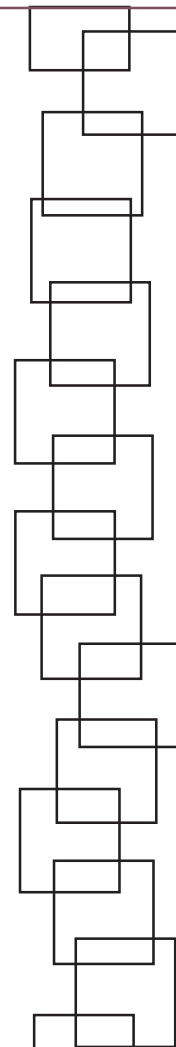


WCL - CMT - WVA



Houffalize
21-23.11.2005

Document 7:

POLICY DOCUMENT

DRAFT POLICY RESOLUTION

Unity in diversity

- Build Trade Unionism on Solidarity -

Rapporteur: Willy Thys

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACP-UE	Joint Parliamentary Assembly (Africa – Caribbean – Pacific – European Union)
ACV-CSC	<i>Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond</i> – Confédération des syndicats chrétiens (Belgium)
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labour – Congress of Industrial Organizations
BATU	Brotherhood Of Asian Trade Unionists
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
CLASC	Latin American Confederation of Christian Trade Unions
CLAT	Latin American Workers' Confederation
CNV	<i>Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond</i> (the Netherlands)
CSDR	<i>Confédération des Syndicats Démocratiques de Roumanie</i> (Romania)
DOAWTU	Democratic Organisation of African Workers' Trade Unions
EI	Education International
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	General Agreement On Tariffs And Trade
GNI	Gross National Income
GPF	(chart n° 2 p 15)
GUF	Global Union Federation
ICATU	International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions
ICEM	International Federation of Chemical Energy, Mine & General Workers Unions
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICFTU/AFRO	Regional organisation of ICFTU – Africa
ICFTU/APRO	Regional organisation of ICFTU – Asia/Pacific
ICFTU/ORIT	Regional organisation of ICFTU – Latin America
IDA	International Development Association
IFCTU	International Federation of Christian Trade Unions
IFIs	International financial institutions
IIWE	Institute for International Workers' Education
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITF	International Trade Federations
ITS	International Trade Secretariat
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur – Common Market of the South (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDA	Public Development Aid (graph p 15)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
SBSI	Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia
TAC	Trade Action Committee

TUAC	Trade Union Advisory Committee
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNO	United Nations Organisation
UPTC	Pan-African Union of Faithful Workers
USA	United States of America
VERBA	<i>Verbetering BeroepsActie</i> – Improvement of Trade Action
WB	World Bank
WCL	World Confederation of Labour
WCT	World Confederation of Teachers
WCTA	World Committee on Trade Action
WEF	World Economic Forum
WFAFW	World Federation of Agriculture and Food Workers
WFBW	World Federation of Building and Woodworkers' Unions
WFCW	World Federation of Clerical Workers
WFIW	World Federation of Industry Workers
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WTO	World Trade Organisation

INTRODUCTION

WCL: A GREAT HISTORY

1. This 26th Congress of WCL will be marked in the history of international trade unionism by the importance of its decisions for the future of the international trade union movement. Since the creation of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions (IFCTU), in 1920, several stages have characterised our development.
2. While celebrating the 25 anniversary of IFCTU, the 8th Congress of IFCTU, assembled in The Hague in June 1946, denounced the ambiguity of the World Federation of Trade Unions which, while calling for worldwide trade union unity, suffered intolerable internal tensions between the supporters of authoritarian socialism and those of democratic socialism.
3. In 1949, these tensions resulted in a split of WFTU. Thus was created the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)¹. IFCTU, based on the values of the Christian social doctrine, was an alternative to WFTU and ICFTU. It took gradually shape in the continents. The Latin American Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (CLASC) was created in 1954 and covered the territory, in America, south of the Rio Grande. In 1959, in Africa the Pan-African Union of Faithful Workers (UPTC) was constituted. Lastly, in 1963, the Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unionists (BATU) was created. This trade union globalisation had to lead IFCTU to a second historic Congress: the 16th Congress, assembled in Luxemburg in 1968, at which IFCTU was transformed in World Confederation of Labour (WCL).
4. It is now a matter of deciding if WCL can found, on the basis of an agreement negotiated with ICFTU and other independent and democratic organisations, a new international trade union organisation whose democratic functioning must guarantee respect for pluralism. This, too, is a historic stage.

A TRADE UNIONISM OF VALUES

5. Our history is singular. First IFCTU, then WCL distinguish themselves in the Concert of the world confederations by a very elaborate Declaration of Principles, which places the worker in a context that goes beyond working life and considers the human person in his totality.
6. Its foundation is constituted by elements of the Papal Encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*”². But this Declaration of Principles has grown larger with the metamorphosis of IFCTU into WCL. The spiritualist inspiration remains, but it has been enriched with universal values and lays the accent on the necessary solidarity and justice between the peoples of the world. It is on the basis of these values that many organisations from developing countries did join the ranks of WCL. This emphasis on values distinguishes WCL from other organisations. It is therefore legitimate to raise questions on the why of this specificity.

REFERENCE TO THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT

7. Europe is the cradle of the social movement, which developed in the last decades of the 19th century, and of its underlying ideologies. Trade unionism took root in the socialist movement and its institutions, the basis of which was constituted by the political party.
8. So, the trade union movement that emerged in the wake of the party felt no need to develop a separate ideology. The Socialist International³ constituted the frame of reference and the party laid out the line at the national level, basically inspired by the Marxist writings. The industrialisation of Europe according to the liberal concepts of the Scotch economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) led to a shameless exploitation of the workers, and in the context of the class struggle religion was considered "opium of the people".
9. It was waiting for "Rerum Novarum" to witness the development of the first Christian trade unions. These, however, could not rally round the Church, as the clergy were by and large conservative. Nor to the Christian or "Catholic" parties, as they were led by the high *bourgeoisie*. So, Christian trade unionism developed thanks to the promotion of progressive Christian leaders, in many cases with support from priests with a social vision⁴. Later on, the ideology of the Christian trade unions would be inspired by the writings of the philosopher Emmanuel Mounier⁵.
10. So, the history of world trade unionism clearly explains the differences in approach. But the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) obviously constitutes a common basis of inspiration for the democratic and independent trade unions worldwide.

DECOLONISATION

11. After World War II the colonial empires disintegrated. The Bretton Woods institutions (International Monetary Fund and World Bank) saw the light of day. The colonial system allowed the direct exploitation of the riches of the colonised countries towards the industrial countries, which were short of raw materials. The Cold War divided the world in blocs, dominated by two empires: the United States and the Soviet Union. Quite a number of crimes were committed in the name of anti-communism or anti-imperialism.
12. Our organisations in the continents were often taken in this "capitalism/communism" struggle. This was particularly the case in Latin America, where the United States supported military dictatorships in the name of struggle against communism. The organisations of CLAT/WCL suffered a lot from this situation as they stuck to their independence, refusing each dictatorial system, whether capitalist or communist, and each alignment on either bloc. In the meantime, however, the multinational companies developed considerably within the capitalist bloc, taking over from the colonial system as it were.

FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

13. In the 1980s, the Soviet Union gradually weakened. In 1980, general strikes in Poland led to the recognition of the free trade union Solidarnosc. In 1989, the Berlin Wall fell and the empire disintegrated. In the early 1980s, and parallel to this process, the neo-liberal ideas imposed themselves, particularly through

the Reagan Administration in the United States and the Thatcher Administration in Great Britain. They accentuated the internationalisation of the economy. The fall of the Berlin Wall gave a powerful boost to this evolution, which would be gradually qualified as economic globalisation. The combined powers of finance (Bretton Woods), trade (GATT-WTO) and the multinationals would begin to dominate the world. The disappearance of the Soviet Union put the United States in a predominant position which nobody can really counter today. The European Union is not finished and is lacking coherence at the level of international politics. The regional groupings that have emerged in the continents are still insufficiently structured.

14. Still, there is the positive unification and pluralism experience of the creation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), in 1973⁶, in order to constitute a countervailing trade union power to the European Union under construction.

EFFECTS ON THE TRADE UNION WORLD

15. There is no need to come back to the disastrous consequences of this neo-liberal globalisation: intolerable inequalities, non-respect for the ILO conventions, precarious employment, growing unemployment bringing about a considerable development of the informal economy, discrimination (particularly at the gender level)...
16. And above all things the overall weakening of the trade union movement, target of the neo-liberal system. There are, worldwide, two largely representative democratic international trade union organisations: ICFTU, of social democratic origin, and WCL, of Christian origin. Paradoxically, while today they are confronted more than ever with a growing number of important tasks and challenges, they have less and less means to take them up. The fall of the Berlin Wall has blunted the ideological differences. The positions of both international organisations are increasingly comparable. The political differences have grown vaguer. The overtures of recent years have enabled WCL and ICFTU to affiliate organisations of all tendencies.
17. But there remain in the world representative organisations that find satisfaction neither in WCL nor in ICFTU as such. Without touching the existing nationwide pluralism, which expresses the will of the workers, without questioning who we are, we have been offered an opportunity to create a new strong and democratic international organisations that respects differences, whose representation reflects internal pluralism, that draws its riches from the diversity of approaches and cultures, capable of optimising the work of the confederation and of the trade secretariats, capable of organising the solidarity the workers are in such a need of, capable of struggling for social justice on all fronts. Other independent and democratic organisations are willing to join in this process.
18. So, time has come for a third historic congress. WCL has not intention to die or to dilute its values. To WCL, it is a matter of enhancing the value of its acquisitions by putting together experiences, knowledge and action capacities. It is a matter of continuing the action of WCL in other forms. When IFCTU became WCL, the international trade union movement gained strength. The same will happen tomorrow if we manage to find the appropriate trade union structures, responses and resources to change the course of globalisation. The workers worldwide will watch our congress with hope and confidence.

19. Our 26th Congress will therefore get down to debating on the trade union action to be developed to respond to the many socio-economic challenges. How to act and to see to the protection of the workers in a world that suffers from regulations and a governance that generates injustice, violence and poverty for over three-quarters of humankind? With its 86 years at the service of the workers, WCL must more than ever mobilise the workers on the dangerous and intolerable evolution of the world economic and social order described in the first part of this document. In the second part, it will present unity as the way to more social justice and to universal peace.

AN INTOLERABLE AND DANGEROUS SOCIO-ECONOMIC EVOLUTION

20. Besides the historic aspects, international trade unionism has to take into account the worldwide evolution and its effects on the trade union organisations. Despite the trade union actions in the world, the obstacles to the advent of a humaner economy persist and even tend to grow worse. In the past twenty years the working environment has changed considerably⁷: the present neo-liberal framework of social and economic integration and the transition to the information society dangerously weaken the very foundations of the acquired principles of social progress.

