

Trade Unions at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) The 23rd Conference of the Parties (COP23), Bonn, Germany 6-17 November 2017



Summary

(Section traduite en français juste en dessous)

(Sección traducida en castellano justo debajo del texto en francés)

2016 was marked by two major events: the extremely rapid ratification of the Paris Agreement by hundreds of Governments and the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States, whose campaign included the promise to withdraw from any commitment to reduce emissions under the Paris deal.

2017 was therefore a critical moment to assess how these two events would influence the general dynamics and support for climate action globally, as well as more specifically the climate negotiations, still necessary to complete the Paris agreement “rulebook”.

This year we have witnessed that the Paris Agreement ‘s recognition of the need to secure a Just Transition for workers led to an increased visibility of the concept of Just Transition, sometimes used in disconnection to the workers/communities’ needs.

There was a need for the international union movement to strengthen its advocacy strategy and be seen among those standing strong for climate governance, as well as consolidating the connection of the Just Transition concept, coined by trade unions, to workers and communities in the context of climate action.

In addition, the decision by the UNFCCC to hold COP24 in Katowice, Poland, the capital city of the historically coal-producing Upper Silesian region, puts the trade union movement in a delicate and critical situation, where a well-crafted strategy is needed to ensure trade union messages in support for climate action and Just Transition for workers is well heard.

COP23 provided little progress on the specific aspects of the Paris rulebook it was supposed to develop. More interestingly, this COP witnessed a shift in the attention, which moved from the negotiations to the “outside” space, with announcements around coal phase out or climate commitments by cities got much more coverage. Trade unions will have to follow this development

carefully, as there is a risk governments deliver poor outcomes without paying any political cost for them, as they could be “protected” by a media narrative favourable to them.

The next COP (COP24, in Katowice, Poland) needs to deliver critical aspects of the Paris Agreement architecture, as well as providing a push for the upward revision of national contributions. In addition, it can become the space where a Work Programme on Just Transition could be launched, so there is a clear commitment from governments to all those affected by climate policies, based on the Paris Agreement, and rooted in the UNFCCC process.

Résumé en français:

2016 a été marquée par deux événements majeurs: la ratification extrêmement rapide de l'Accord de Paris par des centaines de gouvernements et l'élection de Donald Trump à la présidence des États-Unis, dont la campagne comprenait la promesse de retirer les États-Unis de tout engagement de réduction des émissions.

2017 représentait donc un moment critique pour évaluer comment ces deux événements influenceraient la dynamique générale et le soutien à l'action climatique à l'échelle mondiale, ainsi que plus spécifiquement les négociations climatiques, toujours nécessaires pour compléter le « rulebook » de l'Accord de Paris.

Cette année, nous avons constaté que la reconnaissance par l'Accord de Paris de la nécessité d'assurer une transition juste pour les travailleurs a conduit à une visibilité accrue du concept de transition juste, parfois utilisé de façon déconnectée des besoins des travailleurs/communautés.

Le mouvement syndical international avait donc besoin de renforcer sa stratégie de plaidoyer et d'être vu parmi ceux qui défendent la gouvernance climatique, et de consolider le lien entre le concept de transition juste, développé par les syndicats, et les travailleurs et les communautés dans le contexte de l'action climatique.

En outre, la décision de la CCNUCC d'organiser la COP24 à Katowice, en Pologne, la capitale de la région de Haute-Silésie historiquement productrice de charbon, place le mouvement syndical dans une situation délicate et critique, où une stratégie bien conçue est nécessaire pour veiller à ce que les messages syndicaux en appui de l'action en faveur du climat et de la transition juste pour les travailleurs soient bien entendus.

La COP23 a peu progressé sur les aspects spécifiques liés aux règles à définir dans l'Accord de Paris (« rulebook ») qu'elle était censée développer. Plus intéressant encore, cette COP a été témoin d'un changement d'attention, qui s'est déplacé des négociations vers l'espace « extérieur », avec des annonces autour de l'élimination du charbon ou des engagements climatiques des villes. Les syndicats devront suivre attentivement cette évolution, car il y a un risque que les gouvernements produisent des résultats médiocres sans payer aucun coût politique pour eux, car ils pourraient être « protégés » par un récit médiatique qui leur serait favorable.

La prochaine COP (COP24, à Katowice, en Pologne) doit fournir des aspects critiques de l'architecture de l'Accord de Paris, tout en encourageant la révision à la hausse des contributions nationales. En outre, il peut devenir l'espace où un programme de travail sur la transition juste pourrait être lancé, de sorte qu'il y a un engagement clair des gouvernements vis-à-vis de toutes les personnes affectées par les politiques climatiques, basées sur l'accord de Paris et enracinées dans le processus CCNUCC.

Resumen en castellano

El 2016 estuvo marcado por dos eventos importantes: la ratificación extremadamente rápida del Acuerdo de París por cientos de gobiernos y la elección de Donald Trump como Presidente de los Estados Unidos, cuya campaña incluyó la promesa de retirarse de cualquier compromiso de reducir las emisiones bajo el Acuerdo de París.

