



International Trade Union Confederation

**GENERAL COUNCIL**

Brussels, Belgium, 29 November – 1 December 2017

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Agenda item 14:

The Regions

(d) Arab Sub-Region

The General Council is requested to approve the report of ATUC.

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Confederación Sindical Internacional  
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## ITUC Frontlines and Priorities

Region: ATUC

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### Highlights – 2017

Since its founding congress in 2014, ATUC succeeded in renewing many of its cooperation agreements with its international partners (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Belgian National Centres, LO-Norway, LO/FTF and ILO-ACTRAV).

ATUC successfully achieved the first phase of the European Commission's three-year pilot project for the promotion of social dialogue in the southern Mediterranean in three countries (Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco). The SOLiD-South Mediterranean Social Dialogue Project (see: <http://www.medsocialdialogue.org/>) brings together regional and international representatives of social partners, as well as a number of relevant partners from the EU. The project is implemented by a consortium, which consists of ten members: ITUC, BUSINESSMED, SOLIDAR, CNT, CESE, ATUC, ANND, ISCOS, Progetto SUD and AIP.

The project consists of three phases spread over a period of three years. The first phase aimed at understanding and improving the economic and social situation in the target countries, as well as mechanisms of social dialogue, including the work of Economic and Social Councils (ESCs). The second phase expects to increase the knowledge of – and enhance the cooperation between social partners on – tools and modalities for improving and institutionalising social dialogue, including the functioning of ESCs, as well as enhancing the exchange and mutual learning of the relevant stakeholders. The last phase will enable the project's partners to develop the needed policies for social dialogue and exchange best practices in the form of a "Charter" as a model framework for social dialogue, including ESCs' experience at the EU-Southern Mediterranean level.

The most important achievement for this year is ATUC's contribution as co-applicant to the second contract with the European Commission to implement a three-year project entitled "EU and South Neighborhood Civil Society: Enhancing Dialogue". This project aims to address key social and political challenges in the Neighborhood South (NS) and in EU-NS relations through engaging citizens, including young men and women, in policy-making processes relevant to civil society, EU institutions, and regional entities and authorities.

This project largely consists of programmes in which the applicants (EUROMed and REF) are engaged. Three co-applicants (ATUC, ANND and SOLIDAR) are implementing the SOLiD-South Mediterranean Social Dialogue, which is a three-year programme co-financed by the European Union. The programme aims to promote dialogue on labour issues between employee organisations, employers' organisations and NGOs in this region.

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## Frontlines - 2017

### Climate Justice and Industrial Transformation

ATUC continued to support its affiliates in conducting their agenda and their national campaigns on climate change and launched a regional media campaign on climate change challenges and the role of trade unions in the Arab region.

### Eliminating Slavery

ATUC is currently developing a concept note related to a call for proposals to support civil society and human rights activists working outside the EU in five key areas of human rights corresponding to the five recurring lots of 2014-2017 EIDHR global calls for proposals.

ATUC, in cooperation with the IFJ, (BWI) and IUF, will apply for Lot Number 3: Combating forced labour and modern slavery. The initiative aims to support actions contributing to combatting forced labour and coercive recruitment practices in the agriculture/forestry sector.

## Priorities - 2017

### Countries at Risk

ATUC will continue its campaign against violations of human and trade union rights in Algeria, Egypt, Palestine and Bahrain.

ATUC held its pre-ILC meeting in April 2017 to prepare the campaign by ATUC affiliates before the credentials and standards committees with a focus on Algeria, Bahrain and Egypt.

ATUC addressed the women's network in the Middle East and North Africa of IndustriALL.

ATUC continued for the third year running to launch the Arab trade union rights report and online mapping with a focus on highlighting trade union rights and freedom of association, forced labour and human trafficking, collective bargaining and social dialogue, and inequality and discrimination.

### Global Governance of Migration

ATUC attended the first coordination meeting for this year, held in Bangkok, Thailand, in May 2017, to agree on the draft work plan for the implementation of the MOU on labour migration between ATUC, SARTUC and ASEAN TUC. Two more regional unions are involved (ITUC-Africa and TUCA-America) in the MOU on migration. This work plan was submitted to the pre-ILC meeting of the workers' delegates in the ILC in Geneva on the 7 June 2017.

ATUC participated in the 2nd meeting of the Inter-Regional Experts Forum on Skills and Migration in the South Asia-Middle East Corridor, held in New Delhi on 25–26 July 2017.

ATUC attended the third coordination meeting (Bangkok, 15–17 October 2017), which aimed to explore the possibility of the establishment of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) in the Asia-Pacific region with the possible joint action of the three sub-regional organisations, including ATUC. ATUC shared its ideas on the establishment of MRCs (legal base and responsibility for MRCs, how services

will be provided, the financial plan, policies, operating procedures, including HR capacity and the appropriate location, etc.).

### Domestic Workers

ATUC attended the second meeting of the ILO Policy Advisory Committee on Labour Migration in the Middle East (27–28 April 2017 at the Issam Fares Institute, American University of Beirut).

ATUC attended the third meeting of the ILO ROAS Policy Advisory Committee on Fair Migration in the Middle East, held on 6 October 2017 in Beirut.

### Organising

In support of programmes, ATUC participated in the preparation for the annual conference of the organising academy, which was held in Casablanca (29/10–2/11 2017).

