

Inside this number:

- Patah reelected president of UGT 01
- Watch the video of the 3rd Congress 01
- Brazil: It is time of reforms 02
- Debates mark the second day 02
- Fighting to win 03
- We are invisible 04
- Natal Leo will preside the Employment Commission 04
- Leisure and Culture in the Congress 05
- Exhibition aims at the past of workers 05

Patah reelected national president of UGT

Congress of UGT reappoints **Ricardo Patah** for the presidency of the trade union center

The **3rd National Congress of União Geral dos Trabalhadores (UGT)**, which began on June 16 and gathered 3 thousand unionists from all Brazilian States, ended on June 18 with the strengthening of its democratic process and with elections that elected the board of directors that will be ahead of the trade union central for the next four years.



The plenary session unanimously reelected Ricardo Patah, who was touched and thanked, once again, the thrust they had in him and emphasized that after eight years of fight, which made UGT a leading institution in defense of the interests of the working class, the trade union center strengthens itself in the foundation of unity to face any challenge and to tackle all sorts of attacks against labor rights.

“UGT is a trade union center of the streets, we cannot allow corruption in our country, we must increase our actions in defense of Petrobras, besides fighting for more health, education and civic capacity”, the leader of UGT explains.

“All of us that are here building this trade union center believe in Brazil, because this is a country that has men and women able to promote changes and UGT, which is the institution that aggregates most commerce and service trade unions in Brazil, just what provides an increase of activities with society, with communities”.

[Watch the video of the 3rd National Congress of UGT](#)



[Check more pictures of the Congress](#)

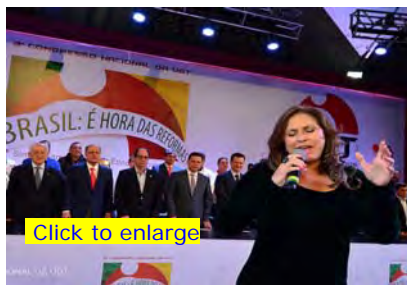




Brazil: It is time of reforms

UGT opens 3rd Congress with criticism of the interest rate and of unemployment

Attended by three thousand unionists of all Brazilian State and of the Federal District, and guest observers from four continents, UGT opened its **3rd National Congress** in Sao Paulo.



It was up to **Fafa de Belem** to sing the national anthem in the opening of the event, which filled up the Celso Furtado auditorium at the Anhembi Convention Center.

Touched, **Ricardo Patah, national president of UGT**, affirmed that it was an honor to have all the presidents of State branches of the trade union center attending the event and highlighted the importance of the female presence in the labor fight, paying a tribute not only to Fafá, but to all women who were at the event.

Geraldo Alckmin, governor of the State of São Paulo, personally congratulated Patah for the mark of ten million workers of affiliated trade unions achieved by UGT. I would like to greet UGT, personified in the figure of its president, for the innovation that was always present in this trade union center, which makes the difference", said Alckmin. He used the opportunity to attack the policy of high interest rates currently practiced by the Federal Government, which, in his opinion, only damages workers.

Manoel Dias, minister of Labor and Employment, affirmed that UGT is surely the trade union center that is more worried with the organization of workers. It is not a coincidence that UGT received official compliments during its participation in the 104th International Labor Conference in Geneva", Dias celebrated.

Gilberto Kassab, minister of Cities, said that the trade union center has everything to increase even more its action area and nail developmentalist policies for workers. "UGT is more than reality, it is a development compass", the minister stated.

Mary Kay, president of SEIU-Service Employees International Union, which is the trade union that represents workers of the sectors of cleaning, condos and surveillance in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico, led the audience to a round of applause by saying that the American dream is a miracle for nearly 44 million people who work in two or three jobs for derisory wages in the USA. "Here in Brazil you have UGT, which, with its fight and exchange, leads me to state that it strengthens a global fight for better wages and trade union guarantees to workers of the fast food industry".

Debates mark the second day of the Congress

The second day of the Congress was marked by counterpoints of ideas during the lectures of the panel "The Reforms that Brazil needs". It was up to **Pedro Simon**, from Rio Grande do Sul, ex governor and senator for four terms and ex minister, to open the cycle of lectures..