Por lo tanto, 2017 representaba un año crítico para evaluar cómo estos dos eventos influirían en la dinámica general y el apoyo a la acción climática a nivel mundial, y más específicamente en las negociaciones sobre el clima, aún necesarias para completar el "reglamento" ("rulebook") del Acuerdo de París.

Este año pudimos ver que el reconocimiento de la necesidad de garantizar una Transición Justa para los trabajadores en el Acuerdo de París llevó a una mayor visibilidad del concepto de Transición Justa, aunque a veces de forma desconectada de las necesidades de los trabajadores / comunidades.

Existía la necesidad de que el movimiento sindical internacional fortaleciera su estrategia de visibilización de su apoyo a la acción climática como así también de consolidar la conexión del concepto de Transición Justa, acuñado por los sindicatos, con los trabajadores y las comunidades en el contexto de acción climática.

Además, la decisión de la CMNUCC de celebrar la COP24 en Katowice, Polonia, la ciudad capital de la región históricamente productora de carbón de Alta Silesia, coloca al movimiento sindical en una situación delicada y crítica, donde se necesita una estrategia bien elaborada para garantizar que los mensajes sindicales en apoyo de la acción climática y la Transición Justa para los trabajadores sea bien escuchada.

La COP23 proporcionó pocos avances en los aspectos específicos del “rulebook” que se suponía iba a desarrollar. Lo que es más interesante, esta COP fue testigo de un cambio en el foco de atención, que pasó de las negociaciones al espacio “exterior”, con anuncios sobre la eliminación del carbón o los compromisos climáticos de las ciudades, que obtuvieron mucha más cobertura. Los sindicatos tendrán que seguir este desarrollo cuidadosamente, ya que existe el riesgo de que los gobiernos obtengan resultados pobres sin pagar ningún costo político por ellos, ya que podrían ser “protegidos” por una narrativa mediática favorable para ellos.

La próxima COP (COP24, en Katowice, Polonia) debe acordar aspectos críticos de la arquitectura del Acuerdo de París, así como impulsar la revisión al alza de las contribuciones nacionales. Además, puede convertirse en el espacio donde podría lanzarse un Programa de Trabajo sobre Transición Justa, para que exista un compromiso claro de los gobiernos con todos los afectados por las políticas climáticas, basados en el Acuerdo de París y enraizados en el proceso de la CMNUCC.

1. Background to COP23, trade union priorities and trade union participation (including gender and geographical distribution)

The 23rd Session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP23) was considered a “technical” COP, where many key elements of the Paris Agreement which were left open in COP21 were supposed to progress, so that the so-called “Rulebook” is ready by COP24. That said, the conference was confronted with political pressures to deliver on issues which were not featuring prominently in the agenda, such as the ambition before 2020, the role of the Adaptation Fund under the Paris Agreement and more broadly financial commitments after 2020.

Trade union priorities

The background document for Paris, with our three topline priorities outlined is available here:

COP 23 ITUC Frontlines Briefing Climate Justice: COP23 Special Edition

English: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-frontlines-briefing-climate-19266>

Español: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/informe-nuevos-frentes-de-la-csi-19267?lang=es>

Français: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/dossier-nouveaux-fronts-de-la-csi-19268?lang=fr>

Deutsche: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/igb-frontlines-briefing?lang=de>

A briefer advocacy document for negotiators was released:

<https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/briefornegotiators.pdf>

The priorities stated above were promoted through active lobbying in the negotiations, campaigning with other civil society organisations, through a stand outlining our demands, among other actions.

Trade union participation (including gender and geographical distribution)

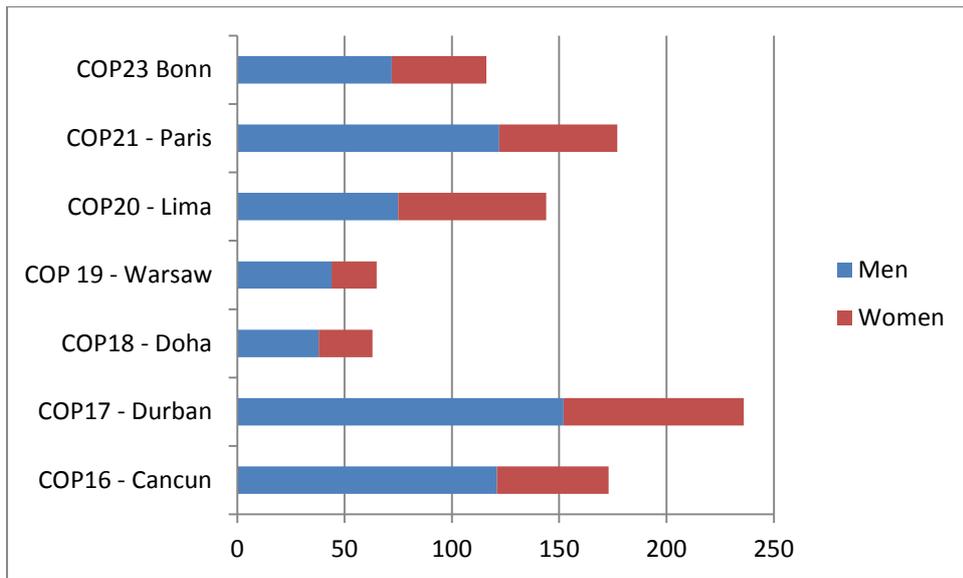
Following the quota system put in place by the UNFCCC Secretariat, the ITUC was provided with 82 badges for the Negotiations space (Bula zone + Bonn zone), and 20 additional ones for the Bonn zone only. This enabled us to register 139 delegates thanks to the split between week one and week two and a good management of arrival and departure dates in the system. In addition, some unions registered under their own status, or through their governmental delegation.