## Other Regional Issues

### International and Regional Meetings

- ATUC took part in the UfM High Level Working Group on Employment and Labour (ENPI S-041) in Barcelona (28-29 March 2017).
- ATUC attended the European Development Days (29 May–2 June 2017).
- ATUC participated in the high level Civil Society Forum's meetings, including the preparatory meetings, held in Tunis at the end of April 2017, and the 2017 edition of the Forum, which took place in Brussels on 10-12 July).
- ATUC and its affiliates attended the Policy Forum for Development, which took place on 3 and 4 October 2017.
- ATUC and its affiliates participated in the UfM Social Dialogue Forum, held on 10-11 October 2017.
- ATUC will hold its fourth general council in Jordan in November 2017.

### Arab Women's Network Annual Meeting

The 8<sup>th</sup> AWN meeting, supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, was held in Tunis in March 2017. The network is working on a checklist to combat violence against women in the workplace and to support the alleviation of poverty among women refugees.

### The Regional Meeting for Journalists and Decision-Makers of the ATUC Media Network and ATUC Affiliates

The regional meeting of Arab media, held in May 2017 and supported by LO/FTF, aimed to build the capacity of the new media network members, particularly journalists with the instruments and sufficient means of communication and information to enable them to use the provisions of international labour standards at the regional level in their media coverage in the Arab region, with special focus on empowering the ATUC media network, including the decision-makers of the affiliates, for more enforcement and support.

The conclusions were:

- Restructuring the media network and dividing the journalists into groups according to their specialties;

- Creating a video channel (the Unionists' Voice), to start functioning on 1 July 2017, where the videos shall not exceed two minutes each;
- Improving the social media by starting with separating the Facebook account from the Twitter account, downloading three to four news items (containing videos and images);
- Adopting a programme for formulating the new work plan for 2017/2018; and
- Improving the E-Learning concept.

## FES Partnership on the ATUC Website

### Information and Training

In 2015, ATUC launched a project entitled "E-Learning". This project aimed to establish and build an online platform through the ATUC website to provide training on several issues using three methods: videos, info-graphs and databases. The project seeks to build the capacities of trade unionists in the Arab region. The online platform has been created with a specific focus on supporting the exchange of contents, methodologies and technologies so as to strengthen the capacity of trade unions and **workers' organisations**, lawyers, journalists, NGOs, etc., to deliver innovative training and equip the public with the knowledge, skills and competences needed to address the new challenges in the labour markets across the MENA region.

This project managed to include 30 videos last year and five videos for this year. The topics covered related to international conventions on the following issues: forced labour, freedom of association, child labour, migrant workers, workers' representatives, collective bargaining, the fundamental convention on equality of opportunity, employment policy and promotion, employment security, social security, minimum standards, maternity protection, working hours, night work, part-time work, labour administration and inspection, workers with family responsibilities, minimum wages, vocational guidance and training, domestic workers, occupational health and safety, employment agencies, repatriation of seafarers (ILO Convention C166), working from home, and public service.

Last year, 15 info-graphs (11 related to discrimination against women in Arab countries and four on discrimination against migrant workers in Arab countries) were produced. Also, the launch was announced of a database of the different studies and reports related to the ILO Decent Work Agenda, including employment and international labour standards, with a focus on freedom of association and collective bargaining, social protection and social dialogue. For more information, visit: <http://arabtradeunion.org/>.

ATUC is still focusing on the E-Learning programme and published more training materials on its platform. In addition, an important online database was established in three languages (Arabic, English and French) about policies, economies and social topics in the Arab region.

### LO-Norway Cooperation (2016-2018)

During the first year of cooperation, ATUC, together with its affiliates in five countries (Jordan, Palestine, Bahrain, Oman and Tunisia), jointly developed a regional training-of-trainers programme for 20 young unionists on decent work, social and economic issues and the concept of organisation.

Upon completion of the programme, ATUC supported participants in their efforts to carry out training courses in their countries during 2016. These trainings reached 100 young unionists in the five countries.

In 2017, within the frame of this cooperation, LO-Norway supported the organising of the 2<sup>nd</sup> regional meeting of the Arab Youth Network, (Tunis 18–20 September), which aimed at strengthening the Arab Youth Network and integrating the 20 youth unionists' trainers in this conference. The conference addressed many topics and included presentations and workshop activities that dealt with many important themes that were discussed and debated in the conference.

The conference and the Arab Youth Network have set a platform, as well as a stronger youth representation in the Arab region, in order to strengthen youth engagement in youth-related issues, both in the workplace and within the unions.

Finally, the conference had the opportunity to launch the "ITUC Get Organized" campaign, which can be clearly seen in the new theme of the Arab ATUC Youth Network digital platform: <https://www.facebook.com/arab.youth.trade.union.network/>

ATUC, FES, ILO ACTRAV and Belgian National Centres Cooperation (2016-2017) on the "Sectoral Approach on Changes in the Labour Market in MENA Region and Their Effects for Workers' Rights and Social Dialogue"

The second phase of the regional study included the following steps:

1. Convening the regional experts meeting to agree on the study work plan and the terms of reference.
  2. Organising four sub-regional workshops in collaboration with ATUC affiliates and the GUFs in the region. During these workshops, the outputs of the background papers and the questionnaire analysis (from Phase I of the study) were discussed. The Phase I conclusions of the study were discussed during the seminar, which preceded the ATUC General Council in November 2016. They were approved by all ATUC affiliates, which demonstrated their cooperation in implementing Phase II of the programme.
  3. The final version of the study will be adapted in the last months of 2017.
  4. The final version of the study will be presented for validation at the seminar, which will be held after the ATUC General Council on 16 November 2017.
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