



Nº 18 – March 30, 2009

GWU makes its 6th Plenary Session of the National Executive Board in Brasilia

The **General Union of Workers - GWU**, gathered more than 150 chairpersons from all over the country on March 16 and 17, at the 6th Plenary Session of the National Executive Board that took place at the Nacional Hotel, in Brasilia/DF.

Ricardo Patah, president of GWU, was responsible for the opening of the event, in which he announced to the unionists the growth of 76% in the number of unions affiliated with the institution in only a year. Patah also informed that in the first semester of this year GWU will have its own headquarter in downtown São Paulo and in the next months it will inaugurate a regional office in Brasilia.

It was up to the General Secretary, Canindé Pegado, to announce to the audience present at the Plenary Session, the affiliation of the Federation of Employees in the Commerce and Services Sector of Pernambuco, with 14 unions, and over 200 thousand workers.

With this new affiliation, GWU, that currently has 534 affiliated unions, will have 548, not to mention the Confederations and Federations and more than 250 unions that already signed their affiliation with GWU, but wait for its validation along with the Ministry of Labour.

The plenary session had the participation of Jair Menegueli, president of the National Council of SESI (Social Service in Industry), that discussed with workers the "Opening of workers representation in the SEST - Social Service of Transportation - system and also the representation of workers in the SENAR - Social Service of Rural Learning - system.

The Federal Deputy Pepe Vargas, writer of the project that revokes the social security factor, participated in the debate on the issue and received suggestions from the unionists on the modification of how the calculus of the benefits from social security are made. Sandro Mabel, also a Federal Deputy, writer of the law project on the Tax Reform, made a lecture on the main issues of the reform.

On the second day it was held the seminar "Brazil and Latin America: Collaboration and Conflict" in which the union chairpersons discussed the



Statement delivered to Temer defends basic social rights

On March, 4, in Brasilia, it was delivered to the deputy Michel Temer (PMDB-SP), president of the Chamber of Deputies, a statement in defense of basic social rights, signed by more than 60 institutions that represent the civil society, popular organizations, social movements, unions of workers and union centrals.

The document warns the country to the risk that the project of constitutional amendment of the tax reform, in process under the Chamber of Deputies, brings to the expenses of the Social Security (Welfare, Health and Social Assistance), Education and Work departments.

And that happens because the project, under the federal government initiative, comprehends all the social contributions conquered under the Constitution of 1988 in a unique tax, called IVA. There is: all the taxes raised by the Federal Government will be kept under a unique account, not guaranteeing a budget to basic social rights.

Lineu Neves Mazano, president of Sisstesp, that represented **GWU** at the act of delivering the document, says that, due to these risks to social rights, the organized society should demand of the National Congress a deeper debate on the tax reform.



Os interessados em aderir ao movimento devem enviar mensagem para o e-mail evilasio@inesc.org.br. Evilásio é o coordenador do manifesto e está cadastrando cidadãos e entidades que desejam participar da luta em defesa dos direitos sociais básicos.

[Read the document in full \(portuguese\)](#)

Secretary of Labor Relationships delivers at GWU a Sindistal certificate

In the picture, Ricardo Patah and Luiz Antonio de Medeiros

GWU (General Union of Workers) received this Friday (13) morning, the visit of the secretary Luiz Antonio de Medeiros, from the Labour Relationships Secretaryship to make the official delivery of the union letter from Sindinstal (Union of workers in Cable TV, MMDS and DTH installers companies of the state of São Paulo).



The ceremony, that usually takes place at the Minister of Labour, in Brasília, was coordinated by the **president of GWU, Ricardo Patah**, and counted on the presence of union chairpersons from several cities in the state of São Paulo. The new union, already affiliated with GWU and is presided by **José Tadeu de Oliveira Castelo Branco**, popularly known as "Castelo".

The union letter, besides having the signature of the unionist Medeiros is also signed by the ministry Carlos Lupi, from the Minister of Labour and Job and was part of the process number 46219.028263/2008-94. The secretary of Labour Relationships Department said that the MLJ (Minister of Labour and Job) has rules and legal precepts that should be fulfilled. Therefore, despite the union area, it tries to deal with everyone in an impersonal way. "I talked to the ministry and, exceptionally, decided to break the rule and come to GWU to deliver this document due to the importance of Castelo, a unionist that participated in all the fights of the Brazilian union movement for the redemocratization of the country", said Medeiros. Ricardo Patah, president of GWU, also made sure to point out the qualities of Castelo..

GWU presents suggestions to the government plan on popular housing

GWU (General Union of Workers) participated this Friday (20) afternoon in a meeting, at the Palácio do Planalto, occasion in which the government presented details on the housing plan that will be released by the end of the month. The **General Secretary of GWU, Canindé Pegado**, suggested that the hiring of workers, by the industry of civil construction, gets done in a straight way. "We were contrary to outsourcing labour. There is no need for the companies to sub-hire other companies because this is a strategy adopted so that there is no link with the workers, aiming exclusively towards costs reduction", said Pegado.

