



ASIA-PACIFIC TUDCN MEETING

25-26 JANUARY 2018 – DUSIT PRINCESS SRINAKARIN HOTEL,
53 SRINAKARIN ROAD, BANGKOK, THAILAND

MEETING REPORT

The meeting documents are available online: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/AP-TUDCN-Regional-Meeting-January-2018>

Representatives of eleven ITUC affiliates gathered at the regional meeting of the Asia-Pacific Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (APTUDCN), along with the network's regional and global secretariats. The two-day meeting took place in Bangkok on 25-26 January 2018 and was attended by Shoya Yoshida, Secretary General of ITUC AP and Kate Lappin, Asia-Pacific Secretary of PSI. The meeting also counted with the participation of Arun Kumar and Pong-Sul Ahn (ILO/ACTRAV), Riccardo Mesiano (UN ESCAP) and Nicholas Booth (UNDP).

THURSDAY 25 JANUARY 2018

The meeting opened with welcome remarks by ITUC AP Secretary General Shoya Yoshida. He noted that development should primarily reduce inequalities, and that sustainable development can only be achieved with decent work for all. He reaffirmed that SDGs are at the core of trade union work.

MORNING SESSION: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: WHAT HAPPENED AND NEXT STEPS (I)

Following the participants' introduction, a recap of the previous APTUDCN meeting was presented by Haridasan. This was followed by a presentation on the TUDCN Strategy on 2030 Agenda, by Paola Simonetti, TUDCN Coordinator. The participants shared their experiences at national level, and their thoughts on how to increase trade union involvement on 2020 Agenda. It was noted the different levels in which trade unions are involved, as well as the general lack of preparedness of national governments to offer truly multi-stakeholder dialogue on SDGs, not to say dialogue with social partners on SDGs. Participants brainstormed on best ways to engage in dialogue with governments and civil society, as well as with regional and sub-regional organisations.

AFTERNOON SESSION: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: WHAT HAPPENED AND NEXT STEPS (II)

Arun Kumar (ILO/ACTRAV Bangkok) gave a presentation on the relevance of the 2030 Agenda for workers, and the involvement of the ILO/ACTRAV in the monitoring and follow-up process. Kumar highlighted that the SDGs cover many trade union priorities, and that international labor standards are central in the realisation of SDGs. Over 30 indicators related to the Decent Work Agenda spread over 10 goals, and the ILO is custodian agency for 14 of them. He linked the SDGs to ILO discussions on the future of work, and warned about trade, investment, industrial and labour policies not being aligned with SDGs. He advocated for a active role of trade unions in the SDGs, to ensure decent work priorities are championed by governments. ILO/ACTRAV envisages strengthening the capacity of workers' organizations towards four SDG targets (8.5, 8.8, 16.7 and 16.10) in

2018-19, and further collaboration with TUDCN towards the 2019 monitoring round is desired, as well as a pilot “Trade Union Platform on SDGs” in Indonesia.

Participants brainstormed around the SDGs being object of the 2018 monitoring round, namely goals 6 (water and sanitation), 7 (sustainable energy), 11 (resilient cities), 12 (sustainable consumption and production) and 15 (sustainable biodiversity). Emphasis was given on company level bargaining and government level lobbying, government provision of critical infrastructure, promotion of sanitation in the workplace, targeting agriculture and GMO crops as controversial, national discussion on distribution of water between industry and agriculture, higher taxes on fossil fuels, bargaining for more sustainable energy use, get workers paid higher wages, push for better provision of housing and improvement of transport systems.

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2018

MORNING SESSION: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: FOCUS ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Riccardo Mesiano, Coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), presented the roadmap towards this meeting, which will take place in Bangkok on 28-30 March 2018. Mesiano outlined the form and function of the Forum, as well as the spaces available for stakeholders to interact with governments and international organisations. The theme of this year’s review will allow stakeholders to explore some of the important trends that will impact sustainable development in Asia-Pacific, what risks do these trends create for food, financial, social and other important human systems in the region, who is most in danger of being “left behind” because of these risks, and what “resilience capacities” are needed, and what is being done to build these capacities. Mesiano also offered a timeline for the voluntary national reviews in the region, and the preparatory and side events around the Forum, as well as the entry points for trade unions to engage in the process.