⇒ Trade Union delegation present in activities inside and outside the COP23:

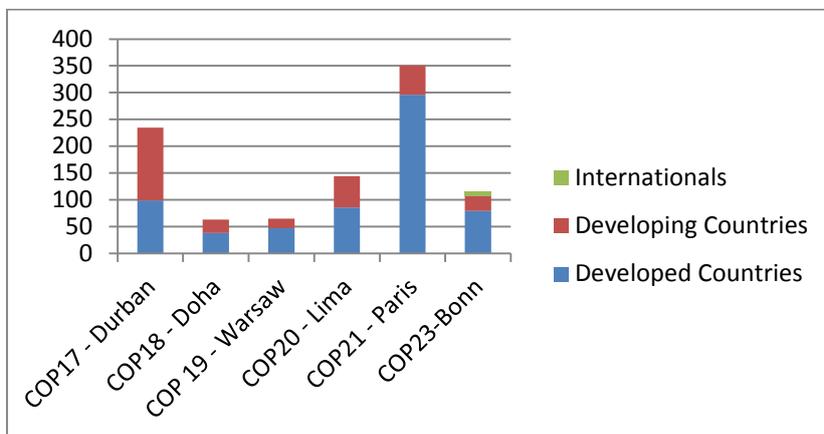
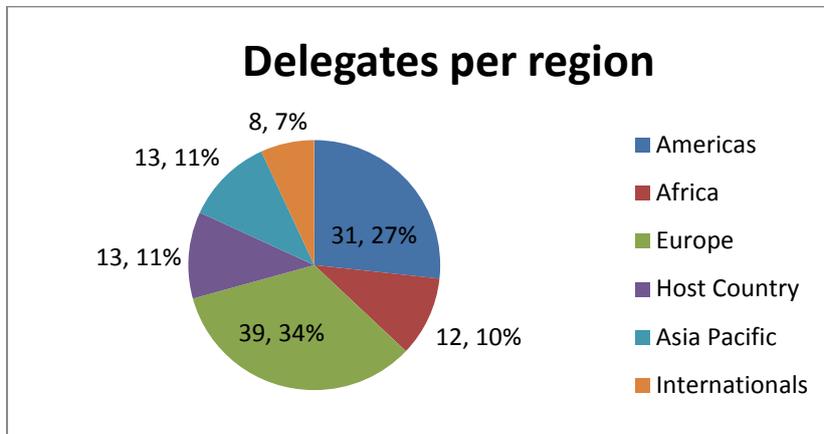
https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/cop23_tradeuniondelegation_finallist.pdf

From this list, it is possible to identify the gender and regional distribution of the trade union delegation. From our calculations, 72 (62%) of the trade union delegates identify as male and 44 (38%) as female. Compared with previous COPs in Europe, this meeting marks a small improvement towards parity. With a record-keeping

on gender balance that has lasted now for at least the past ten COPs, we wanted to share this figure in a (short) historical perspective.



In terms of regional distribution, and due to the limited funding support for developing countries, we didn't count with a very balanced regional distribution. FES funding for around 15 developing country unions was fast outnumbered by the very important delegations from developed countries, with a strong presence of European delegates –normal, as the meeting was taking place in Europe- as well as a (welcomed) rather large delegation from Canada. In order to improve the accuracy of our statistics, a new category, for delegates belonging to international organisations has been created.



2. Trade union activities at COP23

Promoting the trade union position on climate change

Bilateral meetings were organised between the ITUC and many government officials as a result of affiliates' efforts. The following delegations were met (either in the context of bilateral discussions or with an ITUC delegation): Australia, Belgium, Canada, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Japan, Norway, Spain.

UNFCCC Secretariat: ITUC delegates participated in a briefing for civil society organisations called by Patricia Espinoza, the UNFCCC Executive Secretary. Trade unions were also represented in a meeting with the chairs of the APA.

Interventions in formal UNFCCC sessions

Trade unions were invited to address several plenaries during the UNFCCC, as follows:

- APA opening – November 8. Trade union speaker: Rhoda Boateng (ITUC Africa)
- COP Opening – item 10 – November 8. Trade union speaker: Elizabeth Ballermann (NUPGE-CLC Canada)
- SBSTA/SBI Opening – November. Trade Union speaker: Anne Beth Skrede (LO Norway)
- High Level Segment – Thursday 16th November, 9pm

Trade Union speaker: Dan Urai, President, Fiji Trades Union Congress

<https://www.facebook.com/anabella.rosemborg/videos/10214385616171588/>

Daily trade union coordination meetings

The trade union delegation met daily in the UNFCCC premises during the two week period. Members of the trade union climate change network rotated regionally in the chair position. The coordination meetings were attended by trade unionists and close allies, such as the FES and the ILO. These sessions allowed also the trade union delegation to exchange with outside speakers as well, as it was the case with the visit of the Polish Environment Minister, Jan Szyszko, or the presentation on the Carbon Majors tax. On Monday 13th, the delegation repeated the now traditional joint caucus with Women and Gender constituency.

