above the minimum wage;
- b) End of the social security factor
- c) Establishment of an accord with the S System (Sesi, Senai, Senac);
- d) Accords with schools and universities;
- e) Enlargement of the Popular Drugstore Program;
- f) Linking of retirement raise to minimum wage readjustment
- g) Raise of LOAS tax base percentage to two minimum wages;
- h) Full compliance of rules established by the elderly statute;
- i) Improvement at the SUS service and creation of a national health insurance for elderly people;
- j) Support houses all over the Brazilian territory and hotels accords in large urban centers so that pensioners, retired and elderly people get to sleep over in case of health treatment.

Besides Patah and Edmundo Benedetti, the following people participated in the debate table: **Natal Léo, Valdir Vicente de Barros** (president), **Aparecido Alves Tenório**, aka "Cidão". During the assembly, the secretary **Chiquinho Pereira, Rubens Romano, Cleonice Martins** and the Italian unionist **Guido Moretti** also made their speeches.

### Trade union centrals gather at G UW against Social Security Factor

The **General Union of Workers - G UW** - on its 8th National Plenary Session, that was held in Brasilia, on November, 10, has taken a position against the maintenance of the Social Security Factor, on this occasion, G UW showed such position through a legal ratification, on November, 23, along with other five trade union centrals (CUT, Força Sindical, NCST, CTB, CGTB) and also with COBAP. After evaluating projects that concern workers and retired people and that are following legal channels under the National Congress, the centrals and COBAP came down to a unique agenda in defense of all projects and initiatives that concern retired people.

To **Ricardo Patah, National President of G UW**, the adherence of the other centrals is essential for the projects approval at the Chamber of Deputies, especially the project of the Senator Paulo Paim, that extinguishes the Social Security Factor. The unionist emphasizes that, from now on, union centrals are going to pressure the president of the Chamber, the deputy Michel Temer, into putting the project, which was already approved at the Senate, to a vote. Union centrals also released a combined memorandum emphasizing the items of the claim agenda.

**Victory** - Union institutions and centrals that are contrary to the social security factor faced another victory on November, 17, when the Committee of Constitution and Justice (CCJ) from the Chamber of Deputies approved, unanimously, the end of the factor that reduces the workers retirement in up to 40%.

### Vice-president of G UW joins committee to negotiate reduction of working hours



**Roberto Santiago, deputy - PV party - SP**, vice-president of the **General Union of Workers**, was nominated by the president of the Chamber, Michel Temer, to join a committee of parliamentarians that represent workers and companies to discuss the procedure of the vote of the amendment proposal to the Constitution (232/95), that reduces working hours for shift work from 44 down to 40 weekly hours, without a reduction in salaries.

The committee, that will gather again from December 10 to the 15th, is composed by the deputies Armando Monteiro (DEM party-PE), Eduardo Sciarra (DEM party-PR) and Guilherme Campos (DEM party-SP), representatives of the business sector ; the following deputies: Roberto Santiago (PV party - SP), Paulo Pereira da Silva (PDT party-SP), Vicentinho (PT party-SP), Paulo Rubem Santiago (PDT party-PE), and Chico Alencar (Psol-RJ), were representing workers.

Temer pointed out that the committee has the objective of providing a consensus over the reduction, because it is important to end a deadlock that might even disturb the Brazilian productive sector. "The Chamber of Deputies would do a great service if we were able to intermediate this negotiation without any conflict", he said.

Roberto Santiago, deputy, ensured that workers and unions will spare no effort along with parliamentarians to clear up the way for the amendment approval and that January will be a decisive month to enlarge negotiations with the business sector, when it comes to approving the reduction from 44 down to 40 weekly hours without a reduction in salaries.



### **G UW Human Diversity Declaration**

A strong and integrated policy from G UW, capable of promoting racial equality starting at the labour world was built on November 18, 19 and 20, during the National Seminar of the Human Diversity Department in Rio.

Magno Lavigne, responsible for the department, emphasized the importance of the event being held in Rio. "Rio is historically recognized as a major political site of Brazil; it was here that important movement like Camélias, samba, among others, took place; Édson Santos, ministry, and also from the Special Department of Policies to Promote Racial Equality, and Carlos Santos, federal Deputy, writer of the Racial Equality Statute proposal, are also from Rio.



There were 196 colleagues representing 72 institutions from eight Brazilian states in the National Seminar on Human Diversity. Canindé Pegado, general secretary at G UW, who participated in the opening by bringing a message from Ricardo Patah, president of the central, celebrating the success of the event by the quality of representativeness, reaffirming the commitment G UW has with the promotion of racial equality.

Other important chairpersons from G UW participated in the first day of the event, such as the colleagues Zé Francisco, president of G UW-Pará and the national executive board; Nindberg dos Santos from G UW Amazonas; Márcio Fatel, president of the Federation of Commerce Workers of Bahia; Mazinho, president of G UW Santa Catarina; Waldir Vicente, from the Executive board and founder of Inspir, and also the colleagues Cléo and Cidinha, also from G UW and Inspir.

After that discussion, participants from the Seminar discussed and approved the final text of the event named "**Declaração da Diversidade Humana da UGT**" (G UW Human Diversity Declaration). The Human Diversity Department of G UW also participated in the official program of the state of Rio de Janeiro in the celebration of the November, 20th, Black Consciousness Day.