The government proposal is the construction of 1 million residences by 2010 at an average cost of R\$ 60 thousand per unit for the families with an income higher than five minimum wages. The General Secretary of GWU positioned himself in favor of decreasing the time of work. "Besides decreasing the time of work, it would decrease its cost", he said. The unionists proposal is that the construction gets done in 11 months instead of the 33 originally previewed in the plan.

FSH Borrower: "Buy a house and pay for two"

Canindé Pegado

Official information from the Palácio do Planalto account for the fact that at least 100 thousand FSH (Financial System of Housing) borrowers will end their contract of buying their own house this year not being able to settle their accounts. That is: citizens that bought their houses in 1989 making a commitment to pay in 20 years, end their contract and won't receive their definitive deed because they still have debts to get settled. That works for those that are not beneficiaries of the FCVS (Compensation Fund of Salaries Variation). At least that is what appears in the survey made by Ibedec (Brazilian Institute of Studies and Defense of Consumption Relationships).

The buyer signs a financial contract for 20 years, pays the shares with sacrifice and, when they catch a glimpse of hope to scream out loud "free of shares", the Financial System charges a new balance corresponding to the inflation adjustment. It might be under the law, but I find it immoral. Even because the FSH borrowers didn't make up this malefic inflation. On the contrary, they are also victims and cannot afford to pay for a flaw in the economy.

Summing up: a citizen buys a residence and has to pay the amount of two. That is at least immoral. (**Canindé Pegado is the National Secretary of GWU - General Union of Workers**)

GWU condemns reduction of only 1,5% in the interest tax

The **General Union of Workers - GWU** condemns the decision of Copom in reducing the interest tax in only 1,5%. According to the **president of GWU, Ricardo Patah**, this decision reflects the insensitivity of the Central Bank towards the world economic crisis and it is a measure that goes in the opposite direction of the logic of the moment the economy is going through, mainly when it comes to the fall the Gross National Product (GNP), a decrease of 3,6% in the fourth trimester and the disaster in the industrial production, that showed a decrease of 17,2% in January, if compared to the same month last year.

The president of GWU says that the crisis is serious and the economy of a country and the jobs of thousands of workers are not something to be played with. "Once again the Central Bank demonstrates to be of service to bankers and against workers and Brazil". To Ricardo Patah it lacks to the economists at the Central Bank a macro vision of the market, facing the current situation it is necessary more credit to finance the level of consumption, keeping the job standard at a level that guarantee economic stability. "The Selic tax should have a reduction of at least 2%. The decision of the Central Bank only contributes to the inhibition of credit and unemployment", assures the unionist.

Dieese releases at GWU balance of salary increases of 2008

The effects of the international financial crisis in Brazil didn't interfere in the negotiations of salaries raise in 2008 at a national level. This information and others were released this Thursday (12) morning by **Dieese (Inter-union Department of Statistics and Social-Economic Studies)** at the **GWU** auditorium, based on studies and surveys from 706 negotiation units of workers from industry, commerce and outsourcers. Out of this picture, 88% rebuilt, at least, the INPC (National Index of Prices to the Consumers) variation, measured by IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics).



The **president of GWU, Ricardo Patah**, presided the meeting that counted on the participation of chairpersons from six other union centrals (Conlutas, CGTB, CTB, CUT, Union Force and New Central), besides directors of several other unions. **José Silvestre Prado de Oliveira**, coordinator of union relationships of Dieese was in charge of showing the study, which was based on documents, news from the press, websites and employers institutions and tries to evaluate salaries increase divided by economic sectors; geographic regions; data-base; type of negotiation; special categories of negotiations and results towards IVC (Cos of Life Index) measured by Dieese.

The Dieese coordinator enlightened that the crisis didn't interfere on these negotiations, recognizing that the job factor compromised them. He still reminded that many of the negotiations had already been done before. In what concerns the form of granting the increase, Silvestre informed that 97% were applied integrally over the valid salaries at the data-base and 3% were applied in the form of shares, a similar result to the one presented in the previous four years. The data also shows that from the 706 categories analyzed, one of them didn't follow any salary increase and kept the inflation losses that happened since the last data-base.

From the 706 negotiation units, 51% were settled in the industry sector, 35% in the service sector and 13% in the commerce sector. The study also showed the differences of the Brazilian regions, the southeast region gathers 43,8% of the information, followed by the south region, with 23,8%. In the northeast region there were compiled 17,0% against 7,4% of the North region. The mid-west made an entry of 5,5%. There are still 2,5% related to the nation as a whole, corresponding to agreements or labour collective conventions

GWU affiliates with DIAP

GWU (General Union of Workers) is the fourth, out of the six Brazilian union centrals to affiliate with **DIAP (Inter-Union Department of Parliamentary Advising)**. The formalization of the affiliation happened on monday (16) in Brasilia, at the moment of the **6th GWU Plenary Session of the National Executive Board**, at the Nacional Hotel.