Workers participation and climate protection Study Tour – 8th November 2017

Workers participation and climate protection was the motto of a one-day delegation trip through North Rhine-Westphalia organized by the DGB for trade unionists from Germany and abroad. The participants from North and South America, Africa, Australia and Europe visited three practical examples to get an impression how the concept of codetermination works in Germany and how employees can be involved in climate protection measures. All companies combined efficient production and climate-friendly products with the benefits that co-determination and workers participation can provide. Another focus was the direct contact with local works councils. This led to an intensive and lively exchange. The delegation showed great interest in the role of the works council and German codetermination law. Both companies and union representatives agreed that the early involvement of employees in the development of new and trend-setting corporate strategies was an essential basis for a successful future. Both also highlighted the role of workers as experts who know best about their job and possible saving potential. The three site visits showed that employee participation provides important impulses for climate protection measures.



<http://www.dgb.de/themen/++co++c523995e-cb88-11e7-9a2f-52540088cada>

<http://www.rp-online.de/nrw/staedte/grevenbroich/delegation-der-weltklimakonferenz-im-hydro-werk-aid-1.7195887>

<http://www.dgb.de/themen/++co++5de27942-bd85-11e7-9487-5254008cada>

ITUC/DGB/IG Metall Sharing of Good Practices on Workers' participation and co-determination supporting climate action – 9th November 2017



DGB, ITUC and IG Metall invited trade unionists and works councils from countries around the world to share experiences at the climate conference in Bonn. A lively discussion with about 80 participants about the opportunities and challenges they all faced in including workers in climate action quickly developed at the University Club Bonn where the event took place.

The discussion reflected the different national situations and needs. All parties underlined the importance of meeting the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement. It became clear that there is no blueprint for "the" Just Transition. The change can only take place with and not against the employees.

<http://www.dgb.de/themen/++co++1cecf7ac-d390-11e7-a113-5254008cada>

<https://www.igmetall.de/un-klimakonferenz-in-bonn-26160.htm>

<https://cms.fes.de/de/iez/globale-politik-und-entwicklung/themen/internationale-energie-und-klimapolitik/artikel-in-internationale-energie-und-klimapolitik/ein-globaler-austausch-beispiele-gerechten-strukturwandels-und-was-wir-daraus-lernen-koennen/>

G7 trade unions Side Event introducing the Bologna statement in support of the Paris Agreement – 10th November 2017



Previous to the G7 Conference of Ministers of the Environment in Bologna, G7 trade unions together with ITUC and ETUC issued a joint statement. In it, they urged G7 countries to live up to their responsibility as industrialized nations and ambitiously live up to the Paris Agreement. In a panel discussion at the COP, the DGB invited to discuss the union movement's demands for a just transition and to renew the trade unions' commitment to the Paris climate goals.

The panel consisted of Stefan Körzell, Secretary of State Jochen Flasbarth from the German Ministry of the Environment, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation Sharan Burrow, Brad Markell, Executive Director of the Industrial Union Council from the USA, and Benjamin Denis, political adviser for climate and energy at the European Trade Union Confederation.

In a lively discussion all panelists agreed that climate protection presents a great opportunity for clean energy and good jobs if managed wisely. To avoid social hardship and structural breaks it is imperative to make long-term plans for the affected regions. The people affected by the structural change must not be left behind, as this leads to popular unrest and unwelcome political choices.

A just transition offers opportunities for developed countries as well as nations from the global South. This requires a strong industry that delivers important products for sustainable development. "Seeds for fair structural development must be sown today so we can reap the rewards of our work in a few years," Frederik Moch concluded the event.

<http://www.dgb.de/presse/++co++0401fcbe-c5f4-11e7-8798-52540088cada>
<http://www.dgb.de/themen/++co++7cc1d3e0-c5f9-11e7-81fb-52540088cada>

TUED roundtable/strategy session – 10th November

On November 10th, during COP23, Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED) convened a “Strategy Roundtable” in Bonn, Germany. The meeting was attended by more than 40 representatives of roughly 25 unions from 14 countries as well as several allies from the environmental movement, media and research bodies.

Union participants came from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Dominican Republic, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, UK and USA. The meeting was organized with support from the New York office of Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS–New York). Participants were welcomed by Stefanie Ehmsen of RLS-NYC, and TUED Coordinator Sean Sweeney of the Joseph S. Murphy Institute, City University of New York.

The meeting provided a rare opportunity for unions that are not yet part of the network to be exposed to TUED’s analysis and to participate in a lively debate about the struggle for the future of global energy systems. Copies of TUED’s most recent working paper, [“Preparing a Public Pathway: Confronting the Investment Crisis in Renewable Energy.”](#) were circulated.