WEAKENING OF THE TRADE UNION WORLD IN THE 21st CENTURY IN THE FACE OF THE PRACTICES OF NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALISATION AND THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONISM

21. The trade union movement is being increasingly affected by the repercussions of the neo-liberal policies: the workers and women workers are losing their rights and social acquirements. In the present-day world the rate of unionisation is relatively low: 80 per cent of the workers are still not organised and are therefore vulnerable to the predatory capitalism.

22. Millions of them in the developing countries earn less than one US dollar a day, and in the industrial countries the risk of landing in unemployment from one day to the other as a result of financial operations to raise the benefits of the shareholders is a common occurrence. By and large, today's employment contracts are more precarious, and most people are constantly living in fear of having no job or of losing it in a world ruled by capital. No day passes by without the media announcing major company restructuring operations, bankruptcies, relocations to countries where the protection of the workers is weak. Also the culture of individualism and corporatism, well conveyed by the modern means of communication, is penetrating all the aspects of life. The transition to an information society with its growing automation diminishes the need of workforce considerably. The relocation of factories to countries providing a poor social framework has never been easier for lack of regulations in the countries of origin on the one hand and due to the disregard of the basic social rights in the host countries on the other. The workers will also have noticed the growing inequalities as far as the access to information is concerned.⁸

23. The workers, increasingly powerless, observe the ever tighter hold of the liberal globalisation in this 21st century: accelerated privatisation of public sectors, stronger financial flows and opening of markets between countries with different levels of development, consolidation of the power of the multinationals, inability of the states to manage the new form of economy, loss of thousands of jobs under the pretext of lower charges or insufficient profitability, transfer of numerous production activities to subcontracting in order to lower the production costs and to let play competition to the detriment of the health, safety and dignity of the workers and women workers and their children.

24. The foundations of our social system suffer from the progress made in the field of health, communication and transport, but also from the rise of a neo-liberalism that advocates the privatisation of social security and of the pension funds, a frantic deregulation and the precariousness of employment as the main project of society. Thus, the social model is threatened in many texts such as the draft

European directive that is unacceptable to the workers in view of the many dangers it holds.⁹ It advocates the destruction of the labour market, the deregulation of the workers' rights and economic, social and environmental dumping. It threatens the life of social institutions and public services and would like to submit them to just the requirements of the market. All things considered, this draft directive on the liberalisation of the public services, which is intended to dismantle the democratic and social acquirments established by parliamentary and governmental circles, snaps its fingers at the right of nations to give precedence to guaranteed basic civil rights and the collective interest over the rules of the market and of free competition.¹⁰

25. This irresponsible strategy is also the one conveyed at the international level by the World Trade Organisation with its dangerous General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which is aimed at the total liberalisation of 160 sectors of activity, including health and education, by disregarding international, regional and national laws. While shelving our trade union proposal to insert respect for the standards and for the basic workers' rights into these agreements, WTO continues to liberalise trade and to ignore the social rights and environmental standards democratically established within the international United Nations bodies.
26. Why fear the worst for our organisations in the present circumstances? In that they ignore the acquirments of social progress of the past century, all these "regulation", establish for the market and for the accumulation of benefits in the hands of a small minority, insidiously bleed white the satisfaction of the basic needs and the access to basic services for all. The negative effects of the globalisation on the national social framework no doubt diminish the action capacity and the force of the trade unions in their mission to protect the rights of the workers and their families. Day after day, the bonds of solidarity among the workers are harmed by a model that banks on individualism and gain as existential goals. Thus, workers find themselves in precariousness and insecurity (informal economy, clandestine work, "false self-employment" status...). Their number keeps growing without their demands being voiced for lack of representativeness in our organisations and executive bodies (case of women and young workers). *On the other hand, and this is a more disquieting phenomenon*, in this context of overall social regression related to the imposition of neo-liberal policies, difficulties have arisen with the trade union organisations themselves. *Many organisations are losing members because of restructuring operations and close-downs of companies. Trade unions can be dismembered as a result of the disappearance of their leaders, who are threatened, harassed, arbitrarily dismissed or killed with impunity.* Other workers' organisations have gone into the defensive, seeking a new balance of power to maintain and strengthen the control of the respect for the international labour standards. *Today, further, trade unions are more and more tempted by division and corporatism, which weakens the workers' movement even more.* These tensions jeopardise the cohesion and solidarity of the workers, the only chance of guaranteeing an efficient balance of power in the establishment of a fair worldwide social contract.

WEAK CONSIDERATION FOR DECENT EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

27. How can the political decision-makers advocate poverty reduction without taking account of all the commitments they made in the international bodies? In 1999, the representatives of the socio-economic world, assembled at the International Labour Conference of ILO, adopted the concept of decent employment as a general framework for action to achieve sustainable development.

“Decent work should be at the heart of global, national and local strategies for economic and social progress. It is central to efforts to reduce poverty, and a means for achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable development”¹¹

- 28.** In 2000, just one year later, WCL and other representatives of the world of workers and civil society noticed that the United Nations General Assembly had failed to take decent employment into consideration in the Millennium Declaration. This text, unanimously adopted by the governments, proposes the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations agencies, chiefly UNDP, and other international institutions (the IFIs) placed the following goals on their agendas, pledging to attain them by 2015: eradicate extreme poverty, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, develop a global partnership for development. No mention of decent employment can be seen in the Millennium Declaration as an internationally recognised means to reduce poverty.
- 29.** This oblivion or ignorance is just one example among many others of universally adopted texts the implementation of which suffers from weakness in the national coordination¹². While reiterating its attachment to and support for the United Nations system, WCL nevertheless demands more coherence and coordination. Why are the concrete commitments, made within ILO, not taken into account in the later international commitments made by the United Nations and other international agencies (UNCTAD, World Bank, IMF, WTO, UNIDO...)? This question certainly deserves to be dealt with in depth when examining the problem of governance and the necessary reform of the United Nations system with a view to its institutional strengthening.
- 30.** As an organisation oriented towards human development, WCL discovered with concern the absence of the decent employment concept in the texts of the development policies and programmes. The advance of poverty and social disparities bears witness to serious voids in the globalisation, which are related to a deficit of decent employment and to the dismantlement of the social and economic institutions in charge of the proper functioning of the wealth redistribution mechanisms. The expansion of precarious forms of employment in the informal economy are flagrant symptoms of this. They shock the international community.
- 31.** Why is more than half the world population living in degrading circumstances whereas humanity has the economic and social means to remedy this? We cannot but notice that despite the international political mobilisation for poverty reduction the effects of economic and social progress are still exploited to the detriment of 40 per cent of the human beings, who earn less than 1 US dollar a day. Moreover, the workers must turn down or reorient each strategy that ignores the social dimension of development and the need for every human being to be able to self-fulfilment in dignity and with respect for the others. Sustainable development means much more than charity: each man and each woman has the right to live in dignity thanks to a decent job this is, according to ILO, the point of convergence of four strategic goals: right to work, employment, social protection and social dialogue.

“Decent work is work that is carried out in conditions respectful of the rights and the dignity of the workers as defined in particular in the ILO conventions. Decent work is free from exploitation and makes the worker an actor of an economy at the service of humanity and not a mere ‘production factor’”. Point 8 of the resolution on ILO. 25th WCL Congress, Bucharest, 2001

32. Even if the Millennium Development Goals call on the solidarity of the international community for their attainment, it is still necessary to take position as representatives of the workers, as actors of development who cannot be ignored. Whereas in 1947 the trade unions were involved in the implementation of the Marshall Plan for Europe, this is not true for the many regional economic integration agreements and free trade agreements, which neglect worker participation as the fundamental principle of social progress. The workers are consulted, mostly on an informal basis, according to terms and conditions that do not always respect the principles of social dialogue (transparency and participation in the decision-making in line with the principle of collective interest).
33. After the Millennium Declaration, the basic conclusions of the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation, published in March 2003, are explicit. The ILO Commission, inviting to revise both international and national governance, calls on all the institutions to act in partnership as the chief way to develop what is essential for all: decent employment.

“However, current systems of governance of globalization at national and international levels have not realized such potentials for most of the world’s people-and in many instances have made matters worse. “Seen through the eyes of the vast majority of men and women around the world, globalization has not met their simple aspiration for decent jobs, livelihoods and a better future for their children”¹³

34. Considering, further, that the creation of decent jobs is the only way to reduce poverty while respecting the dignity of the human being and instituting peace and social justice, WCL has pledged, together with ICFTU, to firmly support this principle within the framework of the civil society programme of struggle against poverty in 2005: “Worldwide Appeal to Action against Poverty”¹⁴.

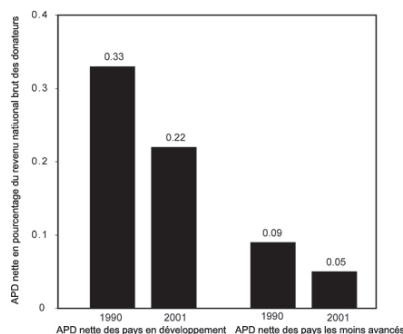
“We, the participant organisations, ICFTU, ETUC, WCL, Solidar, Social Alert and Global Progressive Forum, commit ourselves to take forward the debate begun by the World Commission and to work to make decent work – a concept that includes respect for workers’ rights, full employment, equality between women and men, social protection and access to quality public services for all – central to our common political vision and mission”. Inter-union declaration of Porto Alegre, January 2005

35. So, in order to avoid that development remains a mere matter of “charity” on the part of the economic powers, the 26th Congress will orient the trade union action towards the creation of decent and dignified jobs as the basic aim to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

DIFFICULTY TO MOBILISE THE FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES TO REDUCE POVERTY AND TO CREATE DECENT JOBS

36. Both economic and social development requires investments many developing countries collapsing under the weight of the debt cannot mobilise. How can one hope to attain the Millennium Development Goals and particularly to create decent employment by 2015, if the investments remain insufficient to generate the expected jobs? In 1972, the United Nations had recommended the rich countries to earmark 0.7 per cent of their GDPs to the development of the economies of the developing countries. In 2004, a mere five industrial countries had reached this percentage: Luxemburg 0.85, Norway 0.87, Sweden 0.80, the Netherlands 0.74 and Denmark 0.85.¹⁵ Instead of rising, the percentage of public development aid went down in period from 1990 to 2001. The diagram below shows the decrease in financing of development in percentage of the gross national income of the donor countries.

Net amount of the PDA, expressed in percentage of the gross net income of the donor countries.¹⁶



37. Yet, in order to advance towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, it will be necessary to raise the public aid by 18 billion US dollars in 2005-2006 and to double it in five years' time. Since the 1960s, WCL and its organisations have taken the view that the debt is certainly a major obstacle to development. The cancellation of the debt of the poor countries is therefore the starting point to initiate economic development with the creation of dignified employment and to consolidate the social services every human being aspires after.
38. WCL welcomes, of course, the decision of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to cancel the debt of many poor countries. This decision results from the commitment of the G8 (Gleneagles) to double the aid to Africa by the year 2010. According to OECD, the development aid to all the developing countries will rise by around 50 billion US dollars by 2010 and at least half this amount is intended for Africa. But it is still necessary to make sure that the cancellation of the debt really means a reorientation of the public expenditure to health services, education and housing.