Kate Lappin, new Asia-Pacific Secretary at Public Services International, gave a presentation about the Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (RCEM), of which she is Co-Chair. Lappin described the structure of the RCEM, which includes a workers and trade unions constituency, as well as sub-regional groups and thematic working groups. She outlined the different engagement windows of RCEM with ESCAP in the context of SDGs, including voluntary national reviews, regional submissions to the HLPF, regional cooperation on tax, public goods and accountability. Lappin criticised ESCAP’s approach to partnerships, which favours the private sector and diminishes tripartism. This is cementing public-private partnerships (PPPs) as UN policy as a whole, an approach that excludes civil society and trade unions from implementation.

Julius Cainglet from FFW Philippines and trade union focal point at AP-RCEM, presented the linkage between the Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum on Sustainable Development (CSO Forum) and the APFSD and beyond. Julius focused on the trade union involvement in the CSO Forum preparations and the different spaces for interaction at the Forum itself and at the APFSD. He provided specific recommendations on how to increase the participation and impact of trade unions at the CSO Forum, the APFSD and other activities of UN ESCAP.

A discussion followed with contributions from Nicholas Booth (UNDP) and Pong-Sul Ahn (ILO/ACTRAV) and all participants. This was followed by a presentation of the 2018 trade union national template on SDGs, by Joan Lanfranco (TUDCN). This is the result of several consultations and joint work between TUDCN global and

regional meetings, and provides a single tool to present the trade union take on SDG implementation at national level, which is to be used at regional and global forums on sustainable development. In Asia-Pacific, Australia, Vietnam, Singapore, Lao PRD, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Kiribati will undergo a Voluntary National Review of the SDGs in 2018. However, all APTUDCN members are encouraged to complete the 2018 trade union SDG national template.

AFTERNOON SESSION: BUSINESS ACCOUNTABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND NEXT INITIATIVES

Joan Lanfranco (TUDCN) offered an overview of TUDCN's work on private sector accountability, with a focus on past, current and future evidence-based and advocacy-oriented research. Lanfranco unpacked concepts such as blended finance and PPPs, and described the different development policy arenas where private sector is being championed, and how TUDCN advocates for the inclusion and consultation of trade unions, as well for donors to have specific criteria for private sector engagement and to mainstream decent work and social dialogue. The plans for evidence-based research in the form of case studies was presented, and participants were asked to come up with research proposals for an upcoming publication that should back TUDCN's advocacy asks in this policy area.

This was followed by the presentation of the APTUDCN work plan for 2018, with 2030 Agenda, evidence-based research on private sector accountability and trade union partnerships as main priorities. The following action points were agreed upon:

2030 Agenda:

- Participate in the trade union monitoring exercise, with reports being done by 20 February 2018, in order to be presented and disseminated at the AP CSO Forum and APFSD (25-30 March 2018) and HLPF (9-18 July 2018);
- Increase trade union participation in UN ESCAP RCEM.

Evidence-based research:

- APTUDCN members encouraged to send proposals to the TUDCN secretariat to produce case studies in the work stream on private sector accountability, with a focus on blended finance.

Trade union partnerships:

- Regional seminar on organisational capacity with TUSOs and national organisations in AP to be organised in Bangkok in June 2018.

Other activities of interest for APTUDCN:

- 4th Trade Union and OECD-DAC Forum, Paris, 19-20 March 2018
- TUDCN Genera Meeting, Sao Paulo, 9-11 May 2018
- ILO/ILC thematic discussion on development effectiveness, Geneva, 28 May-8 June 2018



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