Setting the context for the meeting, Sweeney provided a brief overview of the 5-year history of the 60-union network, and the political origins of the “Resist, Reclaim, Restructure” framework. There was broad consensus among participants that the current, market-driven approach, focused on “mobilizing the private sector,” is failing to produce a just energy transition and that, given the Paris targets, there is an urgent need to pursue public alternatives that advance social ownership and democratic control of the power sector and the broader energy economy, including energy options, management, and research and development.

Participants also provided updates on recent developments in their regions, including reports on: the Philippines and the challenges facing trade unions under Duterte’s government; the September meeting in Buenos Aires on “The Energy Grid and the Commons”; the UK Trades Union Congress resolution to support public ownership of energy; developments and next steps to follow the June 2017 meeting in Geneva of TUED unions in Europe; why “Public Renewable Power” is gaining support among unions in Australia; latest developments in Canada, particularly Alberta and Quebec; and the recent sharp debate around the AFL-CIO resolution on climate change in the US. Participants also heard about ITF’s campaigning work on public transportation.

Identifying points of agreement and shared analysis, representatives of Friends of the Earth International (FOE-I) and Friends of the Earth Europe (FOE-E) also participated in the discussion.



Trade union strategy meeting – 11th November

The strategy meeting had three key objectives: share an assessment of the climate negotiations and progress made by the trade union movement to date, discuss the prospects for the COP24 in Katowice, Poland and gather reactions on a joint advocacy strategy towards that meeting, and evaluate the past four years of ITUC work on climate change and identify highlights, gaps and potential areas of future work.

The meeting addressed each one of these areas and incorporated also a segment where trade unions present could update the full group on recent policies and actions by trade unions on climate change.

The meeting started with a briefing from the ITUC secretariat on different aspects of international climate governance, and progress that trade unions have made on its different priorities, notably Just Transition, which features in the Paris Agreement. A presentation was also made on how those priorities connect to COP23 and potential outcomes on different streams. As the meeting was held in between the two weeks of COP23, some attention was also given to events that were planned as part of the second week of the COP.

The second session was dedicated to discussing the prospects for the COP24 in Katowice, Poland and gather reactions on a joint advocacy strategy. Reactions from the floor were numerous, and different proposals were analysed, including some connected to the formal process of negotiations (such as the idea of a Katowice work programme on Just Transition coming out of the COP24), and others targeting mobilisation outside the negotiations (such as the idea of a global trade union day of mobilisation on climate). Groups informally discussed these ideas and reported back to the plenary on their discussions.

Important elements that came from that session include the need for building unity with the Polish trade unions, broaden the discussion from energy to other sectors in our engagement with them, strengthen our dialogue with allies to prevent misalignment of strategies and messaging, ensure a positive narrative around Just Transition, based as much as possible on real experiences, among others.

The third session was aimed at evaluating the past four years of ITUC work on climate change. It was also designed to enable a space for trade unionists active in the climate space to provide feedback on highlights and gaps of our collective climate work and potential areas of future work. Several positive changes were highlighted including the inclusion of Just Transition in the Paris Agreement, and the inclusion of the concept as a standing item in the UNFCCC negotiations, the agreement of the ILO Guidelines on Just Transition, the good quality of materials to support trade union work on this issue, the “unity” of the movement around climate change, the strength of the alliances developed with many across civil society, among others. Some of the challenges mentioned included the need for bringing trade union leadership on board on a more substantial manner, the inherent difficulty of building social dialogue institutions on climate change when the balance of power make them difficult for unions to succeed in their demands, the need to bring Just Transition as a concept to the wider public and also translate it to different sectors, the importance of developing further the connections to fiscal and industrial policy as well as to the digitalisation discussion, just to mention a few. Unions also highlighted the importance of maintaining and expanding capacity building efforts, make additional work to strengthening trade union mobilisation on climate change, including at the membership level, maintain pressure for the development of an ILO instrument on Just Transition, develop a gender/feminist perspective on Just Transition and better define issues related to energy ownership as part of our climate platform.

The meeting also incorporated a segment where trade unions updated the full group on recent policies and actions by trade unions on climate change.

Just Transition event hosted by ITUC & FoEI – 12th November

The ITUC and Friends of the Earth International held a joint event to discuss the need for a just transition. It was based on the shared understanding that there is a strong connection between the demand for climate justice and one for a just transition that protects the rights and livelihoods of workers and their communities. Representatives from the trade union and environmental movements from around the world spoke about their shared vision for tackling the climate crisis and ensuring an economic transition that is fair for affected workers and their communities. They presented their concrete experiences in working with each other and advancing climate and workers’ justice together.

International speakers at the event included movement representatives from Nigeria, Australia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Latin America as well as Europe.