With the presence of all the institution directorship, the president Ricardo Patah, signed the affiliation form, reassuring even more the bonds of partnership of GWU and DIAP in defense of the working class.

With 548 affiliated unions, GWU represents around 4,5 million of workers, out of which 33% (1,5 million) are unionized. With a rate of 76%, it is the union central that grows the most in Brazil, according to data researched by the Minister of Labour and Job. The information is from the president Ricardo Patah, during the affiliation signature of DIAP.

Work conditions in Brazil are discussed at an ILO seminar

The balance between labour, family and personal life was the main topic of the Tripartite National Seminar nurtured by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** and the Special Secretaryship of Politics towards Women from March 16 thru 18, 2009. The event counted on the participation of **GWU (General Union of Workers)** that was represented by the secretaries **Cleonice de Souza Caetano** (Health and Safety at Work Department) and **Eleuza de Cássia Buffeli Macari** (Adjunct Secretary of the International Relationships Department).



According to the coordinator of the Equality of Gender and Race of ILO, **Solange Sanches**, the few existing policies are not capable of responding to the current challenges, such as the increasing number of women in the market and the job intensification.

"That is why ILO prepared a regional report on Latin America and is preparing, with the support of the Special Secretaryship of Politics towards Women, a national study on Brazil, with the intention of providing information so that the social actors get to develop their actions and policies", she said.

The objective of the seminar is to enlarge the discussions over the balance between family, home and work. Besides, the event proposes the articulation between government, businessmen and workers.



According to a representative of the **General Union of Workers, Cleonice Caetano Souza**, the working conditions in Brazil are still precarious.

"The employer is not aware, just like the government, that if we are united and provide better working conditions, the worker doesn't get sick and produces more", she stated.

According to the economist of the **(Inter-union Department of Statistics and Social-Economic Studies (Dieese) Lúcia Garcia**, between 2001 and 2006, there was a raise in the number of labour clauses related to gender equality. On the other hand, there was a reduction on the ones related to racial equality.

During the end of the event it was presented the final document with the proposals that will be taken to the 98th International Labour Conference (ILC), that will take place in Geneva, in June. Among the actions described in the document, it is reported the wide debate of the Convention 156 of ILO, that recommends the protection to workers with family responsibility.



The Convention 156 of ILO wants to extend to men the home responsibilities and guarantee that it doesn't bring professional damages.

Veja o Watch the video with comments on the proposal

GWU participates in Congress nurtured by GWU from Portugal

"Getting over the crisis, Building a future with Jobs and Solidarity" was the topic of the XI congress of the General Union of Workers (GWU) from Portugal that took place in Lisbon on March 19 and 20. At the meeting it was approved a document with "100 proposals to change Portugal", in which it highlights the raise in the minimum wage.



It was also approved a Petition of Urgency with 18 measures (that have an immediate nature and should be applied during the period of the crisis), one of them is the prohibition of dismissals in companies supported by the State. The document also defends the right to anticipated retirement to all unemployed workers that have their unemployment subsidies coming to an end after 55 or 60 years, anticipating in two years the current age that ranges from 57 to 62 years.

The nearly 800 representatives at the XI GWU Congress elected their chairpersons for the next four years, leading João Proença as the general secretary for another mandate and electing João de Deus for the presidency.

Mário Soares was one of the guests of honor. The former president of Portugal stated that "more than ever, the union movement is important, because it is necessary to defend the unemployed, the employed, workers, the poor, the ones that are about to suffer with the crisis, and not only let the crisis defend bankers and managers".

The unionist Avelino Garcia Filho (in the picture) represented GWU Brazil

Bulletin shows news on Union Law

The office Mascaro and Nascimento Attorneys released this March, the bulletin "Union Newsletter GWU Mascaro and Nascimento", that has as its content the main news towards Union Law. The newsletter is part of the project of partnership between GWU and the Mascaro and Nascimento Attorneys Office, aiming to offer high quality juridical services to all the affiliated union institutions.

Among the main services that are offered, we highlight the following ones:

- Law Consultancy of issues related to Labor Law
- Elaboration of a union newsletter with a monthly periodicity, broadcasting the main news related to union law and the most relevant sentences of Labour Tribunals from all over the country

The president of GWU, Ricardo Patah, assures that "a mapping of the most relevant demands of the institutions affiliated with GWU will be done, so that the quality of the service is at the height of the needs that were shown". Patah highlights that this partnership will aid, in the best possible way, the affiliated institutions on how to deal with matters that are pertinent to Labor Law.



[Click here to read the newsletter \(portuguese\)](#)



"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. "
Ricardo Patah – UGT's President

UGT World – the International Newsletter of the UGT - General Workers Union

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