39. By cancelling the debt of the highest-indebted African countries, the G8 will engage in implementation in innovating financing systems:
- Basic agreement on debt alleviation also by the sale of part of the gold reserve of the International Monetary Fund.
 - The availability of additional resources should come from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group and from the countries that have decided to earmark 0.7 per cent of the gross national income to development aid.
 - Six countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom) have announced a time schedule to raise their public development aid to 0.7 per cent of the GNI, joining so Denmark, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.
 - International Financing Facility (IFF) to finance vaccinations.¹⁷
 - International solidarity levies that could initially be introduced in a limited number of countries.¹⁸
 - Taxation of international financial transactions to contribute to the solidarity levies on carbon, arms sales, marine pollution, common assets, profits of multinationals...

These mechanisms, which are aimed to mobilise the funds necessary for development, demonstrate the will of the international community to collect the resources for poverty reduction in 2015, but this is not always done unanimously. It will be a matter of examining how the workers will organise themselves to make sure that these sources of financing are indeed oriented towards poverty reduction through employment. What will be the conditions of the international financial institutions? Will respect for the human rights be included?

40. Our Congress will demand that these financial institutions, some of which have recognised the importance of social justice and equity, take more into account the social dimension of development and the realities facing the poor: disregard of the human rights, negligence of their involvement in the decisions on national development, non-satisfaction of essential needs along with endemic underemployment and unemployment, weakness of the social institutions for education, health and social protection...¹⁹. It will remain an important item on our trade union agenda to keep an eye on the conditions and the utilisation of the public development aid.

WOMEN STILL ACCOUNT FOR THE MOST EXPLOITED WORKERS OF THE WORLD

41. Considering the growing social inequalities, the precariousness of employment that has become the rule, and the boundless exploitation of the workers, the social situation of women cannot be but gloomy. Women are among the most exploited workers, not only economically but also socially and politically. They suffer more than ever from discrimination and social exclusion on the labour market. Inequalities are *de facto* situations that affect women in the first place, weaken their rights and confine them in a situation of inferiority. The multiple inequalities confronting women are due to prejudices that have permeated the economic and social structures. That way they have got a structural nature.
42. In this respect, too, the workers and women workers discover quite a number of international summits at which a majority of the chiefs of state pledged to introduce policies to reduce inequalities and to promote the women's rights. But the position of women on the labour market has only significantly deteriorated for most of them. This deterioration chiefly results from the neo-liberal policies and their ever greater profitability and accumulation requirements. These

requirements are really excessive, conveyed by the international financial and commercial institutions. These policies plunge our societies, and particularly women, in a situation of social regression, precariousness and loss of rights. Most women have a lower income than men, and atypical jobs. They are more affected by unemployment, not to mention the free zones in which day after day they are exposed to violence: degrading treatment harming their dignity, authoritarian employer practices, absence of respect for their rights, the requirement of higher productivity, flexibility, moral and/or sexual harassment.

43. Why are the disastrous social effects of the globalisation on women workers still so weakly combated? Is it because of the absence of political will on the part of the authorities or simply out of ignorance? Why do the policies of struggle against inequalities not take more account of the impact of privatisation on female labour, of the expansion of the informal economy with a strong female presence and of the the destruction of food crops exploited by women peasants in favour of cash crops? Negotiating and presenting elements on the basis of which political decisions will have to be made so that gender-specific needs in the field of labour are taken into account, are still weak points in the present trade union demands. The main cause would be, among others, the weak representation of women in the governing bodies of the trade unions.
44. WCL and its member organisations must resolutely redouble their efforts to achieve more internal gender equality. It would be an important step forward if the negotiators fully integrate the concerns both of workers and of women workers. Political decisions will have to be taken in order to achieve a better consideration for the specific needs of women in trade union action and in the working environment. This is an essential element of the renovation, restructuring and strengthening of the trade union movement.

THE UNBEARABLE SOCIAL TREATMENT OF MILLIONS OF CHILD AND YOUNG WORKERS

Exploitation of child labour²⁰

45. One of the main indicators of the decadence of the present social situation is no doubt the disregard of the standards related to child protection. Considering that the object of the first social standards of ILO was child protection, trade unionism must continue to denounce the injustice of the fact that 350 million children work and 300,000 child soldiers are mobilised to serve in the armies of countries in conflict. Non-respect for the rights of children to education, self-fulfilment and welfare has been turned more and more into a banality. The very foundation of social development is the respect a nation shows for its children, riches of a nation. Though the international community acknowledges the gravity of the situation of jeopardising humanity through the ill-treatment of children, the efforts and financial resources really invested in this field are still insufficient and fail to enable the introduction of living conditions that ensure universally the harmonious development of children. In this respect, too, the promotion of decent employment for adults and a free system of compulsory school attendance will make it possible to reduce the social ill-treatment of children. The international conventions on child protection have been largely ratified. Yet, hardly any progress has been made in this field: the above-mentioned figures are the same as those in the 1980s and 1990s. Must we conclude once again that the ratification of conventions remain mere declarations of intent? A touch of hope lies in the fact that the struggle against child labour is the object of an effective partnership between various both international and national institutions, particularly between ILO and other agencies (World Bank, UNICEF...) in the context of joint programmes.

46. Family income is a decisive element in the decision to send children to school. Child labour leads to the reproduction of the poverty of families and saps the future prospects of employment. The hazardous working circumstances also endanger the “employability” of children when they grow older, in some cases even all their lives. Knowing the social and economic consequences of the ill-treatment of children, our Congress will agree to demand and to control a protection system that effectively ensures children the right to physical and psychological fulfilment and to welfare²¹. Progress in this field will depend on the ability of governments to contemplate an inclusive and integrated approach to protect children and youths in all the social fields and with the participation of the social partners.

Young workers

47. Historically, youths have played an important role in the changes in the social movement and in society in general. For many reasons youths are not strongly represented in the workers’ organisations. Yet, their participation is of vital importance for the strengthening of trade unionism and for the conveyance of our values from one generation to the other. In the context of neo-liberal globalisation, in which the requirement of profitability is growing stronger and stronger, youths constitute a numerous, flexible and low-cost workforce. In many countries the wage rate of youths has fallen in the past twenty years whereas their rate of unemployment has risen considerably. Youth unemployment and underemployment constitutes a long-term cost for the entire community. Youths, made vulnerable, have less opportunities to effectively contribute to the national development. In too many cases their potential cannot be fully deployed for lack of work. The lack of decent jobs for present-day youths reflects and perpetuates the vicious circle of poverty that passes from generation to generation. The cycle of social deprivation and exclusion affecting youths at the moment they enter the world of work has disastrous effects on the societies and economies. The possibilities for today’s youths to exercise their rights as citizens, to become economic agents, to create and perpetuate solidarity between the generations are dwindling. As youth represents a riches for each country, the trade union world is pleased to see that the international community acknowledges the political urgency to create jobs for youths as a means to eradicate poverty, to start development and to institute sustainable peace.
48. Knowing the social and economic consequences of the ill-treatment of children, our Congress will agree to demand and to control a protection system that effectively ensures children the right to physical and psychological fulfilment and to welfare²². Progress in this field will depend on the ability of governments to contemplate an inclusive and integrated approach to protect children and youths in all the social fields and with the participation of the social partners²³. As far as youths are concerned, the creation of decent jobs is the most recognised means to restore their role in society. In supporting the employment policies in favour of youths, the trade unions will also influence the education and training policies. Acknowledging their dynamic and innovating role in associations and trade unions, our 26th Congress will point out the need to mobilise the resources necessary for the recruitment and organisation of young workers.

INADEQUATE MANAGEMENT OF MIGRATION AND DISREGARD OF MIGRANTS’ RIGHTS

49. In a context of constantly growing gaps between rich and poor, not only between North and South, but also between regions of the South and in most countries, in a context, further, of injustice, profound and unjustifiable between men and women, between income from labour and from capital, the migration flows have swelled considerably in recent decades. Today, we are facing a constant mass

phenomenon, chiefly motivated by the search of a better or simply a more dignified life. To vast impoverished sections in the South of our planet migration is a survival strategy. Nearly 175 million international migrant workers, ie 3 per cent of the world population, are now living in a country that is not their country of origin. The number of migrants has more than doubled since 1975. 60 per cent of the migrant population is living in the most developed; 40 per cent in the less developed regions.

50. The widening economic and demographic gap separating industrial from developing countries can only strengthen the migration phenomenon. Indeed, it is the direct consequence of the financial and commercial policies and of the structural adjustment programmes that have been implemented in many countries, resulting in privatisation, unemployment and poverty. Migration has thus become a structural component of the global economy. Few policies are based on an approach centred on work, human rights and adequate responses to the challenges of migration.
51. Even if migration has officially stopped in many countries, informal migration continues to develop, particularly in sectors of activity (domestic staff, hotels, restaurants, some building subsectors, agriculture...) in which the workers benefit from no social protection at all and in which they are in many cases exposed to exploitation and to flagrant violations of their social and even human rights. The way migration movements are organised today illustrates above all things the global economic disorder. These symptoms will only find a solution in an alternative world, in which each region can give its inhabitants a standard of living that corresponds with their fair aspirations.
52. The migration issue must be placed again in the whole of the global economic development issue. As trade unions we must demand the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between national and migrant workers, between men and women. This equality must be recognised in the laws and practices. Moreover, we must demand the abrogation of the current repressive laws, particularly of their most restrictive aspects for the rights and freedoms of migrants, such as the freedom of meeting and association and the right to join unions and to strike.

DISREGARD OF THE PROTECTION OF THE LIVES, SAFETY AND HEALTH OF THE WORKERS

53. Many trade unionists are ill-treated, thrown into jail and killed for having ventured to protect the workers' rights. The most appalling example is that of Colombia, where over 3,000 trade unionists have been assassinated since 1987. The "Colombia Plan", which is officially aimed to combat terrorism, gives the authorities *carte blanche* to muzzle the legitimate dissidence of social and trade union movements. Thus, the international Freedom of Association Convention (N° 87) is violated with complete impunity even in the member countries of ILO that are signatories to its Constitution.²⁴ Every year, more than 2.2 million people die for reasons related to their work, 1.85 million of occupational diseases and 350,000 in industrial accidents. 1.5 million of them are men, 750,000 million women. This boils down to 6,000 deaths a day!
54. Other threats resulting from the mismanagement of terrestrial resources are weighing increasingly heavily on the workers and the rest of the world: climatic changes can have considerable repercussions on health (example: morbidity and mortality caused by temperature, exceptional meteorological conditions, atmospheric pollution, water contamination, food and transmittable infectious

diseases like malaria).²⁵ Not only do they worsen certain present-day problems, they could also create other, less expected ones. The health risks caused by various pesticides and by pollution of agricultural origin are mainly acute intoxications and chronic effects of pesticides, effects related to nitrates and enteric diseases caused by pathogens that originate in manure and are transmitted by water. The fact that asbestos is not removed from the workplaces worldwide is still a matter of concern to WCL. Several companies get rid of their refuse, endangering the water and air of vast communities in the developing countries.

