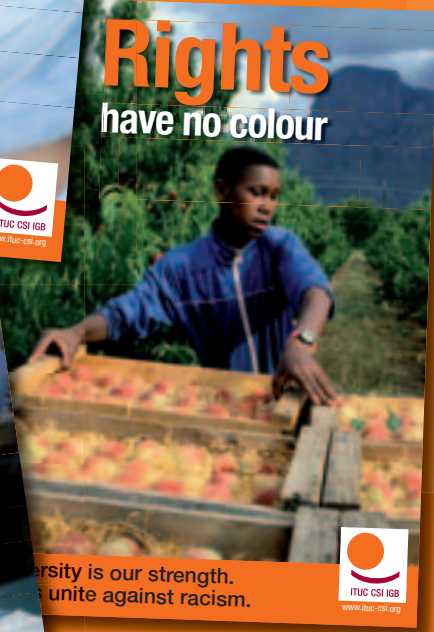
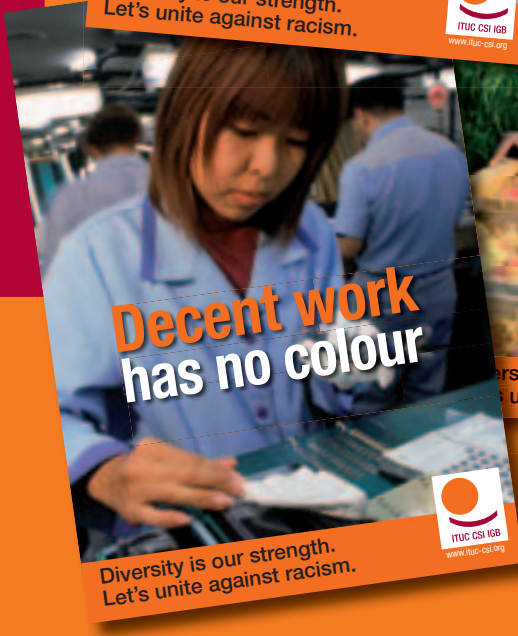


PLAN OF ACTION

ITUC International Trade Union Confederation
July 2008



Getting rid of Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia

Introduction

The continued presence of subtle, wide-ranging discriminatory practices against workers from ethnic and cultural minorities at the workplace and even within trade union organisations shows that much remains to be done.

Trade union intervention to eliminate racism at work and its consequences is both possible and necessary. How? By mobilising all trade union leaders and workers to include this challenge at the heart of the struggle for decent work.

The trade union movement needs to take steps towards creating a world in which diversity is valued, and considered an asset rather than a problem.

This plan of action is aimed at helping all trade unionists make progress along those lines. It was drawn up and adopted at the international seminar jointly organised by the ITUC and the ILO from 4 to 7 December 2007 in Geneva, whose central theme was "Towards a trade union strategy for combating racial discrimination and xenophobia".

The starting point: Decisions of the ITUC Founding Congress

The ITUC Founding Congress in November 2006 adopted the guidelines for a programme of action, one of the priorities of which is combating all forms of discrimination faced by hundreds of millions of workers worldwide.

Fighting Discrimination, Achieving Equality

23. Congress pledges the ITUC to campaign to put an end to discrimination in all its forms so that millions of women and men who today are denied jobs, confined to certain occupations, denied advancement at work, offered lower pay, or subject to intimidation and harassment because of their sex, religion, colour, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinion, social origin, age or disability, can live and work in conditions of equality, dignity and justice. It commits the ITUC to securing full and effective application of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

25. Congress pledges to uphold respect for diversity at work and in society and actively to promote measures to fight xenophobia, in particular in the workplace and the labour market. It underlines the responsibility of the ITUC to campaign against the discrimination and often exploitative conditions of work and life faced by the world's migrant workers and their families. It calls on the ITUC and its affiliates to play a more active and visible role in promoting the rights and equal treatment of migrant workers and in the fight against racism and xenophobia. They must raise public awareness of the contribution to society of migrants, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities and ensure that anti-terrorist measures and asylum policies do not encourage racism and discrimination.

The guidelines for the plan of action therefore concern not only the fight against racism but also the promotion and defence of the rights of migrant workers and above all the respect of equality and diversity.

Trade union organisations worldwide confirmed their commitment to this fight at the ITUC Founding Congress.

Basic Principles

- ☞ Respect for human dignity, human rights, equality and diversity form the very essence of our trade union action.
- ☞ Equal treatment and rights for all workers, women and men, with no distinction as to their skin, or ethnic, cultural or religious identity, shall guide our daily struggle for greater social justice and economic democracy.
- ☞ Solidarity among all workers in the broadest sense, including at international level.

This must be the framework for all trade union action on behalf of workers, irrespective of their origins or their ethnic, cultural or religious identity.

Objectives

The objective of this programme is the elimination of racism and xenophobia and the promotion of respect for diversity, particularly on the labour market, at the workplace and within the trade unions.