Speaking at the event on the need for urgent action, **Alison Tate, Director of Economic and Social Policy at ITUC** commented: *"We are in a race against time to stabilise the climate. The impacts on peoples' lives, livelihoods and prosperity if we fail to act now will be calamitous. We share a demand with Friends of the Earth for a Just Transition. We can lose the battle on climate change with horrendous consequences for all working people and their communities or we can act now to secure a stable climate with decent work for all, prosperity, and development."*

Karin Nansen, chairperson of Friends of the Earth International, said *"For us as Friends of the Earth International, an 'unjust' transition – one that leaves workers behind, abandons communities to post-industrial decline, and deepens inequality – is not acceptable. Likewise, a shift to 'green jobs' that are precarious, badly-paid and few, is not acceptable. The transformation must be people-centred and democratic, and must build on the hard-fought rights of workers and communities. This means that carbon dependent communities and workers must not be forced to bear the costs of change. It is not just a matter of changing the technology; it must address the systemic failures of the current energy system."*

Speakers at the event highlighted the importance of building workers' power. FoEI and the ITUC work together to strengthen the movement of workers and communities affected by climate change. Workers, their communities and other frontline communities are unifying to demand a transition that is fast enough, deep enough and fair enough to deliver climate justice.

Jagoda Munic, director of Friends of the Earth Europe, talked about the importance of the cooperation between environmental groups and trade unions: *"A cooperation between environmental groups and trade unions. Is it easy? No. Is it possible? Yes. Is it necessary and urgent? Absolutely. We see already successful examples happening in Europe like in Scotland and the Netherlands."*

Just Transition – It's Happening. A showcase reception for exchange of good practice – Organised by Just Transition Centre - Monday 13th November

The purpose of the event was to inspire action on just transition within unions and allies by offering examples of just transition work elsewhere. To that end, moderated by ITUC's general secretary, speakers from unions and labour organisations in Canada (national, Alberta, Quebec), Oslo and Australia (national) spoke of their experiences with just transition processes, offering concrete examples to the mainly union represented audience of over 60. A speaker from the B Team told of the work they are doing with the Just Transition Centre on business guidance for just transition, and the director of the Just Transition Centre talked about what the Centre does to support labour to engage in social dialogue with business and government in pursuit of a just transition.

As this was an experience-sharing event, there are no formal conclusions, however JTC staff were approached by several participants interested in knowing more of the Centre's work after the event, with some specifically asking for follow-up meetings to explore potential collaboration with the Centre on just transition work. Some participants have since made contact with some of the speakers to learn more of the just transition processes featured at the event. Videos of some of the 'stories' will be recorded and made available to all via the JTC website in 2018.

Link to invitation: <https://justtransitionitshappening.splashthat.com/>

Link to [photos](#)

Business Briefing on just transition guidance - Organised by Just Transition Centre - Wednesday 15th November

The purpose of this event was to increase awareness of the why and how just transition works and to promote the business guidance and the work B Team/JTC are doing. The target audience was businesses and union organisations.

The event discussed business' role in the just transition, examining the actions of leading businesses and demonstrate practical steps businesses can take to get started. Speakers included the director of JTC Samantha Smith, Sharan Burrow, Mary Robinson and other B Team members.

The ILO definition of just transition was communicated to the audience of businesses and business NGOs. We set ourselves out from other organisations working in this space, in that we work directly with business, collaborate with unions, and utilise the ILO and Paris Agreement negotiated definition for just transition. Our work is critical to ensuring that 'just transition' doesn't become a 'buzzword' for any social measures linked to

climate action, but represents a strong, clearly defined process that both workers and employers respect and are committed to fulfilling.

Potentially two new companies were motivated to consider how they would make a just transition. This would be done in collaboration with JTC.

Invitation:

<https://businessbriefingjusttransition.splashthat.com/?gz=dd16e2683735b41a3ab441ebea6cdb72&pp=1>
[Link](#) to follow-up mail to participants with photos.

Open meeting "A Just Transition for the coal mining and power sector" – Organised by Just Transition Centre - Tuesday 14 of November

This was an open meeting for all trade union representatives and other interested participants at COP23 on different approaches by trade unions to deal with climate change and the challenges to phase out coal.

The objective was to show good practice in just transition processes from Canada and Australia in order to inspire other unions and to move toward trade unions developing a coherent strategy on coal mining and coal fired power production. This is particularly important in the run up to next year's climate conference COP24 in Katowice, where the phase out of coal will be a major issue. JTC will work together with involved and interested unions to show concrete examples of Just Transition policies in coal regions.

The speakers were from ITUC, JTC, ACTU and CLC.

Link to [photos](#)

ITUC/Greenpeace International Side event: A Just Transition to a 1.5°C World – 15th November



The ITUC coorganised with Greenpeace International a side event in the UNFCCC, aimed at exchanging experiences of shared work, as well as lessons learned from trade union-Greenpeace cooperation. Trade unions introduced experiences from Canada, Spain and Brazil, as well as reflections from the African region and Fiji. Greenpeace representatives brought insights from the Philippines, China and Poland. The debate was chaired by Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary and Jennifer Morgan, GP International Executive Director, with support from Daniel Mittler, Head of GP Political and Business Unit. The side event was very interactive, with many reactions and feedback coming from the public, which at the highest attendance moment reached more than 150 delegates. The exchanges shown that despite the general perception that there is a real willingness from both sides to strengthen cooperation on the ground and ensure social justice and just transition come stronger in environmental campaigning.