55. Protective measures must be taken to enable the workers to detect the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning by propane- or petrol-driven engines, causing headaches, nausea, vomiting, coma, heart rhythm disorders. It is necessary for the trade union delegates to improve their knowledge of environmental management so that they can better identify and prevent the safety and health risks at the workplaces. Safety and health committees must be created and strengthened in each company. The weakening of the labour inspectorates does not make things easier for the workers, who undergo the deterioration of the working environment without any recourse.
56. One of the present-day scourges is HIV/AIDS with its alarming economic and social consequences. Information on the protection against HIV/AIDS must be provided in the companies. It is deplorable that WCL, despite its efforts to make its members participate in the international campaigns to combat HIV/AIDS, remains excluded from the group of actors recognised by UNAIDS.
57. Lastly, there are the environmental imbalances caused by man and marked by ecological disasters: tsunami, melting of the ice caps and floods with the warming-up of the planet, with which we will be more and more confronted if the international community does not apply the Kyoto Convention.

PEACE AND SECURITY WORLDWIDE IN JEOPARDY

58. There is no denying that the end of the Cold War failed to herald the beginning of an era of peace as the international community had expected. It is true that wars between states have become rare, notwithstanding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the US war on Iraq. At the same time, however, we are witnessing a rise in the number of internal armed conflicts. Many countries have suffered or are still suffering armed conflicts that destabilise in some cases entire geographic regions: no country remains safeguarded against the consequences of these conflicts, even if the fights are concentrated far from its borderlines: refugee flows, insecurity and particularly humanitarian disasters.
59. Since 11 September 2001, the world has also fallen prey to new forms of violence that do not spare the workers and the civil society as a whole. Globalised terrorism and the threat of religious wars have to be added to various other sources of insecurity such as drug trafficking, organised crime, shortage of vital resources and uncontrolled migration flows. These problems could be solved by introducing a better governance and coordinating the international policies. These actions are not only necessary because these problems, by their nature, exceed in most cases the national borders, but also because their solutions require resources one single country cannot make available.
60. Several causes, the main ones well known by the workers, underlie the insecurity:
 - the arms race and the arms industry: would it not need wars and conflicts to use and sell arms? The international community will denounce the fact that

- year after year 900 billion US dollars are spent on military equipment;
- poverty and injustice: considering the absolute absence of their prospects of social self-fulfilment (dignified jobs, family and social integration), combined with impunity, youths are highly tempted to take up arms to enforce recognition and/or to establish justice;
 - disregard of the social rights that are universally recognised as fundamental for social progress (freedom of association, right to strike, freedom of collective bargaining, equal opportunities, right to development).

*“We must deal with the question of social equity and social justice. Because without dealing with that question of poverty, there can’t be any peace, and \$900 billion being spent on military expenditure, \$300 billion being spent on agricultural subsidies, and \$50- or \$60 billion being spent on overseas development assistance is one of the absurdities that we have to change”.*²⁶

- 61.** This challenge cannot be taken up unless security is conceived in a broad manner, on the basis of international cooperation with the social partners, indeed the chief actors of national development. In not involving the social partners and particularly the workers in its programme, the United Nations with its peace missions gives evidence of little knowledge of the principles of social progress and of the means to build peace and social justice.²⁷ The example of MONUC (Democratic Republic of Congo), which operates in the margin of social and economic life, raises the question if this is really the best way to ensure peace.
- 62.** Non-violence is one of the basic values of WCL. Alliances with institutions such as UN and ILO and with other representatives of the civil society are indispensable in this respect. As constituents of the mission of ILO the trade unions must unite to also take up this joint responsibility to promote lasting peace and security in the world. Trade union unity can make it possible, among other things to combine forces capable of rejecting the war policies and strategies.

TOWARDS SOLIDARITY AND TRADE UNION UNITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

63. The action and pressure capacity depends on the strength of the workers' movement united around the basic principles and values of solidarity, democracy and pluralism. How will our trade union movement have to get organised to take up the many challenges that deprive the workers inexorably of their social and human rights? WCL outlined this policy in the Final Declaration of its 23rd Congress (Grand Baie, Mauritius, November 1993):

"A future that holds out real prospects, requires an economic order that includes a balance between the powers of the market, the state and the civil society, an order based on justice, fraternity and responsibility.

The WCL's activities will therefore be aimed at:

participation: offer people opportunities to take part, to assume and shoulder responsibility, to share in the progress;

lasting development: our environment is threatened. It is therefore in the interest of ourselves and of future generations to make financial, economic and social decisions that take account of our environment and of nature. Not rule, but control;

solidarity: care for one another, bring a message in line with the concept of the WCL, a WCL that unites solidary workers and solidary organisations determined to build jointly the future."²⁷

So, participation, sustainable development and solidarity were the key principles guiding the leaders of WCL.

PARTICIPATION: WEAK INVOLVEMENT OF THE WORKERS IN GOVERNANCE

64. Growing poverty, injustice and disregard of the core social standards can be explained by the absence of a participatory, transparent and democratic governance that underlies each process of social development. Without participation in the governance our efforts, made jointly with other actors of the civil society, to shape the social dimension of development remain vain and insufficient to satisfy the basic needs of the workers in the developing countries.

SITUATION OF GOVERNANCE NATIONWIDE

65. Ever since 1947 the new independent countries have been unable to create institutions capable of carrying social and economic development: corruption, social inequalities and a democratic deficit constitute a real gangrene that deprives more than half the world population of their right to decent employment.

Suffering the absence of transparent and democratically managed institutions, these countries are also favourite areas for the multinationals, which exploit raw materials and human resources without contributing to the improvement of the welfare and environment of the nations where they operate these economic and financial activities. Even if more and more authorities of developing countries are elected, it takes time for the national institutions to pursue a participatory policy in the decision-making. Workers and representatives of the civil society are kept powerless, incapable of playing their role in social and economic affairs. They also suffer from the impact of this kind of non-democratic, non-transparent and non-participatory governance on investments and therefore on employment, education and health. They are powerless against the introduction of policies and programmes that are formulated without the participation of the socio-economic representatives and privilege the transactions between the “confiscators” of power and the multinational companies that could not care less about the universal human rights to protect ever higher profits.

66. The absence of participatory governance also prevails in the private and public companies of many poor countries: they are ignorant of the principles of the freedom of association. Rather than conforming to the instruments of social progress, they start priding themselves on a kind “corporate social responsibility” to shun and minimise their obligations as employers. Workers are submitted to one-sided regulations and to the goodwill of their employers and the shareholders. Taking advantage of the situation of underemployment and unemployment and the division between the workers, the companies drive their employees-executives to violate the core social standards and to exploit the workers so as to maximise their profit margins.

POSITION OF THE TRADE UNIONS AND OF THE MULTINATIONALS

67. The investment and relocation decisions of the multinationals are escaping more and more the workers and their trade unions. Multinationals are increasingly deterring trade union membership and they are by and large hostile to concluding collective agreements. They prefer their own “codes of conduct” without external control. At the international level, too, there are only non-binding directives on the regulations and standards to be observed by the multinationals. There is no regulation on the application and ratification. Both the many abuses in the field of labour and the increase in financial scandals demonstrate the necessity of a new global regulation on company governance. The international trade union movement (jointly with the Trade Union Advisory Committee – TUAC/OECD) conducts a permanent campaign in this respect. An important part of this campaign consists in sensitising the workers and their trade unions to their rights and possibilities and to the available instruments (particularly the European works councils). In this context WCL has set up the VERBA project on multinationals, which has provided training for thousands of trade union leaders. A second important instrument is the conclusion of agreements between the international trade union movement and multinationals. This is an important challenge for the existing and future international trade union structures.
68. The Davos World Economic Forum (WEF) occupies a particular place among the decision-making centres. It assembles multinational managers on a variety of topics. It has gradually opened itself to the civil society, and WCL has been invited since the year 2000. Yet, two observations: on the one hand, WEF puts itself to the trouble of building a better (or less bad) image of multinationals, but on the other it develops strategies that generally consolidate the global neo-liberal policy lines. Thus, a network of NGOs has developed around it, enabling it to act case by case upon development-related areas. This gives the

multinationals easier access to the international financial institutions, adding so to their influence. But here, too, like within the framework of Global Compact, the multinational actors refuse to formally apply the ILO standards. Davos may be a place of contact with many personalities and captains of industry for the trade unions, their influence on the decisions remains very poor.

GOVERNANCE OF DEVELOPMENT

69. Only in few countries do the workers' representatives participate in the development-related decision-making. This area was always just reserved for relations between ministers of Finance, ministers of Foreign Affairs and a few privileged protagonists. For a couple of years the civil society, too, both in North and in South, has been invited to participate in the action for development, particularly in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and in a number of international cooperation programmes funded by the European Union (ACP-EU agreement, Mercosur...) and by the World Bank (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers – PRSP). Alive to the fact that it has not the monopoly on worker protection, WCL welcomes the cooperation with many civil society actors to secure the civil and social rights (Social Alert, Ubuntu and many others within the framework of the World Social Forum). Yet, the accountability of the civil society seems to be fragile for three major reasons:

- The consultation processes suffer from the absence of transparent decision-making processes. The dialogue remains limited to a kind of information to which the representatives of the civil society have only little recourse. Several studies of WCL and other institutions highlight the weak involvement of the workers in the national, regional and international cooperation and trade agreements. This democratic deficit is due to the fact that the workers are in want of training if they want to be regarded as interlocutors and actors of development.
- The representation of the voice of the workers by several international and regional organisations appears to be a division in the eyes of their international and regional counterparts. In the context of globalisation speaking with one voice is primordial in the interest of the workers. In his memorandum to the extraordinary Executive Committee meeting dd 30 October and 1 November 2004, the Secretary General indicated that "organisational pluralism allows to express original stands, but there is then the matter of being able to influence the decision-makers. It is all about balance of power. In these circumstances, a lot of effort must be put in getting recognised as an interlocutor (the ICFTU-WCL ratio is 80:20, and there are little prospects of changing this significantly). On the other hand, competition does not always generate positive energies, except if there is a capability of building unity of action. It is also necessary to measure the results achieved against the means deployed".
- The socio-economic programme of WCL clearly shows the institutional weaknesses in the matter of collective decision-making about national, regional and international development programmes. In the opinion of the workers' organisations, only the tripartite system of ILO really enables a decision-making that involves the authorities (governments) as well as the beneficiaries of the social and economic policies (workers and employers). This fact puts it in line with the principles of governance and democracy. Nevertheless, there is no denying that in recent times this Organisation has been politically and juridically weakened, particularly due to the fact that the member states failed to ratify or apply the conventions. A stronger, more constant and more coordinated participation, in solidarity, of the workers' representatives is therefore necessary.

