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Numbers hide the cruelty of unemployment

The cold statistics do not show the cruel reality of unemployment for Brazilian working families. That is why UGT struggles against austerity policies and wants the recovery of economic growth in Brazil.

Ricardo Patah, President of União Geral dos Trabalhadores - UGT

The **Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)** has just issued the 2016 report on unemployment figures in Brazil. According to the **National Household Sample Survey (Pnad)**, conducted in 211,344 households of about 3,500 cities, the year ended with 11,8 million unemployed on average, which represents an increase of 37% compared to 2015, when it reached 8.6 million.



These expressive numbers conceal another statistical reality. According to Credit Suisse, Brazil is among the global record players of the so-called expanded unemployment. According to the Swiss bank survey, Brazil has the sixth highest unemployment rate among the 31 evaluated countries.

In addition to the unemployed in the traditional mode of calculation, the expanded unemployment rate includes workers who are freelancers for having no choice, those who work less hours and those who stop looking for jobs due to discouragement.

This number would reflect the reality of the labor market situation better. According to recent data (third quarter of 2016) the rate of expanded unemployment would reach 21.2% - a total of 23 million unemployed Brazilians.

What none of these figures shows is the cruelty of unemployment to the workers. Unemployed workers lose their salaries, their minimum security and their health benefit. They lose the possibility of updating themselves in their professions.

Unemployed workers lose their identity. Their families are unstructured. Their lives are unstructured. A family in which all members lose their jobs lives the reality of hunger, lack of housing, illness.

Unemployment is the worst face of the economic crisis. It is the most cruel face of unemployment. UGT is fighting for an economy recovery because it is fully aware that nothing can be worse for workers than unemployment. We will make Brazil grow again without removing any rights of Brazilian workers!

Death of former First Lady Marisa Letícia Lula da Silva

The **União Geral dos Trabalhadores (UGT)** mourns the death of Marisa Letícia Lula da Silva, former first lady of Brazil, wife of former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

A strong woman, partner, wife and mother, she was with her husband throughout his union and political struggle, especially when he assumed the presidency and ruled Brazil. We are mourned, because Lula, besides being a trade unionist, is a friend, and we express our solidarity with the suffering of the family at this moment.



UGT em defesa dos Trabalhadores

Record at the Labor Court

With unemployment and crisis, labor lawsuits set a new record in Brazil.

If the lack of work reaches more and more Brazilians, what is not lacking in the Labor Court is work. The number of new labor lawsuits filed in the first instance (labor courts) has been breaking records in Brazil since 2014, when the economic crisis settled here. Since then, the line of unemployment has risen and the financial capacity of companies has fallen. As a result, there are more workers appealing to the courts for not having received full severance payments after they were dismissed.



In 2014, courts received 2.3 million new lawsuits, an amount 10.9% higher than in the previous year, according to the TST (Superior Labor Court). In 2015, another record: 2.6 million new lawsuits in the first instance, a number 12.4% higher. As for 2016, numbers recorded until October point out a figure 5.3% higher than the same period in 2015: 2.34 million against 2.22 million.

Last year, the six main questions of workers in court are reflections of the total non-payment of the severance pay during the break of employment contract. The most demanded rights are: notice; fine of article 477 of the CLT (Consolidation of Labor Law); Fine of 40% of FGTS (Severance indemnity fund); Fine of article 467 of the CLT; holidays; and the proportional Christmas bonus salary.

"Most employers do not comply with labor laws and do not guarantee all rights to their employees. For the unemployed, there is no alternative but to go to court," says Claudinor Roberto Barbiero, labor law professor from the Mackenzie Presbyterian University of Campinas.

To Lívio Enescu, president of the Labor Lawyers Association of the State of São Paulo, it is common in Brazil for companies to fire employees without properly granting all rights established by the CLT." And this economic crisis evidenced that," he said.

The rise of unemployment is a direct cause of this growth. At the end of 2013, the unemployment rate was 6.2%, which represented 6 million unemployed Brazilians looking for a job. The index doubled in three years, reaching 12% at the end of 2016, or 12.3 million unemployed. The data are from PNAD (National Household Sample Survey) made by IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics). (R7)

Trade Union Forum of Workers (FST) rejects labor reform

FST rejects labor reform and points out contradictions in the text

The Trade Union Forum of Workers (FST) had a meeting with the leaders of the affiliated confederations and defined its position by rejecting the Bill 6,787/2016, sent by the government of Michel Temer to the National Congress.

To Arthur Bueno, coordinator of the FST, the proposal not only changes the current labor legislation by what will be agreed between the parties, but also changes the union organization established by the 1988 Constitution. This will cause the negotiation process to start from scratch. "This is a Labor and union reform," says Arthur.

One of the main points unanimously criticized by the confederations was the possibility that the representative in the workplace does not need to be affiliated to the union. "This is a devaluation of the union and a way to weaken the action of the workers," said the coordinate of the Forum. (Agencia Diap)



See the table prepared by FST's legal counsel.

TISA could be more harmful than TPP

While the focus was on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), another global agreement could have a more serious impact on the labor world. This is the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA).