At the age of 85, Simon summarized everything he experienced over the last 50 years in the Brazilian politics. He said that Itamar Franco was responsible for a high credibility government, but he was mocked for being a simple man. Fernando Henrique let vanity speak louder and did all he could for reelection. As for Lula, he created social programs that took millions out of misery. "But he closed his eyes for corruption", he criticized.



Right after, other two guests talked, Demétrio Magnoli, sociologist from the Group of Analyses of the International Situation, and Antônio Augusto de Queiroz, aka Toninho, journalist and director of the Inter-Union Department of Parliamentarian Advising.

On June 17, in another activity with a full auditorium at the Anhembi Convention Center, the 3rd National Congress of UGT received the visit of **Marina Silva**, ex senator, as guest lecturer. Marina participated in the panel "Sustainable Development with Social Justice" and pointed out that, among all crises in which Brazil and the world have gone through, the worst one is the "crisis of values".

"People lost the logic of care with themselves, with other and with the environment", Marina said. "We are experiencing a major economic, social, political and environmental crisis, as well as a crisis of values", she affirmed. "They are making an ethical speech, but they relativize everything in their own benefit. This kind of attitude damages Brazil and the world".



[Check more pictures of the Congress](#)

Fighting to win

UGT holds international seminar

Strengthening the union between trade union centers worldwide as a way of ensuring civic rights, social inclusion, health, education and solidarity through work. This was reinforced with the organization of the International **Seminar “Implementing Global Trade Union Strategies: Fighting to Win”**, a satellite event of the 3rd National Congress of UGT.



While speaking in the opening of the event, **Ricardo Patah, president of UGT**, affirmed that the exchange of experiences among international trade union centers in the fight for better working conditions is valuable. “We wait for the contribution of these colleagues, their subsidies, concepts, paths for a better world”, Patah said.

The **president of UGT** emphasized the great fight that trade union centers are engaged in the National Congress with the threat of approval of the Bill 4,330, which allows outsourcing of all Brazilian workers.

“There are already 12 million workers under this condition (outsourced) in our country. With this Bill, they want to put another (disrespect labor rights) 40 million workers into conditions of precarious employment”. He reiterated that, while thinking of global strategies of defense of workers, strategies are also reached in our country.

Decent Work in the Olympic Games 2016

Patah officially launched the campaign “Decent Work in the Olympic Games 2016”. This is a combined initiative of UGT and trade unions of athletes, physical educators and other classes connected to the organization and execution of the Olympic Games - Rio 2016.

“We did the same in the World Cup 2014, with the campaign Play Fair, and now we are doing with the Olympic Games. We have already been at the Labor Minister with sports representatives to deal with this issue”, he highlighted.

Patah cited the case of the Brazilian fighters of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), who reach the number of 30% of athletes in the international outlook. “They have no sort of labor protection”, he said.

Multinational Chains

Transnational companies that act in the system of Global Value Chain were the main topic of lecturers of the seminar “Fighting to Win”.

The attack to labor rights and the total flexible labor relations were pointed out as only two of the evil effects of transnational companies on labor worldwide. Production, in these chains, of parts of one final product is pulverized in several countries, such as mobile telephony, with different patterns of labor relations and low cost of inputs, supplied by the poorest countries.

Roland Schneider, representative of TUAC, Trade Union Advisory Committee that gathers 56 countries, based in Paris, affirmed that currently nearly 500 million workers are part of the global chains of production (work in transnational companies, enterprises with global representation). “In 1995, this number was 300 million”, Schneider stated.

TUAC is in charge of supplying data and suggesting policies to OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development).

“Unfortunately, OECD embraced neoliberal economic policies. We, unionists, attempted to change this direction”, he evaluated. Schneider also stated that the companies that are leaders in their sectors, such as sports shoes and mobile telephony devices, end up making the labor rules almost worldwide and these rules have an effect of “erosion on labor rights”.



[Check more pictures of the Congress](#)

We are invisible

In Brazil, retired workers and elderly people seem invisible, our problems are ignored even representing more than 32 million people nowadays, nearly 17% of the population.

Natal Leo, president of the National Trade Union of Retired Workers, Pensioners and Elderly people.



President Dilma vetoed the formula 85/95, included in the Provisional Measure that was approved in the Congress and that ended the social security factor, and afterwards it restored it, now as a starting point, to be progressively increased.

The formula 85/95, in which the numbers represent the sum of age and time of work for men and women, respectively, represents an advance and benefits workers, especially female workers who are about to retire.