70. Our 26th Congress should confirm the support of WCL for ILO as a model of governance and reiterate the demand to reform the United Nations system by creating a Social and Economic Security Council. We want the Congress to give us the policy lines to take up successfully the present human social stakes. This Congress gives us also the opportunity to reflect on the means to provide a strong universal trade unionism in the interest of the workers. It is an urgent task to organise and mobilise the workers in a new joint international trade union structure in order to stop the negative effects of the globalisation and to consolidate the peace efforts of the international community.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE UNIONISM: CONSOLIDATE KNOWLEDGE, KNOW-HOW AND ACTION CAPACITY

71. We are carrying out our training mission through several programmes (VERBA, equality, standards, socio-economic programmes, IIWE/ACV-CSC, information). They are precious instruments for training and informing the workers on trade union strategies and policies imbued with social justice and democracy. What are the main weak points of our trade unionism?²⁸:

- need to improve communication and to spend more time on the action with the grass-roots organisations: the exchange of information with the national member organisations is poor and takes chiefly place through the modern means of communication. The excellent site of WCL does not prevent many organisations from complaining that the communication with, and information of, the grass-roots organisations is poor;
- more efficient use of the means of communication provided by the information society (intranet, video conference, audio conference and other techniques);
- stopping activities with grass-roots organisations for lack of financial resources: the poorest organisations got no substantial aid to gain strength and to recruit, which would have allowed a stronger nationwide mobilisation;
- weak representation in the international institutions, resulting from the lack of human and financial resources;
- membership dues problem: if it wants to speak on behalf of the workers, the trade union movement must be in a position to count of the commitment of the member organisations. This commitment to international trade unionism is also measured by the financial contributions of the members and is the best indicator of the existence of worldwide solidarity and of the health of our organisations. The problem of the membership dues to WCL has been the subject of a critical debate, especially in the past four years.

72. In any case, our trade union movement will ensure the continuation of its strong points:

- promote a trade unionism of democratic and independent development with the social aspect at the centre of its concerns and welfare for all as the goal of its action;
- promote women in all the decision sectors and spheres;
- respect the autonomy and responsibility of the regional organisations by decentralising and the regional representations and making them accountable;

- continue its commitment to activities that are aimed to organise the workers in the informal economy by implementing training programmes within the framework of the VERBA and IIWE projects. The value of the cooperation between organisations from industrial and from developing countries is much appreciated with a view to the consolidation of the trade unions in the South;
- preserve the values of solidarity and trade union development cooperation in favour of the trade unions in the developing countries and listen to the workers of the South.

SOLIDARITY: TOWARDS THE UNIFICATION OF THE WORKERS OF WCL, ICFTU AND OTHER INDEPENDENT ORGANISATIONS

73. Invest both human and material resources in the strengthening of international trade union action in the hope of gaining nation-, region- and worldwide a stronger position. Given the globalisation and internationalisation, trade unions are in absolute want of greater solidarity so that the voice of the workers is sufficiently heard and taken into account by the international and regional authorities. It is only natural that several actions, of various nature, have been taken with ICFTU to achieve, thanks to the representativeness of both international confederations, that trade unions demands were taken into considerations by the international, regional and national agencies.

A NEW INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANISATION?

74. It is now nearly three years ago that the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) entered upon informal, then formal talks about the creation of a new international trade union organisation that would be open to other national democratic and independent trade union organisations.

BEFORE CASABLANCA

75. In his memorandum dd 24 April 2004 the Secretary General presented the chronological evolution of these relations. Before 2001, the talks resulted in the decision to create a standing forum to favour unity of action. The implementation of this decision did not start before the arrival of the present Secretary General of ICFTU, at the end of 2002, with whom the relations were resumed in the form of a search of cooperation relations.

1. Congress of ETUC – Prague, April 2003

76. In his address to that Congress, the newly elected Secretary General of ICFTU, Guy Ryder, called on WCL to start a “resolute process of unity” of the international trade union movement. The ensuing contacts led to the idea to create, on the basis of an agreement between both democratic world trade union organisations – WCL and ICFTU –, a completely new world trade union organisation that, besides to the current member organisations of WCL and ICFTU, would be open to all the democratic and independent trade union confederations. The aim was and is to strengthen the credibility, legitimacy and representativeness of the trade union movement as a whole and particularly to be equal to the growing challenges of globalisation.

2. Jakarta Confederal Board, 19-25 October 2003

77. The relations between ICFTU and WCL were discussed in depth on the basis of the foregoing. This debate led to the following conclusions:

- *We have to keep on building the unity of action as has been decided by the Confederal board in Asunción, October 2000.*
- *The General Secretariat of the WCL meets the ICFTU as a result of the declaration Guy Ryder made during the Prague Congress and in connection with the proposal to create a new organisation made afterwards. It should be an informal dialogue with a view to explore the proposal.*
- *A report will be submitted to the Executive Committee on 29-30 March 2004. The Executive Committee will evaluate and decide on the follow-up.*
- *A report will be submitted to the Confederal Board of the WCL in October 2004, which will decide on the attitude to adopt during the ICFTU Congress that will take place in Japan in December 2004.*

3. Informal talks

78. In application of these conclusions two informal meetings were organised, early in February and early in March 2004, to discuss a document Emilio Gabaglio²⁹ had drawn up about the talks between WCL and ICFTU. This document came about by common consent to facilitate a particularly delicate dialogue, even it was only informal and exploratory in nature. After these contacts and at the start of this dialogue, he wrote a concise document listing the principles that might lay the foundation of a new international trade union organisation.

“1. Building a convincing and effective response to globalization constitutes, at present, the most urgent tasks for the trade union movement. There are indeed reasons for alarm. Many signals indicate that the trade unions are losing ground and influence in relation to business and governments, as well as encountering major difficulties in reaching out to the millions of workers still missing in the trade union ranks. Reversing these negative trends is essential if the trade unions are to remain relevant to the working people and preserve their influence in society. To this end a new multifaced and multilevel strategy is needed allowing the trade union movement to enhance their credibility, legitimacy and representativity. Establishing independent and democratic trade union unity at world level is undoubtedly an important element of this strategy. It would have a highly symbolic value and send out a powerful rallying message to the movement everywhere.

2. There are two main players today at the world level, the ICFTU and the WCL. No trade union unity can materialise without their consent and involvement.

Over the years a number of attempts were made towards the same goal but all of them failed because at the end of day the solution offered was that of the WCL merging into the ICFTU. The new approach would be different envisaging the creation of a completely new organisation. This project should also appeal to independent and democratic national trade unions centres, which for the time being do not have international affiliations. A number of them exist especially in Europe and Latin America (and possibly elsewhere) and should be approached at the appropriate time. There are reasons to believe that they would be willing to join.

3. By now the ICFTU and WCL basic principles and policy orientations are largely converging and it should not be too difficult to find a common platform of shared values and objectives on which to build the new organisation. The WCL is however the heir of an historical component of the trade union movement rooted into spiritual values and vision. To recognise this unique reality and to preserve its influence a Foundation could be created, within the organisation, and whose cultural and education activities could be benefiting to all interested partners. In any case this should not interfere with the single structures of the new organisation nor with the democratic decision making process. The composition of the governing bodies of the new confederation as well as their representation will be balanced and reflecting internal pluralism.

4. Establishing an unitarian new trade union centre at world level will by itself do away with all sort of duplication and allow the pooling and reallocation of human and financial resources, to the benefit of a more effective trade union action. The new world centre will not call into question existing pluralism at national level.

5. The new Confederation should be organized in view of securing a powerful single voice of the movement vis-à-vis the International Institutions and the world business community. Regional structures will be established following consultations with the organisations concerned, taking into account the increasing significance for the trade union action of "regional groupings", emerging in different areas of the world. In due course consideration should be given to the relations between the Confederation and the International Trade structures.

4. Executive Committee dd 29-30 March 2004

- 79.** The document was presented to the Executive Committee, which drew the following conclusions after a debate in depth of various aspects of the relations between WCL and ICFTU:

"to continue the mandate of the Jakarta Confederation Board session to explore the possibilities through informal talks, while going deeper into:

- the type of trade unionism: approach to a joint declaration of principles;

- *internal pluralism. the proposal to create a foundation is generally considered insufficient in this respect. Particularly the matter of representativeness must be clarified;*
- *Trade action. It must not be left aside. In the hypothesis of a new organisation, the relations between the inter-trade structure and the trade structures must be redefined;*
- *the timing, particularly the year 2006. This does not seem to be realistic. Reference is made to the transition period provided for in the talks of the wood and building sector.*

Apart from that, at the internal level:

- *the regional, national and trade organisations will receive an informative note on the ongoing informal talks and on the position of the Executive Committee to comply with the wish for consultation, expressed by a number of members;*
- *an extraordinary Executive Committee meeting will be held on 30 September and 1 October next to prepare a position for the Confederal Board, which will assemble in Morocco in the week from 18 to 23 October 2004;*
- *the General Secretariat will draw up a basic WCL not with arguments for and against the creation of a new single international organisation;*
- *in line with the decisions of the Asuncion Confederal Board, in 2000, continue to build unity of ICFTU-WCL action at all levels.”*

5. Informal contact between the delegations on 29 March 2004 in the evening

80. During the meeting of our Executive Committee, ICFTU had convened in Brussels a pilot committee in preparation for its Congress. Both parties seized this opportunity for an informal joint meeting (composed of around fifteen people each), which took place at 6.30 pm at the head office of WCL and was followed by a convivial dinner.³⁰ The Executive Committee evaluated this meeting as follows:

- *the perception of a change. There was no visible arrogance anymore, which was a kind of recognition of WCL and conveyed the feeling that ICFTU took the initiative seriously,*
- *that unlike the experience made during the discussion of the “standing forum”, the information on our joint discussions is circulating in the organisations and governing bodies of ICFTU,*
- *that the ICFTU organisations that expressed themselves, did so in a favourable manner as regards the hypothesis of the creation of a new organisation on the basis of an ICFTU-WCL agreement,*
- *the general positive feeling about the atmosphere during the informal meeting and the subsequent convivial meal.*

6. Developments in some international trade federations of WCL

81. In the meantime, three international trade federations of WCL have made arrangements with their respective partners (GUFs) to integrate their structures: WFBW, WCT and WFIW (its affiliates from the chemical sector). Today, WFAFW and WFIW (its affiliates from the metallurgic sector) are having consultations with their respective partners (GUFs) about the integration of their structures. Other international trade federations of WCL are in contact with their respective partners (GUFs). It is not yet clear if these initiatives will result in agreements on forms of cooperation in action and/or in structure.
82. At its meeting on 29 and 30 March 2004, the Executive Committee instructed the general secretariat to draw up for the extraordinary Executive Committee meeting dd 30 September and 1 October 2004 a basic WCL paper listing the arguments for and against the creation of a new international single trade union organisation. This paper stated explicitly and exhaustively the challenges of creating a new organisation. In October 2004, the Casablanca Confederal Board approved unanimously of formal talks between WCL and ICFTU.

Decision of the Confederal Board:

“Convinced that today, trade union unity at world level is crucial for ensuring effective representation of workers’ rights and interest in the global economy,

Convinced also that achieving such unity is an urgent task for the international trade union movement and that the necessary conditions for it do now exist,

The Confederal Board decides to solemnly commit WCL to the creation of a new international trade union organisation, founded on internal pluralism and democracy

The WCL joins with ICFTU in calling upon national, independent and democratic trade union centres, which do not have affiliation at world level to engage in this process.”