- ☞ This objective can only be achieved if we mobilise on a huge scale (in order to dismantle the mechanisms that underpin racism and xenophobia) and raise the awareness of workers, trade union leaders, the authorities and society at large.

The programme to combat racism and xenophobia therefore has five operational objectives:

- 1/** To raise awareness and mobilise the trade union movement worldwide through campaigns and training
- 2/** To increase the involvement of workers from ethnic minorities or majorities discriminated in trade union activities
- 3/** To ensure better representation of the interests of workers from ethnic minorities or majorities discriminated
- 4/** To include this issue in social dialogue
- 5/** To conduct broad action through a worldwide network.

That means that the affiliates will be contributing to a global and concerted approach based on an exchange of experiences, under the coordination of the ITUC.

Duration

The struggle against racism and xenophobia requires long-term action. It must be started as soon as possible.

At each ITUC Congress an evaluation will be made regarding progress in this area.

Content

The participants at the ITUC-ILO seminar held in December 2007 defined the actions to be developed at the various trade union levels (national, regional and international).

The following themes and areas were identified as priorities:

I. At the national level

Trade unions undertake under:

Trade union and political action to:

- ✘ Include analyses, policies and activities designed to promote diversity, tolerance and equality on the trade union agenda.
- ✘ Integrate the fight against racism into trade union policies and programmes and consolidate democracy within national trade unions, in particular by:
 - Raising awareness among and mobilising trade union leaders in order to ensure equal treatment and equal rights among all workers within their own ranks.
 - Ensuring the real integration of workers of foreign extraction, of colour or from ethnic minorities (for example through recruitment and organising campaigns targeted at migrant workers and workers from discriminated groups).

- Creating new structures within the trade unions to ensure the representation of all categories of workers, to gain a collective view of the problem, to find out more about the issues, to launch new action strategies and to ensure adherence to and the implementation of the plan of action. Specifically, there would be a Committee to Combat Racism and Xenophobia.
 - Working closely with people from the populations concerned on drawing up a list of demands to be used in collective bargaining.
- ✗ Examine whether national level legislation foresees equality for all upon recruitment, irrespective of race, ethnic origin, nationality, sex or religion
- ✗ Define the work that needs to be done in terms of political decisions as regards:
 - citizenship (access to identity documents),
 - the recognition of specific cultural characteristics,
 - policies to facilitate access to the labour market and equal working conditions (protection of people working in the informal economy).
- ✗ Participate in drawing up migration policies that respect migrants' rights.
- ✗ Put in places procedures to denounce cases of discrimination within the trade unions and in the workplace, and ensure the effective defence of the wronged workers (discriminatory hiring practices, unequal pay for work of equal value, discrimination in forms of work organisation and with respect to participation in decision-making, etc.).

International standards to:

- ✗ Run campaigns for the ratification and application of ILO and UN Conventions, particularly C111 on discrimination in employment, C100 on equal remuneration, C169 on indigenous and tribal peoples, C97 on migrant workers, C143 on migrations in abusive conditions and the promotion of equality of opportunity and treatment of migrant workers, C87 on freedom of association and protection of the right to organise, C98 on the right to organise and collective bargaining, the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (1965) and the UN Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families (1990).
- ✗ Ensure the respect of and promote the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up (1998).
- ✗ Identify the obstacles to ratification of these international standards and support from trade union organisations.
- ✗ Lobby members of national parliaments to promote legal instruments.

Social Dialogue to:

- ✗ Include this issue in social dialogue, particularly by including clauses to ban racial discrimination in collective agreements.

- ✘ Develop campaigns to raise the awareness of and exert pressure on governments to create a solid framework within which unions can approach employers.
- ✘ Prevent discrimination and promote equal opportunities for ALL workers, whatever their racial, ethnic, or religious background, etc. Collective bargaining could be used as a means of putting pressure on employers to prevent racism, notably through:
 - Positive action
 - Access to vocational training and language courses
 - Clear procedures for dealing with cases of racism in the workplace
 - Examining pay conditions.
- ✘ Organise training that takes a multi-cultural approach designed for all workers at their place of work, notably those in managerial posts.
- ✘ Ensure a close monitoring of the situation of these categories of workers in the workplace: their representativeness, job categories, pay, working hours and conditions. This information could be used to make recommendations to employers and to press for a charter or code of conduct.
- ✘ Develop concrete initiatives vis-à-vis and in cooperation with employers, facilitated by the ILO.

Training, awareness-raising, information and communication to:

- ✘ Systematically integrate equal treatment and equal rights for migrant workers and ethnic minorities in training and awareness-raising activities. Advanced training on equality issues should aim to make people realise that racism can be expressed not only verbally but can also be part of deliberate or unconscious behaviour that has clear discriminatory consequences. Skills training programmes should be carried out for:
 - Supervisory staff and trade union leaders so that they have the training to identify racism and understand its mechanisms, as well as the legislation and trade union policies on discrimination.
 - The population groups affected by this type of discrimination, so that they can take on trade union posts.
 - Activists, so that they become more involved in combating this problem at their workplace.
- ✘ Raise the visibility of the anti-racist positions and policies of ITUC affiliated organisations, stating them clearly and firmly in all publications.
- ✘ Work with national media (radio and television) to broadcast anti-racism messages in order to raise public awareness of the importance of respecting diversity as society develops.

