

## TUDCN Facilitation and Steering Group (FSG) MEETING

7 May 2012 – Helsingor, Denmark

### Present:

- Henrik Als, LO-FTF
- Parayarikkal Haridasan, ITUC AP
- Adrien Akouete, ITUC Africa
- Gemma Arpaia, ISCOS-CISL
- Maurice Bossuat, CFDT France
- Judith Kirton-Darling, ETUC
- Lars Bengtsson, TCO Sweden
- Wellington Chibebe, ITUC
- Jan Dereymaeker, ITUC
- Paola Simonetti, ITUC
- Kasia Szeniawska, ITUC

### Minutes:

#### 1. Approval Report of the previous meeting

The report has been approved with no amendments.

#### 2. Activity Report January-April 2012

Paola Simonetti (ITUC-TUDCN) presented the [TUDCN activity report \(Jan-Apr 2012\)](#). Jan Dereymaeker (ITUC-TUDCN) completed the report with an [update on the post-Busan official and CSO processes](#).

Parayarikkal Haridasan (ITUC AP) raised the issue of the role of the regional organisations. They receive many invitations to various meetings, but have very limited human capacities to take part in them. If the invitations are sent via general circulars only to the General Secretaries, they do not always reach the relevant persons. How could we communicate in a more efficient way to ensure better representation of the regional bodies in the key meetings?

Jan (ITUC) commented that we should aim at a more regular contact, e.g. using the conference call system.

Wellington Chibebe (ITUC DGS) commented that where the secretariat cannot send their representatives, they can send affiliates' representatives.

Jan (ITUC) gave the example of APHEDA representing ITUC at a UNDCF Symposium in Australia the following week.

Maurice Bossuat (CFDT) pointed out that while increasing the presence of TUDCN/trade unions on the global level, we should also keep in mind the engagement of the national affiliates, their role in the processes and what they can benefit from it.

Henrik Als (LO FTF), raised the issue of the future funding for the network.

Gemma Arpaia (ISCOS) supported the comment of Maurice concerning the gap between the global and the national level. The way forward, she said, might be to have more joint projects implemented on the national level, based on the partnership between networks' members, like in the case of the recent proposal of a development education project.

Paola (ITUC) said that she would like to have more feedback from the national level on how the network's work and policies are being applied, as would help to bridge the gap. She also supported Gemma's idea to have more partnership projects, with the support of the network's secretariat.

Jan (ITUC) pointed out that in fact the secretariat has done more than what was presented in the Activity Report, including Wellington visiting a number of affiliated organisations. The work done on bilateral contacts is not reported properly. The secretariat has also prepared a number of briefing papers to support affiliates' engagements in the development agendas, as well as encouraged to share news from affiliates through the newsletter. Jan supported Paola's point that there is a need for more feedback from the national level. The challenge, he said, is how to engage more on the country level and bring the voice of the affiliates to the global policy debates.

Paola (ITUC) explained that so far the network was focused primarily on the outreach work – representing the trade union perspective in external processes, but now that the capacity development is becoming a stronger focus for the network, the gap between national and international engagement will be reduced.

Maurice (CFDT) listed three main obstacles to the work of the network: the economic crisis and decreasing funds for development cooperation in some countries; lack of political priority attached to development cooperation in the national organisations and ITUC; lack of political coherence. There is a need to show that TUDCN is truly effective, he said.

Jan (ITUC) continued the thought, referring to the necessity of reporting not only outputs, but also the results and impact of the network's work. There are a number of examples where the trade union presence in the global development processes effectively introduced important changes in the discussed agendas, he said and added that there is a need for a change in the approach to reporting.

Wellington (ITUC) brought up the question on how to make development cooperation issues a priority in the ITUC.

Jan (ITUC) introduced the proposed process of securing the funding for the future of the network. The European Commission's call for proposals, from which the TUDCN has been financed so far, will be published later than originally expected, which creates a gap in funding of a couple of months. There is a discussion with the Commission about the possibility of securing funding through the system of direct awards, like in the case of political foundations and local authorities. Since the direct awards would start from April 2013, there would still be the need secure bridge funding for the first quarter of 2013. Diversifying income for the network could also be the solution, said Jan and suggested co-ordinating with the national affiliates on the issue of possible governmental funding. He also suggested that some of the network's activities could be included in the affiliates' action plans.