AFTER CASABLANCA

83. Following the debates of the Casablanca Confederal Board, the secretariat was instructed to start formal talks with ICFTU in order to propose:
- an outline of a new international trade union confederation – document transmitted together with an informative note to all the member organisations – and,
 - an outline of basic principles for an international trade union confederation.
- The following criteria, prescribed by the statutory bodies of WCL, must be taken into consideration during the talks:

“It cannot be a sheer merger between the WCL and the ICFTU but a joint approach aimed at setting up a new international trade union organisation open to all democratic and independent trade union organizations; it is a matter of creating a real alternative;

The values of solidarity, dignity, justice must guide the action of the new organisation; autonomy, respect for political, religious, ethnic, cultural and trade union pluralism;

As a prerequisite of a democratic and dynamic functioning, internal pluralism must exist both at the level of the decision-making bodies and of the external representations (particularly international institutions) and at the level of the decision-making processes (qualified majorities in certain areas);

Special attention shall be given to women trade unionists taking higher responsibilities;

The issue of regional structures has to go hand in hand with consultations at the level of the regional interlocutors.

At the level of Trade Action, it is necessary to actively seek to create a structural link with the new organisation.

Besides during the negotiations special attention shall be given to the future affiliation policy to the new organisation (respect for pluralism at national level, reference to ILO Convention 87...).

All the member organisations of WCL and ICFTU have the right to affiliate to the new organisation.

The action programme must define the attitude of the new organisation vis-à-vis the social movements. The organisation of the informal sector must be promoted.

Unity of action between the WCL and the ICFTU must go forward, which is only possible in a climate of mutual trust, and will promote the future cohesion within a new organisation.

Moreover, terms and conditions were followed to accompany these negotiations: The regular Executive Committee meeting to follow possibly closely the progress of the discussions between the secretariats; the opening of specific negotiation spaces at the level of the regional organisations and of Trade Action.

Moreover formula (coordination, ...) must be sought in order to maintain lasting links of solidarity between the partners of the developed countries and the organizations of the developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe, particularly at the level of training and cooperation projects.”

STRENGTHENING OF ACTION UNITY

84. Since Casablanca, the talks have evolved at various levels, particularly at the level of ICFTU, of the realisation of action unity in several fields and of the relation between the regional organisations. The member organisations of ICFTU passed a resolution in this sense during their recent Miyazaki Congress, in December 2004.

TOWARDS UNIFICATION (*Congress of ICFTU, Miyasaki, Japan, 2004*)

“Convinced that today, trade union unity at world level is crucial for ensuring effective representation of workers’ rights and interests in the global economy;

Convinced also that achieving such unity is an urgent task for the international trade union movement and that the necessary conditions for it do now exist;

Congress decides to solemnly commit the ICFTU to the creation of a new international trade union confederation, founded on the values, principles and objectives set out in the appendix to this Resolution, as well as on internal pluralism and democracy..

The ICFTU joins with the WCL in calling upon independent and democratic national trade union centres which do not have affiliation at the world level to engage in this process and to participate in the establishment of the new confederation..

Congress underlines the importance of affiliates’ engagement and ownership of this process at the national level. The General Secretary is therefore instructed to prepare a consultation document setting out the decisions of Congress, in order to promote discussion and full engagement in the process.”

85. Under the impulse of ETUC, ICFTU and WCL conducted joint actions. They launched several campaigns with international and European institutions: the granting of general preferences, participation of the workers in the ACP-EU, LAC-EU agreement coordinated by the inter-union WCL-ICFTU-ETUC group, joint struggle against poverty in the context of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP). At several events like the World Social Forum, WCL engaged with ICFTU and a variety of civil society organisations in the denunciation of injustices and of violations of universal social rights and in the demand for a reform of the United Nations Organisations. Other actions in unity with ICFTU were conducted at the level of the international financial institutions. Every two years, for instance, there are in Washington high-level meetings with officials of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In October 2004, delegations of WCL and ICFTU were in Washington for a direct dialogue with the Director General of IMF and with the President of the World Bank. Joint activities also took place at the level of the World Trade Organisation. Joint public conferences will be organised on the next Ministerial Conference of WTO, which will assemble in Hong Kong next December. Moreover, WCL will participate in activities and meetings of ICFTU, and the people in charge of their respective liaison offices in Geneva are in permanent communication in support of this cooperation and joint action. On 14 January and on 10 March 2005, the teams of the Equality and Youth Departments of ICFTU and WCL met to promote the status of women workers in the international agencies and in the trade union organisations.

- 86.** The consultation of the workers and of other representatives of the civil society by governments of developing countries is probably a major progress in the development cooperation. The role of the European workers, united in the European Trade Union Confederation, to insert in a European development agreement the obligation to respect the core social standards and the participation of the trade unions as actors of development is a *inter-union acquis*.³¹ This clearly demonstrates the strength of trade union unity in raising the weight of the social dimension in development cooperation. Several member confederations of ICFTU and WCL in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific are already cooperating with national trade union platforms for national development. These trade union platforms were set up in many countries to strengthen the workers' representation in the consultations on development (National Indicative Programme - NIP).³²
- 87.** There were already several meetings with the regional organisations. During meetings of their respective executive bodies, CLAT, BATU and DOAWTU passed resolutions on the creation of a new international trade union organisation (cf Annex 1). On 2 and 3 September 2005, the leaders of the regional organisations of ICFTU and WCL met in Brussels to reaffirm their will to support the unification process. This meeting was a first one ever in the history of the international trade union movement and an important stage in the ongoing unification process. The general secretaries of the regional organisations of ICFTU – AFRO (Africa), APRO (Asia, Oceania), ORIT (Americas) – and of WCL – DOAWTU (Africa), BATU (Asia), CLAT (Latin America and Caribbean) – met in Brussels with the world leaders to discuss the future structuring of the regional organisations in the new organisation. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), which already unites the European organisations of ICFTU and WCL, also participated in the debate. The leaders of the regional organisations unanimously pledged to strengthen trade unionism in the face of an “unbridled globalisation”.
- 88.** The Trade Action structure of WCL differs fundamentally from the one of ICFTU. The international trade federations (ITFs) of WCL, while being autonomous in the pursuit of their sector policies, are affiliated to WCL, pay membership dues and have the right to vote at congresses and Confederal Board sessions. The Congress elects a Vice President in charge of Trade Action. He or she shares the meetings of the Trade Action Committee (TAC) and of the World Committee on Trade Action (WCTA). At the general secretariat a Deputy Secretary General coordinates Trade Action and ensures the link between the ITFs and the departments of WCL. At ICFTU the international trade secretariats (ITs) are totally independent, pay no membership dues to ICFTU and have not the right to vote in the decision-making structures, in which they can participate as observers. In the past few years an informal Global Unions structure assembles at regular intervals ICFTU, the ITs and TUAC in an attempt to ensure a certain amount of coordination. The ITs also have an informal coordination structure, the Global Union Federations (GUFs). While independent, they function in the line of ICFTU. In many cases, the affiliation of trade federations belonging to confederations without international affiliation³³ paves the way affiliation to ICFTU. Since the 1980s, trade federations of ACV-CSC (metal, clerical workers, food, some transport sectors, culture) and of CNV (food, metal) have left the ITFs for the ITs, in order to better position their action in the face of, particularly, the multinationals. But this is also the case for other organisations like, for instance, education at CSDR Romania, agriculture and food at Dignité Ivory Coast, transport at SBSI Indonesia...). To a lesser extent and with less impact similar situations are found within ICFTU. Moreover, structured forms of cooperation are getting organised between ITFs and ITs – IE-WCT and WFBW-IFBWW – in the context of the creation of a new organisation. Talks are also going on in other sectors, and an agreement was recently concluded between WFIW and ICEM (chemistry).

PLURALISM OF THE NEW ORGANISATION

89. At ILO, WCL and ICFTU are cooperating, and the elections for the Governing Body of ILO have shown the favourable evolution of this trade union solidarity. Right from the start of the talks about the new organisation pluralism has been the centre of concerns. We wish to affirm first that the pluralism of the national organisations is not challenged at all. This pluralism reflects the will of the workers, and only the will of the workers can allow overtures. It has been acquired that the member organisations of WCL and ICFTU are automatically members of the new organisation. Internationally, the new organisation must reflect this pluralism both internally (composition of the governing bodies) and externally (representation). The Constitution will have to be explicit in this respect. But in this respect a positive signal was given during the recent elections for the Governing Body of ILO. Historically, WCL was always underrepresented in the workers' group at this Body. This had to do with the simple majority vote system, which made it impossible for a WCL organisation to be elected without the prior consent of ICFTU. This matter was discussed in depth at the Casablanca Confederal Board session. The elections in June 2005 were proof of an obvious change. Indeed, for the first time in the history of ILO, WCL obtained two (out of fourteen) people elected on the list of titular member, two (out of nineteen) on the list of deputy members and three (out of nineteen) on the list of substitute members. This proves the will of pluralism inspiring the negotiators. Lastly, the Casablanca decisions provided for the creation of a foundation to perpetuate the bonds of solidarity uniting the partner from the developed and the developing countries as well as from Central and Eastern Europe in training and cooperation projects. This foundation is being created and will be presented to the Congress. All these stages cannot be ignored and are part of the overall context of the relations between ICFTU and WCL.

CONTACTS WITH OTHER INDEPENDENT TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS

90. At the same time, consultations were organised with democratic and independent national organisations willing to join this refounded international trade union movement. Since 2004 there have been contacts between WCL, ICFTU and other independent organisations. In the margin of the International Labour Conference, in June 2005, leaders of possibly interested independent organisations were approached: CGTP (Portugal), CGT (France), OPZZ (Poland), GEFONT (Nepal), CITU (India), PIT-CNT (Uruguay), CUT (Colombia). At the level of intercontinental regional organisations were approached: ICATU (Arab countries) and CGS (Commonwealth of Independent States, former Soviet Union). Generally speaking and with a few nuances, the interlocutors received the information in a positive manner and wished to be involved in the process. Besides, the relations with the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU) are continued and intensified. These organisations have been invited to attend our 26th Congress.

91. The draft Constitution and the draft Declaration of Principles for a new international trade union organisation will also be among the documents.