Its progression, since it will be 86/96 in 2017 and 87/97 in 2019, ends up decreasing these benefits.

I defend the overthrow of the veto of President Dilma because I consider the progressivity of the formula disadvantageous.

I agree with our president of UGT, Ricardo Patah, who said: "The government could not have vetoed the formula, as it vetoed a measure that benefits the workers, and give nothing in return. Instead: it proposed a rule of progressiveness that is not advantageous at a medium and long term. It is not what we want."

President Dilma seems to think that social security is simply a matter of accounting, ignoring its profound social aspects. This uncompromising vision of the future of millions of Brazilians still ignores that, in reality, the pension has no imbalance as the data of the National Association of Accountants Tax Internal Revenue Service show on a pension surplus estimated at R\$ 100 billion over the past five years.

The issue of the increase of the life expectancy of Brazilians, a real issue, seems to be presented not as an advance, but as a "serious problem".

This is how everything that concerns retired workers, pensioners and elderly people in Brazil is treated: we are invisible. We do not attract solidarity to our situation. It seems like it would be better if we ceased to exist.

Retirement turned out to be a salary complement, since elderly people, pensioners and retired workers continue to work. In order to get people to retire later all it takes is offering a real benefit, one that covers basic needs and guarantee a deserved rest for a life dedicated to work.

I will continue to fight for a National Policy of Decent Retirement, which I will propose in the forum that was created by the government through the decree 8,443 of May 30, 2015.

Natal Leo will preside the Employment Commission

Representative of UGT is elected president of **the State Employment Commission of the State of São Paulo**

On June 11, **Natal Leo, president of the National Trade Union of Retired Workers, Pensioners and Elderly people of UGT (SINDI-API-UGT)** was elected president of the State Employment Commission of the State of São Paulo, a tripartite organization that gathers representatives of employees, of employers and of the State public power.

Natal Leo was unanimously elected and will work for a term of one year, beginning on June 16, 2015, and ending on the same date in 2016



The Commission has the goal of participating in the definition of policies that form the Public System of Employment of the State of São Paulo following and evaluating its implementation, besides stimulating and approving, in a partnership with SERT (Department of Employment and Labor Relations), the creation of Municipal Employment Commissions of Cities of the State of São Paulo, to collaborate in the development of local public policies of employment and income.



[Check more pictures of the Congress](#)



Leisure and Culture in the Congress

Relaxation, information and culture mark the Congress of UGT

Fafá de Belém, muse of the fight for direct elections in the 1980s, opened the 3rd Congress with the national anthem and talked about the importance of these 30 years of redemocratization, an important mark for the Brazilian politics, but also for the whole culture of a nation. Another mark of the music was the presentation of the Symphonic Orchestra of Sao Paulo, which chanted the harmony of what this Congress will be.

The 3rd Congress of UGT showed that the trade union center carries, among its ideals, quality of life and knowledge through the leisure of workers. Among lectures for a reform of Brazil, sustainable development, in the halls and stage of the Anhembi Convention Center, where this event takes place, with music, art and Native-American performances acclimate and provide a cultural exchange



The orchestra of the Pao de Acucar Institute led nearly 3 thousand unionists who attended the event at the Elis Regina auditorium to sing Demônios da Garoa, Toquinho and be amused by Vivaldi and Guerra-Peixe. Occasion in which the conductor Daniel Misiuk, who conducts nearly 40 young people, showed the importance of silence in music, teaching about rhythm and on the importance of every instrument that is part of an orchestra.

Presentation of Native-American art, dance, capoeira, plastic arts provided an exchange of culture and showed the cultural wealth of Brazil



Exhibition aims at the past of workers

União Geral dos Trabalhadores, UGT, which is a result of a merger of three historical trade union centers of Brazilian workers, and hosts the highest diversity of political positions and ideas among Brazilian trade union centers, considers the History of workers movements as its own history



UGT's National Department of Trade Union Training took a photographic exhibition to the Congress telling the history of the Trade Union Movement from the 19th century to the 21st century, named "Our stories, our fight, history of the participation of women in the labor world and in the political history of our country.

With pictures that were provided by the Center of Trade Union Memory, and exhibited in wood totems, the exhibition drew the attention of participants.

The UGT Global is the Newsletter of International Information of the União Geral dos Trabalhadores

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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