Working together for Green Jobs Tripartite Cooperation for a low-carbon Economy – LO Norway & partners side event, 15th November

LO Norway co-hosted the official Norwegian side-event "Working together for Green Jobs – Tripartite Cooperation for a low-carbon Economy", where it was also launched the "Working Life's Climate Week" which is a workplace-based climate campaign. More information on this campaign can be found here (in Norwegian) www.arbeidslivetsklimauke.no and on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/144200479546084/> Working Life's Climate Week will be kicked-off with a breakfast-event the 15th January 2018, with participation of Norwegian trade union leaders.



Other trade union events

- ETUC side event - 8th November 2017
- RENGO Japan event on Just Transition – 10th November
- JTC/CLC event on Just Transition

Media Releases/Blogs

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

<https://www.ituc-csi.org/trade-union-demands-for-cop-23>

<https://www.ituc-csi.org/cop-23-paris-agreement-goals-still?lang=en>

Education International (EI) Global Union

<https://www.ei-ie.org/en/detail/15530/cop23-promoting-climate-change-education-for-a-fair-economic-transition>

<https://www.ei-ie.org/en/detail/15549/un-climate-conference-produces-an-underwhelming-outcome>

International Transport workers' Federation (ITF) Global Union

<https://storify.com/ITFglobalunion/ourpublictransport-at-cop23>

Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA)

<http://csa-csi.org/NormalMultitem.asp?pageid=12196>

CTA A Argentina

<http://www.agenciacta.org/spip.php?article25535>

CTA T Argentina:

<http://www.cta.org.ar/la-cta-presente-en-la-cop-23.html>

ACV-CSC Belgium: (Bert de Wel):

<http://community.dewereldmorgen.be/bert-de-wel>

CUT Brazil

<https://cut.org.br/noticias/25-mil-marcham-pelo-clima-em-alemanha-b6da/>

<https://cut.org.br/noticias/com-cut-presente-cop-23-da-destaque-para-transicao-justa-mas-avanco-das-negociac-04cd/>

FO France

<https://www.force-ouvriere.fr/bonn-vers-un-copier-coller-de-la-cop22?lang=fr>

<https://www.force-ouvriere.fr/climat-en-direct-avec-fo-a-la-cop23?lang=fr>

CGIL Italy

<http://www.cgil.it/conferenza-delle-parti-della-convenzione-sul-cambiamento-climatico-dellonu-cop23-fiji-bonn-6-17-novembre-2017/>

<http://www.cgil.it/cop23-report-della-cgil/>

<http://www.greenreport.it/news/clima/cop23-la-lotta-al-cambiamento-climatico-vista-dal-mondo-del-lavoro/>

CCOO Spain

<http://www.ccoo.es/noticia:252815-->

[CCOO participa en la Conferencia del Clima COP 23 dentro de la delegacion de la Confederacion Sindical Internacional CSI](#)

<http://www.ccoo.es/noticia:253234-->

[Los sindicatos participan activamente en la Conferencia del Clima de Bonn](#)

<http://www.ccoo.es/noticia:253612--Limitados progresos en la cumbre del clima de Bonn>

UGT Spain

<http://www.ugt.es/SitePages/NoticiaDetalle.aspx?idElemento=3350>

<http://www.ugt.es/SitePages/NoticiaDetalle.aspx?idElemento=3319>

<http://www.ugt.es/SitePages/NoticiaDetalle.aspx?idElemento=3344>

Greener Jobs Alliance:

http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/?page_id=29

Photos

The ITUC uploaded a certain number of photos to its Flickr album:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ituc/sets/72157690094307894>

3. Status of trade union demands in the negotiations

Three major demands were made by the international labour movement to the Bonn COP23.

1. To raise ambition and realize the job potential of climate action

Trade unions called on COP23 to deliver concrete emission reduction initiatives before 2020 and a strong processes for upward reviews of national commitments, through the development of sound, democratic modalities for the agreed “facilitative dialogue” (now called Talanoa Dialogue) in 2018 which is to lay the ground for the five-year review cycles (“Stock-take”).

The Fiji Presidency put a lot of its political capital in obtaining some decisions on the pre-2020 ambition setting, notably calling for a more rapid ratification of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol (the second commitment period of emission reductions for Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol). A decision was also taken to assess the ambition of pre-2020 measures in 2018, with a decision on what to do if they were proven to be insufficient either in 2018 or in 2019.

On the facilitative dialogue, re-named Talanoa Dialogue, decisions were made so that it's organised as a process which will last all next year, with at least two phases: one with a more technical character, with inputs from different bodies and organizations, taking place during the SBs in May 2018, and a second phase, more political, taking place during COP24 in Katowice, Poland. Of concern remains the lack of agreement on the status of the outcome from the Dialogue. At this stage, a Presidency/Chair's summary seems to be the option. Something terribly inadequate as it would not lead to any decision on the need to raise ambition before Parties present their NDC by 2020.

Follow up: The mobilisation for an upward review of national contributions, in particular but not exclusively in the developed world - where we know that much more should be done-, is needed, so that we can see sustainable investments picking up and employment creation boosted. The Talanoa dialogue should be the occasion for bringing the ITUC-supported cross-constituency work on the Equity review, so that Parties are confronted to the ambition gap between their pledges and the 1.5°C-2°C goal.