CONCLUSIONS

- 92.** All during the 85 years of its existence, WCL has incessantly analysed and proposed alternatives to face globalisation and its dangerous consequences for the workers' rights. Several congresses proposed policies and action programmes to mobilise the workers in the search of a humaner economy. We cannot but notice that, for various reasons, the *acquis* remain feeble and threaten the social progress achieved worldwide in the past century. The political powers that block the workers' actions are becoming predominant and are increasingly priding themselves on the end of trade unionism.
- 93.** So, international trade unionism must act and equip itself with the following means:
- orient the positive effects towards a fair universal distribution of the social, economic and scientific riches;
 - eliminate the causes deteriorating the social injustices, the disregard of basic freedoms, the insecurity and marginalisation of more than half of humanity, and the absence of democracy making vulnerable 75 per cent of the world population and causing conflicts that destabilise in the interest of the multinationals and of those who serve them.
- 94.** The human and other resources must be put together as no national, regional or international trade union, isolated, will be able to change the situation if we continue to act on our own, keeping distance from each other in the action. For us, trade unionists, time has come to show our solidarity and to combine mobilisation forces worldwide. To do so, we need solidarity and cooperation between all the workers for a universal social project.
- 95.** This mission has little chance of success unless the member organisations of WCL support with all their weight the trade union globalisation, engaging their members in building an efficient and coherent countervailing power against the forces that oppose a humaner world. Yet, for worldwide solidarity to be an efficient instrument in the trade union struggle for a juster world, international trade unionism must be anchored in the national concerns and needs of the trade unions and of the workers. According to the very principle of solidarity, the trade unions that succeed in mobilising the workers despite the economic, financial and social challenges are those who respond to the concerns of the workers and women workers in their everyday life.

*"We are at a crossroads: some say it is a historical moment for the trade union movement. The time has come for us to assume our responsibility - just as we often did in the past- not for us, not for our structures, but for the workers we defend and in order to promote the social justice we long for."*³⁴

- 96.** Our 26th Congress is invited to support the commitment of WCL to a new international organisation with WCL, together with other independent trade unions willing to join in. It is on this strengthening of trade union action that will depend the achievement of a globalisation in universal respect for the human rights and social justice for all the workers and women workers.

ANNEXE 1: REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS ON THE CREATION OF A NEW ORGANISATION

1. DOAWTU

RESOLUTION OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF DOAWTU ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

- Considering the context of globalisation characterised by the internationalisation of the exploitation of workers leading to job cuts and subsequent de-unionisation;
- Whereas neo-liberalism brings about the deterioration of the economic and social situation of workers and violation of trade union rights;
- Considering the difficulties the international labour movement faces in providing adequate responses to the consequences of globalisation and neo-liberalism;
- Considering the dire need for the international labour movement to reorganise itself in order to adapt to this new environment;
- Considering the need to oppose the international authorities as a strong, representative and efficient counter force;
- Whereas solidarity and cohesion of workers at the international and regional levels is a challenge for the current union movement;
- *Mindful of the conclusions of the WCL Confederal Committee meeting, held in Casablanca, Morocco in October 2004 which formally empowered the Secretary General to institute negotiations towards the establishment of a new international trade union organisation based on pluralism and democracy, and open to other non- ICFTU and non-WCL affiliated independent organisations;*
- *Mindful of the decision taken in February 2005 by the Executive Board of DOAWTU mandating the Secretary General to institute discussions with his AFRO/ICFTU counterpart on the establishment of a new trade union organisation and its implications for Africa;*
- *Mindful of the Declaration of principles of the new organisation adopted during the WCL Confederal meeting held in June 2005 in Geneva;*

The General Council of DOAWTU makes the resolution to:

- approve the Casablanca decision with respect to the establishment of a new international trade union organisation;
- approve the principle of the establishment of a new international trade union organisation that respects the principles and values of the WCL.

RESOLUTION OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF DOAWTU ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATION

- Whereas the liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation policies implemented within the framework of structural adjustment programmes had harmful consequences on African workers and their families;
- Whereas the context of globalisation fosters the emergence of multi-national companies and leads to weakening the State's role of economic and social regulator;
- Whereas the African labour movement is facing difficulties such as:
 - * job losses
 - * unemployment
 - * de-unionisation
 - * breaking up of trade union organisations thereby contributing to the reduction of its representativeness, loss of efficiency, difficulty in proposing concrete solutions to the problems of workers at both national and regional levels;
- Whereas most African countries face challenges such as:
 - * high prevalence of HIV/AIDS
 - * proliferation of armed conflicts
 - * the debt burden
 - * lack of good governance
 - * massive violation of human and trade union rights;
- *Mindful of the decision taken in February 2005 by the Executive Board of DOAWTU mandating the Secretary General to institute discussions with his AFRO/ICFTU counterpart on the establishment of a new trade union organisation and its implications for Africa;*
- *Mindful of the Declaration of principles of the new organisation adopted during the WCL Confederal meeting held in June 2005 in Geneva;*

The General Council of DOAWTU makes the resolution to:

- Support the creation of the new international trade union organisation;
- Approve the decision of the Executive Board of DOAWTU mandating the Secretary General to institute formal discussions with AFRO/ICFTU towards the establishment of a new African regional body;
- Greatly call on all the DOAWTU affiliated member organisations to join the new international organisation;
- Call on trade federations to also join this new organisation;
- Ensure the maintenance of the identity and values of DOAWTU and its affiliated organisations;
- Guarantee trade union pluralism at the national level;

- Reinforce trade union solidarity at the continental level;
- take account of the African realities at the various stages of the establishment of the new African regional body;
- maintain structural link between trade action and inter-trade action at the regional level;
- ensure the existence of the women's commission;
- take into account the concerns of the youth;
- sustain the heritage of DOAWTU (infrastructure, equipment, expertise, programmes and projects) and its enhancement in the interest of workers.

2. CLAT

RESOLUTION OF THE 12TH CONGRESS OF CLAT ON THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION UNITY

Taking into consideration:

the agreements concluded in the political bodies of the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) on the development of a negotiations process with ICFTU in order to build a new world workers' organisation;

the history of dialogue with ORIT, the inter-American regional workers' organisation.

Whereas:

it is necessary and urgent to promote more firmly the workers' unity at the world level so to take up the new challenges of the neo-liberal globalisation on the world scene as well as an alternative that respects and integrates the national and regional realities to build all together a more freer, juster and more humane world, marked by solidarity;

the workers turn down the perspective of a global trade union in conformity with the globalised market and the single thinking that is aimed to reform and democratise neo-liberal capitalism;

we want to build an alternative of liberation and promotion of all the workers and all the women workers;

we wish to take an active part in the management of a new international single organisation that is respectful of diversity en ideological, political and cultural plurality, free from domination and hegemonic control, as a new and more powerful instrument at the service of the workers, independent of governments, political parties, employers and any other institution or organisation having no link with the workers;

each process of unification must be based on the necessity of involving the workers and women workers with a view to a joint project founded on respect for the

human rights, genuine democracy, national and international social justice, integral and sustainable development, Latin American sovereignty and democratic multilateralism in order to promote world peace, threatened today by the neo-liberal policies of the dominant powers;

in the context of this process, WCL and its regional organisations must not only integrate the organisations composing them, but also the ideological, political, strategic and programmatic assets that were constituted during the 50 years' existence of CLAT and the almost 85 years' existence of WCL;

we want to plead for the building of unity at the level of Latin America and the Caribbean so to pursue together the building of the Latin American Community of Nations as an emancipating and liberating project of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and to participate in a multipolar world with our own capacity and contribution;

the unifying actions in the region must take account of all the actors of the Latin American and Caribbean workers' movement.

The 12th Congress of CLAT decides to:

ratify the single position and the opinion of the workers with a view to spaces of dialogue that make it possible to create a single organisation that respect the principles and values inspiring WCL and CLAT;

support the proposal of the Confederal Board of WCL to start a formal process of negotiations between ICFTU and WCL and to approve the interventions of the Latin American representatives at the Confederal Board of WCL to favour the start of formal negotiations with ICFTU on the creation of a new pluralist, democratic and solidary workers organisation that really takes account of the classes and that is open to all the workers' organisations whose structure guarantees pluralism in all their bodies;

as regards the Trade Action of WCL and of the Latin American sectoral federations, and considering that the ICFTU-linked trade secretariats are no part of the organic structure of ICFTU, establish direct contacts with between these organisations and other non-confederated organisations in order to take the course that leads to unity between these sectors;

maintain the transparency of the process of conversations, develop and provide detailed information to all the organisations involved, so that the process entered upon constitutes a factor of vitalisation of the workers' movement;

promote and summon the unitary dialogue and intensify the unity of action and programme with ORIT and the other organisational expressions of the workers of the region, in order to advance the unitary process and to respond to the workers' problems and to the structural adjustment policies of the international financial institutions;

insist that the process respects the situations in each country of the region by encouraging the organisations to establish a dialogue in favour of unity of action and of programme. In order to promote the spirit, the unitary will and the democratic functioning between WCL and ICFTU, establish equitable representations with the international institutions, particularly with ILO;

ask the Executive Secretariat to promote a programme of open, autonomous and participatory dialogue, without exclusion, with ORIT and the existing independent organisations in the region.

Within its corresponding governing bodies to which all the organisations are convened, the CLAT will decide definitively on the final agreements of this unitary process.

We plead for a united and solidarity workers' movement capable of promoting alliances with other expressions of the socially organised people, which can become a basic factor of transformation for building another worker of which we are convinced that it is possible.

2. BATU

XV BATU CONGRESS, 14 - 15 JULY 2005, BANGKOK, THAILAND

RESOLUTION ON ENSURING DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND STRENGTHENING THE UNITY OF WORKERS IN THE FORMATION OF NEW INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

We, the delegates of the 15th Congress of Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unions (BATU) gathered in Bangkok, Thailand from 14 to 15 July 2005

AWARE of the process towards the formation of the new international organization being conducted at the international level between the WCL, ICFTU and other independent democratic workers organizations;

SUPPORT the WCL Confederal Board in giving mandate to the WCL Secretariat to negotiate with ICFTU at the international level;

UPHOLD the BATU Executive Board in creating a three-member BATU Team to engage the APRO-ICFTU in a dialogue on shared regional concerns;

RECOGNIZE that BATU is still evolving a consensus on the manner that it will prepare for and take part in the formation of the new international trade union organization;

CONSIDER that such consensus will only evolve in the spirit of unity which can only be preserved through processes imbuing transparency, ground level participation, and consistent application of democratic principles;

In view of the foregoing, we **FIRMLY RESOLVE** that BATU will create and operate structures and systems that will ensure:

- Effective communication of any relevant information to raise mass awareness on development of the formation of the new international organization;
- Grassroots involvement of stakeholders in decision making based on commonly-shared information base;
- Sound implementation of decisions based on the consensus of national organizations, trade federation, and internal institutions of BATU on this matter of historic significance;
- Strong capability to secure the self-reliance of organizations constituting BATU;

so that the principle of plurality in the new international organization will be assured at all levels and the international unity of workers is strengthened.

