



INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

**GENERAL COUNCIL**Elewijt, 17 - 18 October 2011

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**Agenda item 6:****Priority Resolutions:****(c) United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)**

1. With global crises multiplying and intensifying, people are losing faith in the capacity or will of governments to defend their interests. The international community needs to show that it can deliver, and restore hope.
2. The United Nations “Earth Summit” in Rio 20 years ago was an historic moment to address development and environmental challenges founded on global action. At that time, leaders affirmed that a coordinated plan could change the face of the earth and lay the foundations for a world in which every person could have a decent life in a healthy and secure environment.
3. The Rio+20 UN Conference in June 2012 and the events leading up to it need to show that there is indeed hope to achieve global equality, that multilateralism has a role to play, that solidarity and cooperation between countries and their people is possible. Rio + 20 must also acknowledge that, while necessary, a vision alone will not be enough. Activating creativity and commitments for the future is a way to address the impact of these crises on the people and the planet.
4. The international community must deliver concrete measures which will put our societies on track to achieve social equity, decent work, environmental protection, development and prosperity; on track for truly sustainable development.
5. The world does not need “just another Summit”. It needs leaders to show real leadership. Rio+20 must be the place to which future generations can look back and say that with its focus and its outcomes, humankind took the right direction.
6. It is in this context that the General Council supports the development of an advocacy statement based on the following:
  - The Rio+20 Summit must inspire governments to deliver outcomes that go beyond pre-recorded language and recognise that ambitious decisions can re-energise the multilateral system. Trade unions believe that Rio+20 can deliver a

message of hope and commitment for the future. This requires a strong political document containing, among other elements, the main principles to be respected by the Green Economy, recognition of the role social protection systems play in ensuring people's economic security and the capacity to bring about change, and a commitment to strengthening rights to defend the planet and communities.

- The Summit must deliver a concrete and ambitious pathway towards sustainability. A declaration will not be enough. Workers expect governments and civil society to leave Rio+20 with decisions that will be implemented from day 1. These must include nationally-based commitments for decent and green jobs, including targets and accompanying social policies. They must also embrace a decision to kick-start the Social Protection Floor Initiative in the poorest countries and a commitment to a Financial Transactions Tax to support climate action, social protection and development and to reduce financial speculation.
- The Summit must integrate the three dimensions of sustainability in each of its decisions. The 1992 Rio Summit laid the foundations in making the linkages between social progress, environmental protection and economic prosperity. Unfortunately, decisions and institutional responsibilities on these three issues have been taken in isolation for the past twenty years. To change that, each Rio+20 decision, partnership and initiative needs to specifically incorporate all three dimensions. Trade unions commit to make explicit the linkages of our proposals, focused on equality and fairness, with environmental protection and economic progress. Similar initiatives should be taken by all other actors in the process.

7. The ITUC would anticipate two different sets of outcomes for Rio+20: a Declaration, containing the main aspects of the agreements on the objective and the themes of the Conference, and a concrete set of decisions that governments must implement and be held accountable for from day 1.

8. Leaders' commitments at the UN Summit level must include:

- A commitment to implement the Universal Social Protection Floor initiative by 2020;
- A country by country self-identified commitment on decent & green jobs targets to be reached in the next 5-10 years, with accompanying decent work policies; and,
- An agreement on a global Financial Transactions Tax.

9. A policy-based Declaration must include:

- A recognition of the role social protection systems play in reducing people's vulnerability in a sustainable way;
- An agreement on the principles of the green economy, which must include social equity, gender equality, decent work and trade union rights, democracy and a Just Transition for workers;

- A clear acknowledgement of the role of redistributive and environmentally-friendly tax policies in the green economy; and
  - A clear acknowledgement of the role collective bargaining and environmental and occupational health and safety rights play in sustainable development.
10. In any agreement on sustainable development goals, governments should agree on a commitment to ensure that at least half of the workers of the world have decent jobs by 2020, secondly, ensuring all governments have as a minimum a social protection floor, based on relevant ILO standards, in place by 2020.
11. In the context of discussions on the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, the General Council call for:
- A strong political commitment to prioritise social equity and environmental protection over economic performance. This must be reflected on the projects driven by different institutions in the multilateral system, including in the International Financial Institutions, regional development banks and national export credit agencies.
  - Support for the designation of a national council or public representative or ‘ombudsperson’ to represent the interests and rights of present and future generations;
  - Launch negotiations for the establishment of an international convention on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration that deals with access to information, public participation and environmental justice;
  - Work towards the creation of a UN Environmental Organisation with strong powers and authority and support the creation of a Sustainable Development Council.
12. **The General Council is requested to endorse the above proposals, and is further requested to:**
- **support the development of international and national Green/Decent Jobs targets and strategies to generate decent work in key sectors, including energy, construction, transport, manufacturing, agriculture/forestry and water;**
  - **reaffirm the close linkages between the Rio+20 agenda and policies in the upcoming Durban Climate Conference (COP17) and the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan, November 2011), which are reflected in the policy and guidelines proposed under Agenda Item 9GC/10.**
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