



Global



UNIÃO GERAL DOS TRABALHADORES

Sindicalismo Cidadão, Ético e Inovador

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March 6th in Brasilia

Everyone is invited to the 7th March for Development, Civic Rights and Labour Valorization

On March 6th UGT, along with the trade union centrals CGTB, CTB, CUT, Força Sindical and Nova Central, will hold the 7th March for Development, Civic Rights and Labour Valorization. This march will also be attended by institutions of the civil society and of the students movement.

The agenda of this march contemplates overriding ideals for the labour world, such as the decrease of working hours for shift work, end of the social security factor, as well as going through a demand of investment on health and education.



We are going to fight for:

- 40 weekly working hours shift without a decrease in salaries
- End of the Social Security Factor
- Agrarian Reform
- Equality among men and women
- Policies of valorization of retired workers
- 10% of GDP for education
- 10% of Brazil's budget for health
- Correction of the income tax table
- Regulation and ratification of ILO Conventions 151 and 158

To Ricardo Patah, president of UGT, "this march will be essential to express important changes, agendas that are committed to development but did not get achieved". "We must give visibility to workers demands. We want a Brazil of inclusion, with decent work, more investment in health and education", he added.

UGT wants adjustment in unemployment insurance

União Geral dos Trabalhadores (UGT) condemns the government's decision not to adjust the unemployment insurance at the same rate that the minimum wage was adjusted, which has caused an enormous damage to the working class, who suffers doubly from the measure. First, by losing their jobs, the greatest asset of workers, and then, with this decision of the government not to adjust the payment of the unemployment insurance, a payment that belongs to the own workers.

UGT immediately demands the adjustment of the unemployment check. And there is more: besides this correction, we are going to expose the obligation of the government to make payments retroactively, covering all workers that already received their insurance without the due adjustment.

UGT goes to Brasilia in defense of motorcycle couriers

Canindé Pegado, UGT's secretary-general, had a meeting on February 5, at the Ministry of Cities, with the special advisor of the general department of the Presidency of the Republic, José Lopez Feijó, with the director of Denatran, Júlio Arcoverde, and with the president of Sindimoto-SP, Gilberto Almeida, to deal with the proposal of a resolution concerning the supervision of motorcycle taxi drivers and motorcycle couriers.



UGT, along with Sindimoto-SP, Sindimoto-DF and the National Association of Detrans, will present a new proposal on February 20, through an ordinary meeting in the Ministry. This proposal establishes that state Transportation Departments are responsible for the supervision and orientation of motorcycle couriers on the importance of respecting the law, for example, regarding the prohibition of driving for more than four hours non stop, as well as stipulating a deadline of one year for punishments.

To **Canindé Pegado, UGT's secretary-general**, the effects of this change for the workers will be concrete. "Workers will actually have time to take courses, and it will also be vehemently demanded by Denatram and Contram that municipalities regulate this law", Canindé emphasizes.

Among deadlocks created due to lack of regulation in municipalities, we may find: lack of credentialed schools interested in applying courses and the transference of class of motorcycle courier drivers. Roberto Santiago, federal deputy and vice-president of UGT, is favorable to this matter.

"It is essential that this supervision actually work in a way that it demands these professionals to follow a model of security and avoid fatal accidents, which have become a national tragedy. This culture of irregularities damages all the chain that involves these services".

To **Gilberto Almeida, president of Sindimoto-SP**, only Transportation Departments recognize the real needs of municipalities. "We suggest the creation of a resolution sharing the supervision responsibilities, since every State knows its reality", said Gilberto.

USA: Fight for a reform in immigration

Unionists announced a Campaign of National Mobilization for an Immigration Reform

Richard Trumka, president of AFL-CIO, stated that a broad immigration reform aiming towards civic rights is essential for all US workers. Along **with Maria Elena Durazo, director of the AFL-CIO committee**, Trumka launched a national campaign for a reform on US immigration law, through a telephone press conference.

"We are here today because we believe in a nation that values the work of people, their communities and their families", said Trumka. "We believe that, in order to create a shared prosperity and a voice to everyone, we must change our immigration process. This is a priority to trade unions of America, because a path to civic rights for Americans, in all senses, except in paper, is essential for all of those that work.

Workers without the protection of their civic rights, are subject to an enormous abuse of their employers. We understand that solidarity means being by the side of the workforce, predominantly performed by immigrants, to improve wages and security at work".

Durazo said that the campaign will be launched with events in 14 cities all over US. The first event took place in Raleigh, North Carolina, and the next one will be in Las Vegas.

Trumka and Durazo said that AFL-CIO will mobilize its political infrastructure and the base of the workmen movement that same way in which it was made to elect and reelect Barack Obama, involving workers families all over the country to approve the immigration reform.

"Do you recall how unionism help the approval of the health reform? How we helped electing and reelecting president Obama? That is how we should act to approve a humanitarian and sensitive immigration reform, to provide civic rights to 11 million people", said **Durazo**.

