



## Barack Obama means that change in favor of peace is possible

The **General Workers Union (GUW)**, facing the election of the first African-American president of the United States, supports that Barack Obama, to History, more than meaning change, confirms that each one of us, in any part of the world, can believe once again that peace is also possible. By **Ricardo Patah - president of GWU**.



"Change has come to America", said Obama at the first speech after being elected.

"As the president of **GWU** I believe I was one of the only Brazilian unionists that had the opportunity to participate in the Democratic National Convention in Denver, United States, that guaranteed the nomination of Barack Obama running for the presidential dispute. Back then, around August, 21, this year, the dream of change spread all over. Dream that was confirmed with the election that happened yesterday is a subject to confirm the change all over the world in favor of the new times, bringing a lot more democracy, a lot more peace.

I went to the United States through an invitation of union institutions mobilized around the campaign of Barack Obama. One of the events happened at an excellent convention center. Afterwards, we headed to the Pepsi Cola Stadium. Several buses were bringing popular leaders from all over the United States. The atmosphere reminded of democratic euphoria, of faith in men and women that congregated to change the world.

And with the confirmation of the election of the first African-American to the presidency of the most powerful nation in the world, we have a lot to reflect. Here in Brazil, mainly, where African-American people are almost half the population and where, unfortunately, disguised prejudice predominates, that under daylight prevents job opportunities, pays lower salaries only for being African-American and prevents their families from opportunities only given to white people.

Barack Obama was elected because a series of circumstances that motivated the North-American public opinion and the rest of the world to choose this option. Mankind doesn't want articulated wars anymore regarding interests of petroleum and weapons lobbyists. That is why, Barack Obama defeated McCain that was associated to Bush and his aggressiveness against nations and people.

Barack Obama was elected because the United States and the world are changing systematically during the last 50 years. A change in favor of integration of people, in favor of peace, in favor of respect between nations.

In Brazil, with Lula, we sensed the taste of change with the election of an ex-metallurgist to the presidency. And now, in this new era that begins, we have the credentials to bet on social inclusion, generation of equal opportunities to African-American, women and minorities. This is the mission of GUW, the central that grows the most in Brazil, that will keep on its daily fight and its systematic mobilization in favor of Brazil, peace and social inclusion."

## GWU has a meeting with José Serra and vindicates anti-crisis measures

**GWU** had a dialogue with the Government of the State of São Paulo about the necessary measures to reduce the impacts of the economic crisis on the workers of São Paulo. The **national vice-presidents** of **GWU**, **Antonio Salim** and **Davi Zaia**, accompanied by **Chiquinho Pereira**, secretary of Organization and **Marcos Afonso de Oliveira**, secretary of Communications gathered together with the governor **José Serra**, at the Palácio dos Bandeirantes (state capitol) on November 7, occasion in which **GWU** leaderships vindicate the increase of state programs of professional qualification and requalification, from industry, commerce and services segments that were affected by the crisis to, particularly, rural workers that already lost or are about to lose their jobs due to field mechanization.

**GWU** leaders also discussed with Serra and with the labor state secretary, Guilherme Afif Domingos, the implementation of the Employ São Paulo System, project of the São Paulo government that has **GWU** as its partner and intends to ease access of workers to information on positions in the job market of São Paulo. National matters were also discussed, with **GWU** leaders defending the increase of the Unemployment Check and, mainly, the immediate reduction of labor shifts, without reducing salaries, as way to guarantee the maintenance and even the increase of levels of employability and consuming in the Brazilian economy.

## GWU Bahia is part of the Supervisor Committee for the Decent Work Bahia Program

**Jaques Wagner**, governor of the state of Bahia, nominated the workmates **José Álvaro França Rios** and **Mário Conceição**, from **UGT Bahia**, to the Supervisor Committee for the Decent Work Bahia Program.

To the National **GWU** the nomination means a very important advance to enlarge the actuation of the central all over Brazil. The National **GWU** is in permanent campaign, along with the other centrals and on the last October 10th participated in public acts under the World Day for Decent Work.



The governor Jacques Wagner and the president of GWU Bahia Álvaro Rios

Under our discussions were our main principles: freedom, equality, safety and dignity. And took the chance to translate to reality what we consider Decent Work and vindicate reduction of shifts, formal jobs and respect to our union organization. We manifested ourselves against child and slave labor. We demand equal rights to women and the end of any form of discrimination, whether from gender or race.