### **Black Consciousness Day**

#### **Ricardo Patah, president of G UW**

On November, 20, it was celebrated, all over the Brazilian territory, the Black Consciousness Day, as established under the Law 10.639, January, 9, 2003. This day was chosen to reverence Zumbi, leader of the "Quilombo dos Palmares", killed in 1695.

Just like Zumbi had an important role in the process of freeing slaves in the Colonial Brazil period, his ideals are still alive among the African American population in Brazil, even after 414 years since his death.

Sadly there is still discrimination against African-American people in Brazil, especially in the job market, where official statistic data show that, when it comes to salaries, Black people are inferior when compared to white people.

G UW (General Union of Workers) came out as a modern Union Central that defends deep modifications in society and the construction of new paradigms towards a new concept of a union project that fits into the demands of evolution of the XXI Century.

At the same time we praise these African-American colleagues for this memorable date, we shout out loud so that everyone gathers G UW and we are able to make the junction of ideas get stronger and we may claim for social justice.

### **GUW promotes Seminar on Professional Qualification**

**Ricardo Patah** warned that, lack of investments on education compromises the future of Brazil



The **General Union of Workers**, through its National Department of Professional Qualification, promoted, on November, 30, its 1st Professional Qualification Seminar.

**Canindé Pegado**, National Secretary of GUV, while opening the event, said that the seminar was already being discussed by the board of directors of GUV since the plenary session was made. GUV, according to Pegado, is ready to go through this kind of investment, even with meetings in other states.

**Ricardo Patah**, president of GUV, while saluting the participants, reminded that when GUV was born, two years and six months ago, it started worrying about the education issue, "even because Brazil will fail in its future if it doesn't make a revolution in education", he warned. He stated that GUV has been growing, and currently it represents 5 million workers through its 700 affiliated unions scattered in several Brazilian states.

The first part of the event, had the participation of Dr. Fátima Rosa Neves, Coordinator of Professional Qualification at the Ministry of Labor and Employment, who made an illustrated explanation with graphics showing the process related to courses that aim to better prepare the worker to face the demands of the job market.

In the afternoon, Roberto Nolasco, unionist and advisor at the GUV National Board of Directors, went through the issue "Professional Qualification as a Guarantee of Insertion in the Job Market."

Vivian K. Bertoldi, National Secretary of Professional Qualification, cleared up that the concern with the Seminar on Professional Qualification, "is with quality, rather than quantity, but still, other seminars will be held next year in other states, depending on the priorities each one has".

### **International Day of Disabled People**

GUV promotes seminar on accessibility

On the International Day of Disabled People (December 3), GUV promoted its 1st National Accessibility Seminar. "More than a celebration day, today is a day of fight", Silvana Mesquita, national secretary at the GUV Accessibility Department, stated. And it was this spirit that mobilized the actions GUV took to promote this seminar that gathered an audience of nearly 80 people at the GUV auditorium in São Paulo.



The employability issue of disabled people was one of the main topics brought up during the event that had the presence of Marcos Belizário, Municipal Secretary of the Department of Disabled People and Persons with Reduced Mobility of the city hall of Sao Paulo. He emphasized the importance of doing this seminar, even to indicate the actions of the city hall. "Through this event we might extend the city hall actions in this area. There's been a lot of talk about sustainability but we cannot forget about the human being" the secretary stated. According to Belizário, the rights of the disabled people in Brazil, are way beyond the expected.

### GUW has a representative in the Social Security Council

Avelino Garcia Filho inaugurates at the Social Security Council of São Paulo

The unionist Avelino Garcia Filho inaugurated as a counselor at the Social Security Council of São Paulo, representing GUW (General Union of Workers). The inauguration ceremony took place on November, 26, at the Social Security Executive Management Board of São Paulo and had the presence of the minister José Pimentel, in charge of the respective agenda.



### 5th meeting of International Union Network of Banks

Ricardo Patah, president of GUW, was invited and should prestige the opening of the meeting in São Paulo, on December, 1. In November and December, the UNI Americas Finance and the Finance Committee of CCSCS, with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Chile) and Project CUT/FNV (Brazil) promoted the 5th Combined Meeting of International Banks Union Networks.

### Union wants Jobs to be kept at Casas Bahia and Pão de Açúcar

The fusion between Casas Bahia and the Pão de Açúcar Group is seen with a strong preoccupation through the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo. The union between the two groups, on the evaluation of the Union, creates the largest sales network in Brazil, with almost 140 thousand workers and the union fears that it may lead to dismissals, which is not good for our country. For that reason, the union has requested a meeting with the board of directors of Pão de Açúcar to demand that jobs are kept and benefits are equalized among the employees of the two groups.

Ricardo Patah, president of the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo, said that he is not against the fusion, as long as jobs are kept, and he expects that the analysis that the Administrative Council of Economic Defense (Cade) will do on this trade, doesn't take for granted only the consideration on the sales concentration that is going to happen, but also on the job keeping. "We are going to call the Ministry of Employment and Work to accompany all the process and we are also going to request the participation of the workers in the discussions, to guarantee their jobs", the unionist said.

### Spotlight interview with Rosane Sasse (UGT-Brazil)

ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation), an organ that represents 175 million workers in 155 countries and territories, affiliated with 311 union organizations, published in its [website](#), an interview with Rosane Sasse.

**Rosane Sasse**, adjunct-secretary of the GUW Woman Committee and Vice-President of STIV, Union of the Textile and Clothing Industry of Jaraguá do Sul and surroundings, examines some of the priorities: organization on the informal sector, the fight against moral harassment, remuneration equality, etc.



"The **General Union of Workers (GUW)** 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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