Plan of the workmen movement for the immigration reform consists of five big interconnected parts:

An independent committee to evaluate and manage future flows, based on the scarcity of the labour market that are determined based on the real need;

A mechanism of safe and efficient authorization to work;

Operational rational control of borders;

Adjustment of the situation of the population with no current documents, and

Improvement, not expansion of temp jobs programs, limited to seasonal and not permanent jobs

Brazilians in the United States

A wide movement of immigration abroad of Brazilians began after the 80s. Researches point out that over 40% of Brazilians that immigrate choose the United States as their first option.

It is estimated that are nearly 350 thousand Brazilians living in the jurisdiction of the General Consulate of Brazil in New York, which covers the States of Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania.

Estimates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicate that 1,280,000 Brazilian live in the United States. Many of these Brazilians are illegal and work almost with no social protection.

For these reasons, UGT strongly supports the proposal of reform of immigration laws proposed by the trade union central. AFL-CIO.

Walmart in fight

Brazil: First strike in the history of Walmart against the unacceptable working conditions.

Hundreds of Brazilian workers made a protest against Walmart in Limeira, Sao Paulo. On January 25, commerce trade unions organized a strike establishing a picket outside the store, obliging the company to remain closed from 06:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

Workers made a protest against the general exploration and low wages, which are not enough for workers to face their expenses. Through an outrageous non compliance of labour laws in Brazil, workers are forced to work extra time with no remuneration, no salary increase, and what is even more preoccupying, with no protective equipment for their health and



The **president of the Federation of Commerce Employees of Sao Paulo, Luiz Carlos Motta**, warned that "Strikes will spread to other cities if Walmart fail to obey the Brazilian labour legislation."

Luiz Hamilton, from UGT and from the Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo, said that it was unacceptable having so many problems related to breaking labour laws at Walmart. "We are getting mobilized to end this continuous exploration of workers", said Hamilton.

Alke Boessiger, director of the Commerce Department of the UNI International Federation said that "the protest against Walmart in Brazil is not a surprise, since this company continues its bad global labour practices, including low wages, excessive extra hours and introduction of mandatory non planned tasks, putting workers in a hopeless situation.

UNI Global Union has repeatedly demanded reforms in Walmart to restrain lousy conditions imposed on workers all over the world, but Walmart rejects these accusations and refuses to start a significant dialogue with trade unions". (UNI Global Union)

ILO asks for more sanctions against slave work

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** defends that the fight against slave work should be improved all over the world with new sanctions and specific laws. This institution published a report that covers legislations from all over the world (read the full study in Spanish).

Although most countries have already ratified ILO Conventions 29 and 105 - both related to the fight against slave work -, currently, 21 million people are victims of forced labour all over the world. According to this study, the explanation for that is that efforts to prevent, identify and bring to court cases of forced labour are frequently insufficient, despite good practices in some countries.

Brazil is an example

With examples of several countries that apply successful actions in the fight against slave work, the report emphasizes the role of Brazil in the fight against the demand of this kind of work with the use of a "dirty list", that exposes employers that were captured using slaves. Educational campaigns in the media were considered important in the awareness of the population on this problem.

Economic sanctions introduced in Brazil in 2008 against employers were also highlighted as an example to be followed by other countries, since they prevent employers caught red handed using slave work obtain public loans or sign contracts with the State. Besides, ILO also recommends harsher penal sanctions, which, in some cases, are limited to fees or too short terms of imprisonment (*Stefano Wroblewski, Repórter Brasil*)

FES Brazil visits National UGT

On January 29, the National UGT received the visit of **Tina Hennecken**, vice-director of **FES Brazil - Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation**.

Arnaldo de Souza Benedetti, National Secretary of Union Education, **Sidnei de Paula Corral**, secretary of Foreign Affairs and **Marina Silva**, advisor, were representing UGT.

It was the first time that FES visited UGT, and this approach has the goal of exchanging experiences in the areas of "Global Framework Agreements" and "Trade Union Networks".



Commerce workers of Franco da Rocha affiliate with UGT

On February 07, the Commerce Workers Union of Franco da Rocha and Surroundings affiliated with UGT



With the attitude of strengthening the proposal of UGT and building an ethical, innovative and towards citizens unionism, commerce workers from Franco da Rocha and surroundings will have the guarantee of a strong and active trade union in the fight for the improvement of the rights of this class.

According to **Leozildo Aristaque Barros**, vice-president of this trade union, this is a partnership that seeks for advances in collective bargains to improve, even more, the defense of the interests of the commerce workers class. (*Fábio Ramalho – UGT*)

Democratizing the word

In harmony with political changes of Latin America over the last decade, the fight for a democratization in communications is no longer an issue restricted to those that are directly or indirectly connected to communication, to become a cause engaged by social actors, once it will bring the future of democracy.

Representing a contribution to this debate, ALAI presents its book "**Democratizar la palabra: Movimientos convergentes en comunicación**", (Democratizing the word: converging communication movements), that brings the contribution from social movements, among them the resolution of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas on this issue.



"The União Geral dos Trabalhadores 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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