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GEWERKSCHAFTSBUND**

Conference of the Parties (COP)

**Conference of the parties to the UNFCCC serving as the meeting of the
Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP)**

Joint high-level segment

Statement from the trade unions

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

Bheki Ntshalinthali, Deputy Secretary General of the Congress of South African
Trade Unions (COSATU)

Thank you Chair,

On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation, I would like to deliver a
message of urgency and commitment.

Trade unions came here with expectations. Some have been realized. But, Chair,
the path is too slow.

Chair, we ask governments to be ambitious and coherent. The economic
meltdown should not divert us from the fight against climate change. These are
difficult times, but the trade unions believe that we can repair and rebuild national
economies on the basis of a green new deal, which will create wealth, jobs and
protect the environment.

If we do not want the poorest to suffer, ambitious reduction targets have to be set
in developed countries, and sufficient technological and financial means have to
be allocated for putting developing countries on the path towards a more
sustainable development.

Trade unions will support these ambitious commitments. However Chair, a solution to climate change will not be found unless we simultaneously combat social injustice.

The transition will not be easy. Change will be painful and the new economy we all want to build cannot leave people aside. Workers and their organizations have to participate in decision making. Social dialogue is a necessity for effectively tackling climate change and social development. It is a tool. Use it to build consensus.

We must send a message to the workers of the world: the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change has to include in its next agreement a “just transition framework”. It needs to be clear in the agreement: the livelihoods and jobs of today and of the future, matter.

Chair, in this COP14, trade unions have been officially recognized as constituencies. This is for us the beginning of what we hope will be a climate ambitious and socially responsible agreement for the post 2012 framework. Chair, you can count on the active support of trade unions in this effort, and to achieve the results we need, **that** will make a difference. The world is watching. Let's act now.