## GWU will participate in the World Social Forum 2009 in Belem, Para

The Amazon is territory and protagonist in the World Social Forum 2009

The **General Workers Union (GWU)** will participate in the 9th edition of the World Social Forum. From January 27 up to February the 1st the city of Belem is no longer the capital of the state of Pará and becomes the center of all Pan-Amazon

During six days, Belem, capital of Para, in Brazil takes over the position of center of all the region to host the current largest anti-globalization event that unites activists from over 150 countries in a permanent process of mobilization, articulation and search for alternatives for another possible world, free from neoliberal politics and all forms of imperialism.



Composed of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela, besides French Guyana Francesa, the Pan-Amazon is known for the largest biodiversity of the world and for the strength and tradition of their people and institutions that build a movement of resistance under the perspective of another model of development.

At a meeting of the International Council (IC) of the WSF, held between March, 30 to April, 2, in Abuja, Nigeria (Africa) it was decided that the WSF 2009 Amazon would take place in Belem, Para, Brazil, from January, 27 up to February, 1, in one of the countries that are part of the Pan-Amazon. Besides the date and architecture of the Forum, the Forum signalized the decision that the territory of the WSF 2009 will be constituted by the Federal University of Para and the Federal Rural University of the Amazon.

Much more than a territory to host the WSF, the Amazon, represented by their people, social movements and organizations will be the protagonist in the process and will have the opportunity to echo all over the world its fights, besides making a network of continental and world alliances.

### The choice of the Pan-Amazon

The International Council of the WSF, composed of around 130 institutions, chose the Pan-Amazon to host the WSF 2009, in recognition of the strategic role that the region has to all mankind. The region is one of the last areas of the planet still relatively preserved, under a geographic space of unmeasurable value due to its biodiversity and that joins a wide and diverse complex of social movements, union centrals, associations, cooperatives and civil society organizations that for a sustainable, solidary and democratic Amazon, articulated in networks and forums, building this wide movement of resistance under the perspective of another model of development.

The WSF 2009 Amazon will be guided by three strategic directives:

to be effectively a space where alliances that strengthen proposals of action and formulation of alternatives are built;

to become hegemonic for its self-manageable activities;

and have a clear pan-amazonic accent

This effort and demand of Pan-Amazon were recognized and embraced by the International Council and the result will be one of the great news of the WSF in its 9th edition, an entire day dedicated to the panamazonic theme - The Pan-Amazon Day. On this day, the testimonies, panels, conferences, discussions, marches and alliances between people of the Pan-Amazon and the world will also understand the 5th edition of the Pan-Amazon Social Forum (PASF).

## GWU takes position against decree 186 and pre-project that institutes the financial contribution

On the last meeting of the **GWU National Executive**, at the Federation of Metallurgists of Minas Gerais State, in Belo Horizonte, on October,30, it was decided the firm condemnation to the pre-project that institutes the financial contribution and the decree 186. It's understood that the pre-project constitutes a threaten to financial sustainment of union institutions, and that **GWU** should take a firm position against the referred pre-project and keep its position to defend and maintain union contribution.

Regarding the decree 186, that refers to new procedures to enroll union institutions, it was understood that the same has aspects that concern union organizations, but it is also disunited at the moment it revokes important articles of Labor Laws and gives room to fragmentation of union institutions, the national executive decided the elimination of any form that vindicates union plurality under the decree 186 of the Ministry of Labor and Job.

## GWU grew 54% in six months with new affiliations

**Presidents of GUV state centrals got together at the national headquarter of the institution**

In a little longer than 6 months **GWU (General Workers Union)** had a growth of 54,78% of affiliated unions, confederations and federations. From March, 31, 2008, until now the number of affiliations jumped by 303 to 469 institutions. The information was given by the general secretary **Canindé Pegado**, during the meeting with all the presidents of state centrals that took place at the GUV auditorium. These numbers, according to Pegado, refer only to valid unions, pointing out that are other 289 that already signed affiliation forms, but are waiting for bureaucratic procedures to accomplish its formalization, even along with the Ministry of Labor and Job. The goal is to reach 600 (valid) affiliations until the end of the year.

While opening the meeting, the president Ricardo Patah talked about the importance of **GWU** take the chance of this post-election period to keep this rhythm of growth but, with organization and sustainability. He reminded that is time GUV participated in discussions to elaborate budgets of countryside city halls to know if the money is destined with social justice and already begin to worry with the matter of the dengue fever. The meeting counted with the participation of presidents of eleven states where **GWU** is officially installed (Ceará, Bahia, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Norte, Rio de Janeiro, Pará, Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Minas Gerais and Amazonas).



"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." Ricard Patah - UGT's President

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