

OECD COUNCIL AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL
Paris, 24 June 2009

Talking Points
By John Sweeney, TUAC President

Prime Minister, Ministers, Secretary-General.

TUAC appreciates this opportunity to meet with you at this crucial time ... and present our statement to the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting.

- The OECD's economic projections that we have just received confirm the fact that the world economy is experiencing the worst economic crisis of our times.
- Rising unemployment is now at the center of this crisis – in my own country – the United States - we lost 345,000 jobs in May -- a slowdown in jobs losses but hardly a recovery – we have lost 6 million jobs since the recession began.
- The situation in many OECD countries -- and beyond in the developing and emerging economies is worse – for some workers and their families the situation is life or death.
- Workers around the world are angry... as they lose their jobs... incomes... and homes... while governments use tax payers money to bail out the banks.
- Your actions today and over the coming months need to give them confidence that all necessary action will be taken on jobs and creating a fairer economy coming out of this crisis.
- In this the greatest crisis of our lifetimes we have to strengthen social dialogue between business... unions... and governments in finding joint solutions to the jobs crisis – inviting BIAC and TUAC here today is one indication of your willingness to do this.
- Last week at the ILO – a tripartite agreement on a Global Jobs Pact was reached – this covers many of the issues presented in our statement to you... we urge you support it.
- At your meeting we are looking for a clear signal that you are willing and ready to act.
- Coordinated macroeconomic policies must be linked to employment and social policies that stop the rise in unemployment. We are alarmed by OECD reports that the fiscal stimulus packages to date are not sufficiently focused on employment and social protection.

- The global trade unions are calling on you to take further measures to implement a coordinated and jobs-oriented international recovery... and a new plan for sustainable growth.
- We call on governments to undertake an extra fiscal stimulus of 1% of GDP sustained over the next three years ... and ensure far greater focus on maintaining and creating jobs and ensuring adequate social protection... building on the Global Jobs Pact negotiated by the ILO.
- You must address the urgent problem of bank insolvency... and assure transparency and accountability in all financial institutions.
- Ministers must take steps to broaden the tax base by increasing the integrity of the tax system and undertaking progressive tax reform.
- Ministers must greatly step up efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals so as to honour past promises made on Official Development Assistance.
- We urge you to respond positively to G8 and G20 initiatives to create a Global Standard for propriety and transparency... of which the OECD Multinational Guidelines must be a key part.
- Ministers must contribute to an ambitious agreement at the Copenhagen Conference on climate change ... including action on Green Jobs and support for the 'just transition' strategies.
- Beyond this the OECD must revise its own analysis and actions to ensure that the policies that led to this crisis are not repeated. This will require a paradigm shift in our economic thinking.
- This most serious crisis of modern times must be matched by the most serious rethinking of policy. The OECD should now explain exactly what it means by a "stronger, cleaner, fairer world economy"
- We believe this must involve a new balance between growth and distribution ... the economy and the environment ... industrialized and developing countries ... finance and real economy ... public governance and markets...and workers and their employers. Thank you