Jocelio Drummond (in the picture), secretary of the **International Public Services for the Americas (ISP)**, is the one who warns that at a meeting with representatives of UGT, CUT and Nova Central, held on the afternoon of February 2, at UGT's national head office.



During the meeting, **Leandra Perpétua, ISP technical adviser**, presented a brief summary on TISA, which involves all 28 members of the European Union, the United States, Australia and 20 other countries.

Broadly speaking, the negotiations that have been confidential point out that global service corporations and some governments are using the agreement to promote a deregulation and privatization agenda.

TISA can establish rules that affect almost all services, including education, health transportation, water, telecommunications, postal services, elderly and day care, energy, retail and banking.

To Jocelio Drummond, what is truly at stake in this agreement is much more than trade, much more than services. The concept of democracy is at stake, as well as the freedom of a people to choose how the State should function and its priorities in offering basic services, in defining the preferable development model in search of a better and more sustainable future.

During this first meeting at UGT, it was decided that three seminars with trade union centrals will be held, so that leaders can learn more about TISA and its real implications in the world of work, preparing to fight against its formalization.

According to Sidnei de Paula Corral, UGT's Secretary of International Relations for the Americas, this first meeting was an important step in search of "preparing our leaders to face this new reality." UGT Press

Attacking immigrants, refugees hurts us all, Trumka says

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka issued the following statement Tuesday on President Trump's immigration executive orders.

President Donald Trump has announced three executive orders addressing immigration that are an affront to core union and American values. Building a wall on our border, scapegoating immigrants and refugees, and shutting out people of Muslim faith will do nothing to uplift working people in our country.



To the contrary, these orders sow fear of raids among workers, promote racial profiling and erode core constitutional protections.

As such, they are a clear attack on our members, and elevated fear is a direct obstacle to workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. We call on President Trump to revoke these orders.

We are better than this. Our nation must never turn its back on people fleeing violence and oppression based simply upon where they are from or the religion they practice. We call for our nation's leaders to stay true to our long and proud tradition of providing safe harbor to those seeking to build a better life. We offer our solidarity and support to the working families harmed by this discriminatory ban.

As the groundswell of actions by union members and leaders around the country has made clear, the labor movement will adhere to our core principles of solidarity, dignity, and respect for working people of all races, faith traditions and immigration status. The labor movement will continue to defend all the members of our unions and communities whose livelihoods and rights are threatened by these punitive policies.



Read TISA: the worst threat to services ever seen from by Jocelio Drummond



The Southern Cone Trade Unions Coordinator rejects the Shame Decree



CDNASCON Brasil

New board of directors at FENASCON

During the inauguration ceremony, the new board of directors of Fenascon discusses current issues.

The board of the National Federation of Workers in Services, Care and Maintenance, Urban and Environmental Cleaning and Green Areas (Fenascon), elected for the 2017-2021 management, took office on January 30, in a ceremony held at the head office of Femaco, in Sao Paulo. Union leaders and officers affiliated with the event

Members of the Executive Board, of the Fiscal Council and substitutes were declared sworn in, reaffirmed their commitment to the workers' struggle, and emphasized the need for the entities to remain firm in their role of putting pressure on the governments for workers' rights, debating current issues.

Moacyr Pereira, former president of the federation - who is now president of the National Confederation of Workers of Services of Environmental Conservation and Green Areas - left the office to the current president, **Roberto Santiago**, handing a report on accountability and of the activities carried out in the period that he was at the head of the federation



Pro-employment front

Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo hosts 3rd meeting of Pro-employment Front

The Front to Fight Against Unemployment holds its third meeting, whose goal is to think about affirmative action and develop solutions for unemployment, and then send the proposals to the municipal management of the city.

The meeting was held on February 2 and brought together leaders of several trade unions of the city at the head office of the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo, an institution affiliated with UGT.

"At this moment, unity is essential. The trade union world is huge and this problem demands urgency. In this meeting we intend to offer alternatives to overcome the adversities we are experiencing. Unemployment cannot wait; these measures need to have an emergency status. Public policies must have a continuous relationship with workers' entities," explains Ricardo Patah, president of the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo.

Other two meetings will be held next week. Then, the union leaders will send the agenda of the workers to João Doria, mayor of São Paulo.

Loss of rights: No!

UGT's State branch of Pará says 'No' to any type of reform that removes workers' rights

Through a meeting at the head office of the Federation of Workers in the Commerce and Service areas of the States of Pará and Amapá - FETRACOM-PA/ AP, the State Board of Executives of UGT's State branch of Pará decided to oppose the proposals for social security reform and sources of funding; as well as trade union and Labor reforms, which, in short, end time-of-service retirement, with the power of unions to negotiate with employers' categories and with the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT).

The formal positioning was taken and should be communicated to the UGT national president, Ricardo Patah, after a lecture given by José Francisco de Jesus Pantoja Pereira, aka Zé Francisco, president of UGT's State branch of Pará and of the Federation, to directors of trade unions, associations and federations attending the FETRACOM-PA/AP auditorium. He dissected in detail the maneuvers of the government, in collusion with deputies and senators to benefit the business categories to the detriment of the working classes of this country.



DIEESE: PEC 287: The minimization Of Public Welfare

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