



# TUDCN ASIA-PACIFIC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

23-24 MAY 2017 – HOTEL AVANI ATRIUM,  
1880 NEW PETCHBURI ROAD, BANGKOK 10310 THAILAND

## MEETING REPORT

The meeting documents are available online: [www.ituc-csi.org/TUDCN-AP-Steering-Committee-May-2017](http://www.ituc-csi.org/TUDCN-AP-Steering-Committee-May-2017)

Representatives of ten ITUC affiliates gathered for the first meeting of the Asia-Pacific Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (APTUDCN) steering committee, along with the network's regional and global secretariats. The two-day meeting took place in Bangkok on the 23-24 May 2017 and was attended by Shoya Yoshida, newly elected Secretary General of ITUC AP. The meeting also counted with the participation of Tite Habiyakare (ILO), Margarita Guerrero (UN ESCAP), Wardarina (Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism - RCEM), Fai Suluck (APWLD).

### TUESDAY 23 MAY 2017

The meeting opened with welcome remarks by Secretary General Shoya Yoshida. He noted the importance of engaging in international fora on sustainable development in order to ensure that the labour movement and development initiatives are mutually reinforcing.

#### MORNING SESSION: WHY ARE WE HERE? WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Following the participants' introduction, an overview of the future challenges of the TUDCN was presented. The different institutional fora for engagement on development issues were outlined. The UN was highlighted, notably via Agenda 2030 processes, as well as the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) and the European Union (EU). The tools developed to ensure that trade unions adopt an effective approach to their development work were also discussed, notably the [Trade Union Development Effectiveness Principles Profile](#) tool (TUDEP). Carol Beaumont (ITUC Global Organising Academy) then gave an overview of the links between capacity building and organising and how they reinforce the coherence of trade union work at national, regional and global level. Haridasan (ITUC-AP) provided a recapitulative of the work of the APTUDCN since its last meeting.

## AFTERNOON SESSION: TAKING STOCK OF TRADE UNION ENGAGEMENT ON THE 2030 AGENDA

### National level

The afternoon session was dedicated to the advocacy work on Agenda 2030 at the national and regional levels. Following an overview of the [Trade Union Strategy on Agenda 2030](#), affiliates shared their experiences at national level. While the priority SDGs set out by many countries coincided with those of trade unions, a majority of participants reported that the national consultation process either excluded them or did not adequately take their input into consideration.

Participants identified other ways of influencing the 2030 Agenda process at national level:

- Request bilateral meetings with the bodies responsible for national implementation;
- Link broader trade union action to demands for SDG implementation;
- Make better use of media and social media tools;
- Strengthen trade union advocacy efforts by coordinating with civil society organisations and platforms. Many participants identified national civil society platforms for this purpose;
- Engaging with international actors present at national level was encouraged, such as the ILO, UNCTAD and EU delegations.

The ensuing discussion highlighted the contrasts that existed between the different national contexts. It also highlighted that trade unions play an important role in challenging the situation reported by governments with the conditions experienced by working people, when these did not match up.

### Regional level

After reviewing the advocacy work at national level, the focus was placed on the regional level approach. The [Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism](#) (AP-RCEM) is a key space for civil society engagement. Wardarina, Co-chair and Women Constituency focal point of the AP-RCEM, began by presenting its aims and modalities. As the platform for civil society engagement on sustainable development issues, which includes a Trade Union and Workers constituency group, it provides a strong channel for promoting the APTUDCN's work at regional level.

Wardarina went on to talk about the civil society experience at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) which took place on the 29-31 March 2017. It was organised by UN ESCAP in preparation of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the review mechanism for Agenda 2030. The APTUDCN participation was coordinated by Julius Cainglet (FFW), who followed by reporting on [the experience of the trade union delegation](#). Following the overall success of this engagement and the relevance of the work of AP-RCEM, participants were encouraged to take up membership members and reinforce their collective participation.

WEDNESDAY 24 MAY 2017

MORNING SESSION: HOW CAN TRADE UNIONS INFLUENCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA?

The session began with a presentation of the ILO's monitoring work by Tite Habiyakare, Labour Statistician at the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The ILO has official custody of fourteen SDG Indicators and is involved in an additional four. With the support of the ILO, governments are integrating these 18 decent work indicators into national level monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Mr Habiyakare provided an overview of ILO trainings and tools. Examples of training for trade unions on the indicators process in Mongolia and the Philippines could be built on. Tools mentioned included the [ILO focus targets](#), the [SDGs Decent Work Portal](#), the [Implementation Plan for Agenda 2030](#) and the [Trade Union Reference Manual on the 2030 Agenda](#).

Margarita Guerrero, Chief of the Statistics Division at UN ESCAP, followed with a presentation on the role of UN ESCAP in SDG monitoring. While it is not a custodian, it does play a role in coordinating the monitoring and evaluation among countries in the region. Their intention is to have a regionally integrated statistical system by 2030. UN ESCAP provides capacity building activities in specific areas, notably including assuring quality and instilling trust, integrated statistic for integrated analysis, building requisite skills set. On the issue of data access, Ms Guerrero made note of the [UN's global SDG Indicator database](#), the [UN ESCAP statistical database](#). The SDG Outlook was also mentioned. It is a joint initiative by UN ESCAP and the Asian Development Bank, which aims to provide an annual SDG report at regional level, the first edition of which will provide baseline data and is scheduled to be published in June 2017. Ms. Guerrero also encouraged APTUDCN to have a presence at the upcoming preparatory workshops on statistical capacity.

In the subsequent discussion it was clarified that, while some regional data would be provided, it would be based on data provided by national governments. Where data is not made available to trade unions, the SDG monitoring process provides an opportunity at international level to advocate for it, including through a push for open data.

#### **Trade union reporting template**

The focus was then placed on the trade union monitoring approach. Participants went through the [Template for National SDG Monitoring by Trade Unions](#). Through the template, national affiliates will compile the data and analysis used for trade union advocacy work. The focus of this work will be the voluntary national reviews (VNRs) which governments present at the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). This is an important space for trade unions to put pressure on governments and raise the profile of their demands. Of the countries represented within the APTUDCN steering committee, India, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines will be presenting their progress at this year's HLPF on 10-19 July 2017.

After having reviewed the template in working groups, participants reported back in plenary. Overall, the structure of the template was deemed clear. Participants provided additional ideas for sourcing data at national level, including through trade union research institutes. Margarita Guerrero (UN ESCAP) provided some additional sources of relevant data. Looking towards this year's HLPF, participants from reporting countries agreed to participate in the monitoring process.

## AFTERNOON SESSION: FUTURE WORK WITHIN THE APTUDCN

The wrap up session was dedicated to planning ahead for the work of the APTUDCN in 2017-2018. The different strands of work identified were the 2030 Agenda, evidence-based research, trade union partnerships and the communications and visibility work of the network. The following action points were agreed upon:

### Agenda 2030:

- Participate in the trade union monitoring exercise (reports from India, Japan, Indonesia, Nepal to be disseminated during the HLPF);
- Link topical campaigns at national level to the SDGs (e.g. minimum wages initiatives);
- Increase active participation in UN ESCAP RCEM engagement modalities.

### Evidence-based research:

- TUDCN secretariat to identify opportunities for case studies in the work stream on the role of the private sector in development.

### Trade union partnerships:

- Seminar on TUDEP with TUSOs and national organisations in AP;
- Regional seminar on organisational capacity in 2018;
- Develop an action plan on organisational capacity, which suggests possible pilot countries.

### Visibility and communications work of the network:

- Build social media capacity;
- Contribute to TUDCN communication tools (newsletter, Equal Times, blogs).



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