

THE CSOs FORUM and the UN-LDCs IV CONFERENCE REPORT

Istanbul 7-13 May 2011

The forum theme was “Towards a world without LDCs” and it is the first time the UN organised a Conference asking for the official presence and contribution of the Civil Society, fact that was welcomed by the CSOs.

The CSO track of the Conference was particularly rich in sessions and different issues raised and analysed. The participation from LDCs was strong, and some CSOs from ‘development partners’ countries were also present. The ITUC delegation was composed of representatives from African LDCs, including ITUC Africa, one from an Asian LDC, two staff from ITUC in Brussels, as well as 2 representatives from DISK Turkey. Most of them were engaged with CSO activities, while some of them dedicated most of their time in engaging with government and coordinating action with other CSOs and the UN-Non-governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS).

The union’s participation helped raising awareness of other CSOs and governments on issues important for labour, including the poor application of Core Labour Standards, the increasing informalisation of work and the unions’ programme on Climate Change and Just Transition. Some of the representatives had the opportunity to raise these issues –and other- as panellists or as participants.

A strong debate was carried out on the implementation of the evaluation of the Brussels Plan of Action adopted 10 years ago. Although some progress has been made, persistent economic and social challenges remain in many of the least developed countries. International aid, on which LDCs are highly dependent, has been insufficient to help them address those challenges and all too frequently the quality of the aid received has been poor. This is an agenda that is doubly important at a time when the budgets of many bilateral donors are being squeezed, and many LDCs are struggling to cope with the aftershocks of the global economic crisis.

This has prompted CSOs to request that the Istanbul Plan of Action provides an alternative agenda that allows the implementation of new policies based on a new development paradigm focused on inclusive development paths leading to building or rebuilding the capacities in LDCs to generate productive employment and improvement of the well-being of all people.

The CSOs have also emphasised on a greater role of the State to guide, coordinate and stimulate economic dynamics towards achieving national development objectives; greater domestic resource mobilization to reduce aid dependence; greater policy coherence between the international financial, trade, technology, commodity and climate change regimes; stronger South-South cooperation and more democratic and universal participation in global governance systems.

The CSOs have finally asked their members to mobilize and advocate both nationally and internationally for their demands to be taken into account in the statements of HLF 4 in Busan 2011

The trade union’s contribution is visible in the final CSO Istanbul declaration (see copy annexed). /.

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