Alliances and cooperation with international institutions to:

- ✘ Work with the Global Union Federations (GUFs).

- ✘ Form alliances with other associations/organisations (international, regional and national) that have the same goals, such as associations of lawyers, human rights defenders, migrant workers' defenders, NGOs etc.

- ✘ Closely monitor the evaluation of the application of the action plan adopted at the (UN) Durban Conference in 2001 on racism and xenophobia. This process is underway at the national and regional level and will culminate in an international Conference in 2009. A big effort must be made to ensure that the views of trade union organisations on the different issues are fully taken into account in that evaluation.

II. At the Regional and International Level

The ITUC regional organisations undertake under:

Political and trade union action to :

- ✘ Include analyses, policies and activities to promote diversity, tolerance and equality on the trade union agenda.

- ✘ Integrate the fight against racism in trade union policies and programmes, notably by raising the awareness of and mobilising the trade union leaders of affiliated organisations.

- ✘ Define the work that needs to be done in terms of political decisions as regards:
 - citizenship (access to documentation),
 - the recognition of specific cultural characteristics,
 - policies to facilitate access to the labour market and equal working conditions (protection of people working in the informal economy).

- ✘ Build a regional and worldwide network of denunciation, solidarity and action.

- ✘ Put in places procedures to denounce cases of discrimination (reinforcing national initiatives) within the trade unions and in the workplace.

- ✘ Take part in the drafting of migration policies focusing on migrants' rights, in the relevant regional and international bodies.

- ✘ Collect and disseminate the experiences of national unions regarding good trade union practices in combating racial discrimination and xenophobia, on migration and on integration, particularly in collective bargaining and employment policy.
- ✘ Integrate the fight against racial discrimination and xenophobia into the ITUC's decent work campaign.
- ✘ Negotiate international trade union cooperation agreements and bilateral and multilateral agreements (sectoral and cross-sectoral) on issues of common interest.

The ITUC needs to be the nerve centre of this international programme. Coordination work will need to be done with the regional and national organisations.

International Standards to:

- ✘ Run campaigns for the ratification and application of ILO and UN Conventions, particularly C111 on discrimination in employment, C100 on equal remuneration, C169 on indigenous and tribal peoples, C97 on migrant workers, C143 on migrations in abusive conditions and the promotion of equality of opportunity and treatment of migrant workers, C87 on freedom of association and protection of the right to organise, C98 on the right to organise and collective bargaining, the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (1965) and the UN Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families (1990).
- ✘ Step up cooperation with the ILO in the campaign for the ratification, genuine application and monitoring of ILO Conventions.
- ✘ Ensure the respect of and promote the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up (1998).

Social Dialogue to:

- ✘ Develop concrete initiatives towards or with employers and governments (for example in the form of partnerships) facilitated by the ILO and in cooperation with the Global Union Federations.

Training, awareness-raising, information and communication to:

- ✘ Organise international seminars and workshops to develop skills, exchange good practices and create and consolidate a network.
- ✘ Raise the visibility of the anti-racist positions and policies of ITUC affiliated organisations, stating them clearly and firmly in all publications
- ✘ Raise awareness of the importance of respecting diversity and mobilise national organisations on a large scale to take action against racism and xenophobia, using campaign materials such as ITUC posters.

- ✘ Keep a regularly updated database about the involvement of affiliated organisations in this action.
- ✘ Prepare training materials in close collaboration with the ILO for trade union leaders, activists and all workers.

Alliances and cooperation with international institutions to:

- ✘ Work with the Global Union Federations.
- ✘ Form alliances with other associations/organisations (international, regional and national) that have the same goals, such as associations of lawyers, human rights defenders, migrant workers' defenders, NGOs etc.
- ✘ Closely monitor the evaluation of the application of the action plan adopted at the (UN) Durban Conference in 2001 on racism and xenophobia. This process is underway at the national and regional level and will culminate in an international Conference in 2009. A big effort must be made to ensure that the views of trade union organisations on the different issues are taken fully into account in this evaluation.
- ✘ Identify the action that can be taken jointly with the appropriate international bodies, notably, UNESCO, ILO and others.
- ✘ Ensure that the ILO makes its expertise available to workers' organisations by means of regular technical cooperation.

The anti-racist dimension of this action plan must be taken on board by all trade union structures, including women's and youth committees at all levels.

The organisations undertake to promote and implement the plan of action on migrant workers adopted by the ITUC seminar held in Brussels in December 2006.

**Diversity is our
strength!**

**Let's unite
against racism.**



**Decent work
has no colour**

Diversity is our strength.
Let's unite against racism.



**Talent
has no colour**

Diversity is our strength.
Let's unite against racism.



**Rights
have no colour**

Diversity is our strength.
Let's unite against racism.



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