NOTES

- 1 AFL (USA), without international reference up to then, contributed to the foundation of ICFTU. AFL and CIO merged in 1956. The history of North American trade unionism is not comparable to the history of European trade.
- 2 1891, promulgated by Pope Leo XIII.
- 3 We refer in this respect to the well-documented work of Jean Bornard (CFTC): "De la CISC à la CMT, 75 ans de syndicalisme international" (From IFCTU to WCL, 75 years of international trade unionism). Exists only in French.
- 4 The Belgian priest Daens, for instance, whose history is illustrated in a remarkable movie.
- 5 1905-1950, French, writer and philosopher, creator of personalism and of the review "Esprit" (Spirit).
- 6 For lack of agreement between ICFTU and WCL, the seventeed European affiliates of ICFTU founded ETUC. The European affiliates of WCL were individually affiliated during an extraordinary Congress in 1974.
- 7 Working environment because it is a general examination of work and its institutions, not only of the workplace environment.
- 8 Internet users worldwide (source: *Bilan du Monde* 2002): USA/Canada: 35.2%; Europe: 30.1%; Asia/Pacific: 28.1%; Latin America: 4.9% ; Middle East: 0.9%; Africa: 0.8%.
- 9 Bolkestein directive.
- 10 Non-consultation of the national civil bodies (parliament, democratic decision-making system)...
- 11 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/decent.htm>
- 12 Convention on the rights of children 1990, ILO Declaration on the principles and fundamental rights at work 1998, universally recognised without the object of these conventions apparently constituting a real priority or even a matter of urgency at the national level.
- 13 Summary of the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation, website: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/faithglobalization/report/index.htm>
- 14 "Consultative Group to Assist the Poor" (CGAP).
- 15 Source OECD/DAC: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/11/35399641.pdf>
- 16 <http://www.un.org/french/millenniumgoals/goal8.htm>
- 17 Mechanism based on the issuing of bonds through a financial platform, guaranteed by extra-budgetary contributions from the state.
- 18 A levy on air transport and kerosene to finance the struggle against AIDS.
- 19 J. Wolfensohn, former Chairman of the World Bank, recognised several times in his speeches that poverty was not only a matter of statistics but also of social justice and rights
- 20 The non-respect for the international commitments of the governments in the field of rights of children non respect des engagements internationaux pris par les gouvernements dans le domaine des droits de l'enfant: if one looks at the figures, child protection does not seem to be a priority in the sustainable development policies.
- 21 "Social protection" is understood in the holistic sence of the term: this system encompasses the right to family, access to health, education, justice, culture, sports and decent employment after childhood.
- 22 "Social protection" is understood in the holistic sence of the term: this system encompasses the right to family, access to health, education, justice, culture, sports and decent employment after childhood.

- ²³ By inclusive and holistic approach we understand economic measures that create a balance between social and economic goals with a view to an approach to development that really takes account of the needs of children and youths and favour individual and collective welfare. Multidisciplinary and multidimensional measures!
- ²⁴ See also the Declaration adopted by the International Labour Conference in Philadelphia, in 1944.
- ²⁵ The rise in temperatures and the changes in the precipitations and in the variability of the climate would modify the zones and the seasonal nature of the transmittable infectious diseases, extending them in some cases and reducing them in other cases. These diseases are transmitted by hematophagous organisms like mosquitoes and ticks, whose survival depends on the complex interaction of climate and other ecological factors.
- ²⁶ J. Wolfensohn in his closing Remarks at the Shanghai Conference on Scaling Up Poverty Reduction, China May, 2004.
- ²⁷ Cf the principles of the ILO Constitution. It is a pity that these are apparently not known by the peace-mission officials.
- ²⁸ Pointed out by the participants in the seminars of IIWE.
- ²⁹ Emilio Gabaglio was Secretary General of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) from 1991 to 2003. He had been President of ACLI (Italian member organisation of WCL) from 1969 to 1972 and, in this capacity, member of our Confederal Board. He had then become Confederal Secretary of CISL-Italy (founded on Christian values and member of ICFTU).
- ³⁰ The delegation of ICFTU was composed of high-level leaders representing important affiliates of all the regional organisations.
- ³¹ ETUC is already a regional platform of ICFTU and WCL member organisations.
- ³² Benin, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, ...
- ³³ CGT-France, for instance, has at least 12 (out of 32) sectors affiliated to the GUFs
- ³⁴ Willy Thys: "WCL-ICFTU relations: for or against the new organisation", extraordinary Executive Committee meeting, 30 October 2004.

WCL - CMT - WVA



Houffalize
21-23.11.2005

Document 7:

Draft Policy Resolution

Rapporteur: Willy Thys

BUILD A NEW INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANISATION BASED ON INTERNAL PLURALISM AND DEMOCRACY

The Congress affirms that WCL, since its birth in 1920 as IFCTU, has had a "great" history. After the second world war and at the time of its metamorphosis in 1968, it contributed to the globalisation of the trade union movement on the basis of its own values. Carrying the emancipation of the workers, it contributed to the creation, in the world, of an authentic, democratic and autonomous trade union movement. The circumstances are now combined to enter a new stage, one of capital importance for the future of the trade union movement.

Whereas:

- the fall of the Berlin Wall has had two paradoxical effects: on the one hand it heralded a democratisation process in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, but on the other it accelerated the neo-liberal globalisation;
- the voids in global governance make it impossible to take into consideration the social dimension of globalisation;
- the international financial (Bretton Woods) institutions fail to pursue adequate policies to solve the problems of development and poverty in the world;
- WTO has still not succeeded in laying the foundations of an equitable trade;
- the multinational companies, in this context, have concentrated an incalculable wealth and, having done so, hold a considerable and uncontrolled power;
- the millennium development goals are far from being attained and the weight of the foreign debt constitutes a major obstacle to satisfaction of the essential needs of the populations in the developing countries;
- the consequences of this are tragic: growing inequalities and poverty worldwide, disregard of the conventions of ILO, social exclusion, unemployment, sizeable growth of the informal economy and (gender...) discrimination with, in the last analysis, an overall weakening of the trade union movement, target of the neo-liberal system;

The Congress points out that these challenges confronting the trade union movement necessitate the strengthening of the international trade union movement, particularly in order:

- to efficiently organise a power countervailing neo-liberalism and to promote a globalisation that combines economic with social development;
- to support the policies developed by ILO, particularly the ones concerning the creation of decent and dignified jobs, the application of the conventions and respect for the freedom of association throughout the world;
- to give an impetus to a profound reform to democratise the international institutions, and to weigh efficiently on the policies of IMF, the World Bank and WTO;
- to redistribute the produced wealth, mainly amassed today by the multinational companies, with a view to pursuing social policies;

- to promote sustainable development programmes, taking into account the dignity of the human being, the supremacy of labour over capital and the need to protect the environment;
- to struggle against the scourge of child labour, against gender discrimination and for better working conditions;
- to organise an active solidarity between trade union organisations of the industrial and of the developing countries;
- to ensure a better representativeness by enlarging solidarity and particularly by rallying the democratic and independent organisations that have not made the choice of an international affiliation, by organising the informal economy workers and by creating synergies with other progressive organisations of the civil society.

The Congress observes that the fall of the Berlin Wall had consequences for the international trade union movement and its geopolitics:

- in the former Soviet bloc independent and democratic trade unions were created whereas others started a democratisation process;
- the World Trade Union Federation was considerably weakened;
- some of these national organisations joined the ranks of ICFTU or WCL whereas others, though representative, kept away from these two confederations;
- moreover, the democratisation process in many other countries has brought about evolutions in the trade union movement, accentuating nationwide pluralism;
- these changes have blunted the traditional borders of the international trade union movement;
- in this new context and facing the aggressions of neo-liberalism and wild capitalism, the positions of ICFTU and WCL have gradually drawn closer together in recent years.

The Congress observes that in this context ICFTU has a different approach to the structures of the international trade union movement:

- in the past, and repeatedly, there was never question but of merging WCL into ICFTU;
- WCL has never accepted to enter upon a discussion that would lead to the recognition of ICFTU as the only possible way for international trade unionism;
- the terms set out by ICFTU and supported by its recent Congress (Miyazaki, 2004) are different. ICFTU recognises WCL as a full partner for the joint building of a new world trade union organisation with other democratic and independent organisations;
- thus, it is a matter today of discussing together about a new structure with a joint definition of values, principles, constitution, strategy, programme;
- thus, it is a matter of projecting the values and experience of WCL in a new structure, instrument of real power of the organised workers worldwide, within which it will be able to enhance the value of its *acquis* and to promote a society based on solidarity, peace and social justice.

The Congress also approves:

- the policy lines decided in 2003 by the 208th Confederal Board session, in Jakarta (Indonesia) and
- the decisions made in 2004 by the 209th Confederal Board session, in Casablanca (Morocco)

to create with ICFTU and other democratic and independent organisations a new single, pluralistic and autonomous world trade union organisation.

ANNEXES

1. Decision of the 209th Confederal Board session, Casablanca, Morocco, 16-23 October de la 209eme réunion du Comité confédéral à Casablanca Maroc 16-23 octobre

The following documents, which are still under discussion, will be sent later on:

2. Manifesto
3. Declaration of principles
4. Constitution
5. Foundation

ANNEX 1: DECISION OF THE CONFEDERAL BOARD, MEETING IN CASABLANCA FROM 18TH TO 23RD OCTOBER

The Confederal Board, meeting in Casablanca from 18th to 23rd October and after discussing the elements of the outcome of the informal talks held between the WCL and the ICFTU general secretariats, decides:

- to adopt the proposed decision to start formal discussions with the ICFTU in view of the creation of a new international trade union organisation (annex).

The Confederal Board has established a list of criteria to be taken into consideration during the negotiations:

- It cannot be a sheer merger between the WCL and the ICFTU but a joint approach aimed at setting up a new international trade union organisation open to all democratic and independent trade union organizations;
- The values of solidarity, dignity, justice must guide the action of the new confederation;
- The setting up of an appropriate instrument, open to all, must make it possible to promote the values of the WCL;
- As a prerequisite of a democratic and dynamic functioning, internal pluralism must exist both at the level of the decision-making bodies and of the external representations (particularly international institutions) and at the level of the decision-making processes (qualified majorities in certain areas);
- Special attention shall be given to women trade unionists taking higher responsibilities;
- The issue of regional structures has to go hand in hand with consultations at the level of the regional interlocutors. Our regional organisations will establish contacts in this sense;
- A dynamic and structural anchored cooperation has to be established between trade action and inter-trade action. A coordination of trade action beside the inter-trade organisation is considered counterproductive.

Besides, during the negotiations special attention shall be given to the future affiliation policy to the new organisation (respect for pluralism at national level, reference to ILO Convention 87...).

All WCL and ICFTU members have the right to become member of the new organisation.

- The trade union organisation of the workers in the informal sector must be promoted.
- The action programme must define the attitude of the new organisation vis-à-vis the social movements.
- Unity of action between the WCL and the ICFTU must go forward, which will create a climate of mutual trust, and will promote the future cohesion within a new organisation. In this respect, it is very important to make concrete and reciprocal gestures such as the affiliation of the USO and other WCL affiliates to ETUC, to have a better representation of the WCL at the ILO, to consult about new affiliations, etc.
- Moreover formula (coordination, ...) must be sought in order to maintain lasting links of solidarity between the partners of the developed countries and the organizations of the developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe, particularly at the level of training and cooperation projects. With this end in view, a meeting of the partner foundations of the WCL will be organized.

Convinced that today, trade union unity at world level is crucial for ensuring effective representation of workers' rights and interest in the global economy,

Convinced also that achieving such unity is an urgent task for the international trade union movement and that the necessary conditions for it do now exist,

The Confederal Board decides to solemnly commit WCL to the creation of a new international trade union organisation, founded on internal pluralism and democracy.