2. To deliver on climate finance and support the most vulnerable

Trade unions asked for COP23 to deliver certainty on how climate finance commitments will be achieved so that there are sufficient resources for supporting communities' resilience to the impacts of climate change and supporting efforts to reduce emissions and build a just transition to a zero-carbon economy.

COP23 only dealt marginally with financing issues. If some important decisions were made in terms of governance (such as the decision to attach the (almost empty) Adaptation Fund to the Paris Agreement), discussions on how the 100bn USD commitment will be fulfilled by 2020, or what will happen after the entry into force of the Paris Agreement are simply not happening. Some expectations existed that these issues might be dealt with off-process, in the One Planet Summit hosted by French President Macron in December. This seems quite unlikely.

Follow up: Further engagement is needed in the Green Climate Fund to ensure funds are mobilised and projects and programmes chosen are in line with trade union priorities.

3. To commit to securing a just transition for workers and their communities

The Paris Agreement took a first step in securing the commitment to a *just transition* for workers. Trade unions asked COP23 to consolidate it through a call to parties to incorporate *Just Transition* elements to their NDCs, their long term decarbonisation strategies and recommend future work on this issue under the joint work of the technical bodies of the Convention, the SBI and the SBSTA.

COP23 was not expected to deliver the guidelines for the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) but to rather facilitate a discussion on different approaches to them. At this stage the most contentious divide is between Parties (generally speaking from the developed world) who would like to limit the content of the NDC to emission reduction commitments and those who see NDC as a broader piece, including also adaptation and finance. In this context, our call for incorporating preambular language in the NDC remains pertinent and some governments mentioned it in the discussion. Potential to cooperate with the Interconstituency on rights –the group representing organisations from women, indigenous peoples, farmers, youth, human rights activists etc with

whom we work in the run up for COP21-, which is also advocating for other aspects of the preamble being brought to the NDC should be fully exploited.

On the joint SBI/SBSTA work on response measures, the two streams of work developed during the COP remained mainly procedural. One, on the work programme on response measures before 2020, where Just Transition is one of the themes, the Secretariat will receive submissions on the scope of the reviews of work programme until 2020. The second one, which relates to the work programme and forum under the Paris Agreement (after 2020) and following a workshop to which trade unions had no access, agreed to give the Chair the mandate to develop draft conclusions for adoption by 2020. This draft should come to the negotiations' floor in May. In these two streams there is broad consensus among governments that Just Transition is a critical issue to be discussed there. That said, the facilitator of the process have shown in his Facilitators' notes less of an interest on continuing with JT as an issue after 2020, and while some might agree to have Just Transition as a topic before 2020, they might also consider that all debates were explored so that it is not necessary to keep on discussing it under the Paris Agreement.

Follow up: The Paris Agreement gives us a real hook to ensuring national climate policies incorporate just transition measures, and along with the ILO Just Transition guidelines we have a package for fighting for those policies at the national level. In addition, when it comes to the international process, and with the COP moving to Poland, trade unions started promoting the idea of a Katowice work programme on Just Transition, which would visibilise and give continuity to the scattered discussion around Just Transition happening now. This should be further promoted during 2018.

In addition to the three priorities, other two decisions could be highlighted, including the adoption of a Gender Action Plan, which incorporates the need for a Just Transition in its preamble, as well as the creation of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities platform.

4. Follow up and planning for next year

2017 will be a critical year for consolidating trade union actions and ambitions on climate change. The ITUC Congress, which will coincide for a week with COP24, will set the priorities for the next four years. After a successful mobilisation for the past decade, it is time to confirm the willingness of trade unions to translate international policies into national ambition. The time of hard choices is coming and we have to show we are indeed standing on the right side of history.

Priorities for 2018 will be elaborated soon, and will certainly be based on current lines of work, namely:

- Further promotion of the "Unions4Climate" campaign to raise the profile of trade union leadership and unions' commitment to the fight against climate change at national, regional and international levels.
- Follow up to ILO work on promoting the ILO Guidelines on Just Transition and support unions in countries selected for a Pilot implementation phase, and mobilisation around the ILO World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO) report, which will focus on climate and environment, and will be released in the context of the International Labour Conference (ILC), 28 May – 8 June 2018.
- Coordinate and organise, in cooperation with the ETUC and Polish trade unions, the international trade union movement participation to COP24 in Katowice, Poland, 3-14 December 2018, including the promotion of a Katowice Work Programme on Just Transition
- Provide follow up to the first Organising for Climate Justice curriculum.

- Prepare the ground for climate change discussions in the upcoming ITUC Congress in Copenhagen, 2-7 December 2018

Key 2018 meetings (Climate & Sustainable Development)

World Social Forum 13-17 March, Salvador de Bahia, Brazil

UNFCCC negotiations - Bonn Subsidiary Bodies: 30 April – 10 May – Bonn, Germany

ILO International Labour Conference (ILC): 28 May – 8 June 2018 – Geneva, Switzerland.

UNFCCC negotiations – Extra session of the ADP: tbc, but likely in September/October

Global Climate Action Summit: 12-14 September 2018, San Francisco, United States

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 9-18 July 2018, New York, United States

4th ITUC Congress, 2-7 December 2018, Copenhagen, Denmark

UNFCCC COP24: 3 - 14 December 2018, Katowice Poland