Jan (ITUC) pointed out that for the next TUDCN meeting, it should be better coordinated with the SSOs' and GUFs' meeting, as this year it collides with one of them.

### **3. Action Plan 2012: focus on regions and capacity development**

Jan (ITUC) informed about the discussions with the European Commission on how to increase Southern affiliates' participation and representation, which has been the priority of TUDCN.

Paola (ITUC) referred to the draft document concerning the capacity development with Southern affiliates. The approach, she explained, will be to draft a strategy with the regional organisations in

order to develop capacity building activities for the affiliates in the South. It will concern both the policy and organisational matters. This approach is reflected in the results of the Busan process and the EU policies, which put a strong focus on the country level both for implementation and monitoring. Also the Busan Building Blocs, she added, will be implemented in pilot countries. The EU *Agenda for change* talks about concentrating development cooperation programmes and projects in three key sectors on national level. Paola explained that this new setting requires TUDCN to also develop a new approach by strengthening national affiliates to engage in policy dialogue with their governments and to have more capacity in organisational terms. The cooperation modalities between the North and the South need to be addressed. Paola mentioned also the Principles and Guidelines for Trade Union Development Effectiveness as well as the TUDEP as important tools in the new approach.

Judith Kirton-Darling (ETUC) brought up the issue of an increasing fragmentation in the development policies and shared an idea of trade union 'twinning' and networking on regional level. ETUC has been trying to build affiliates' capacity by strengthening bilateral links.

Haridasan (ITUC-AP) asked about the results of the regional TUDEP seminars.

Maurice (CFDT) shared the example of CFDT insisting on the coordinating role of regional organisations in their projects, esp. ITUC Africa. The problem, he said, is that the donors don't recognise the regional organisations.

Jan (ITUC) shared the perspective that the issue of regional structure and operations is very important. There is no one solution that would fit all the regions, he said and insisted that they need to be treated separately because of their specificities. He referred to the complicated historical and more recent political background of the relations with regional organisations. He added that twinning has been already used to exchange experiences of bilateral cooperation. He stressed the need for a dialogue with each of the regions and possible identification of pilot projects.

Haridasan (ITUC-AP) pointed out that if the programmes are done through the regional bodies, it might in some cases limit the access for some affiliates due to the organisations' internal guidelines and policies.

Gemma (ISCOS) reminded the three main global development processes: the post-Busan process, EU development policy and the UN consultations on the post-2015 framework – they all require capacity building on national and regional levels. We should also focus more on the South-South and triangular cooperation, she said - working with the southern trade union not only as recipients, but also as potential donors. She suggested creating a matrix that would show the trade unions in the new donor countries and the priority countries of the Agenda for Change.

Lars Bengtsson (TCO Sweden) stressed the need to strengthen the national organisations in creating and implementing their own strategies as well as supporting them in becoming independent of external donors and guidance.

Adrien Akouete (ITUC Africa) said ITUC Africa insists on the information flow and putting in practice the principles of development effectiveness. He also brought up the issue of the increasing engagement of Turkey in Africa.

Jan (ITUC) pointed out that it is not only the international development agendas that set out priorities for national ones, but also the regional strategies like NEPAD, ADB etc. We need to prioritise, he said, taking into account the capacities and needs of organisations.

Maurice (CFDT) said that there is a need to identify added value of the regional bodies.

Wellington (ITUC) pointed out that all this complexity is not created by the union movement, but that the movement is responding to it, trying to harmonise our operations.

#### **4. Preparation of the General Meeting**

Jan presented the [agenda of the General Meeting](#). The chairing of the Meeting's various sessions has been assigned to Wellington, Judith, Gemma and Maurice.

## 5. Conclusions

- The secretariat will reflect on new ways of reporting in the TUDCN General Meetings. A more political introduction of the single activities is needed to show the context of the initiatives we are undertaking;
- More participation of the GUFs is needed, and the secretariat will further engage towards this goal;
- The reporting time from regions and national affiliates in the TUDCN GM should be longer and more structured: the secretariat will produce and circulate a reporting format to be filled in advance;
- Capacity development: the secretariat will keep liaising with regional organizations to assess their needs and strategic priorities. The pilot countries approach will be followed