



ASIA-PACIFIC TUDCN MEETING

21-22 JANUARY 2019

AVANI ATRIUM BANGKOK - 1880 NEW PETCHBURI ROAD,
BANGKOK, THAILAND

MEETING REPORT

The meeting presentations are available [here](#).

Representatives of seventeen ITUC affiliates gathered at the regional meeting of the Asia-Pacific Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (AP TUDCN), along with the network's regional and global secretariats. The two-day meeting took place in Bangkok on 21-22 January 2019 and was attended by Shoya Yoshida, Secretary General of ITUC-AP. The meeting also counted with the participation of Pong-Sul Ahn (ILO/ACTRAV), Riccardo Mesiano (UN ESCAP) and Smita L. Nakhoda, Lesley Lahm and Haidy Seang Ear-Dupuy (ADB, online intervention).

DAY 1 – MONDAY 21ST JANUARY 2019

The meeting opened with welcome remarks by ITUC-AP Secretary General Shoya Yoshida and Paola Simonetti, Deputy Director from the ITUC Economic and Social Policy department, both highlighted the importance of the meeting and the issues at stake, as well as, the broad participation (12 countries represented). The opening was followed by participant's introductions.

SESSION I: REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON SDGS IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FROM 2018 UN-ESCAP SDGS FORUM

The participants shared their experiences at national level, and their thoughts on how to increase trade union involvement on Agenda 2030. It was noted the different levels in which trade unions are involved, as well as the challenges and opportunities to engage. In many cases, participants voiced the lack of preparedness of national governments to offer a truly multi-stakeholder dialogue on SDGs, not to say dialogue with social partners on SDGs. During the debate, participants exchange experiences on increasing the participation of trade unions at national level in the review of the SDGs implementation.

Country	Main Highlights
Korea (FKTU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SDGs platform is organized by the government, for 2019 the plan is to have an active participation from trade unions.• In 2018, the trade union report not welcomed by government. Still, FKTU plans to review the report again and submit.• There is increased awareness of SDGs in TU movement.
Japan (RENGO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Japanese government established the SDGs Promotion Headquarter in 2016 headed by the Prime Minister Abe, to ensure a whole-of-government approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda in comprehensive and effective manner and worked on the SDGs

	<p>Implementation Guiding Principle. Trade Unions are participating in this space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JTUC-RENGO mainly did three activities for World Day of Decent Work. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness raising activities. 2. Web-campaign that included two actions, having special campaign page on our official website, regular posts of photos appealing for decent work with placard from locals on Facebook. 3. Production of 1200 “SDGs candy” to hand out at each opportunity. Trademarks of our higher priority goals SDGs 5 “Gender Equality” and 8 “Decent work” were printed in the candies. • Japan is the chair of G20 in 2019. JTUC-RENGO will negotiate with government to uphold SDGs in the statement of G20.
Nepal (NTUC; GEFONT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nepalese Government has been engaged to implement SDGs under the theme of “Happy Nepalese & Prosperous Nepal through implementation of New Socialism oriented constitution of Nepal”. SDGs are addressed in the Government Programmes & Policies as well as annual Budget. • Trade unions continue lobby & pressure on the Government to implement new labour law and contributory social security law, which are related to the transformation of workers’ life for prosperity. • No specific plans on SDG engagement <i>per se</i>, but the issues related to SDGs linking with workers are being combined in other plans, mainly in mobilization for social security scheme for even informal workers in local level.
Indonesia (KSBSI; KSPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Social and Environmental Law and Governance – trade unions actively engaged in the implementation of SDGs 5, 8 and 10. The government institutionalized the dialogue on SDGs by a decree. • Trade union are using ITUC/TUDCN position papers and documents to strengthen its advocacy for trade unions’ positions on the implementation of the SDGs in time of formulation of national action plan of Indonesia SDGs. • Production of a shadow report on VNR in 2017 that aimed to show trade unions positions to government and the general public. • Unions are planning to continue its engagement with the SDGs in Indonesia steering committee and look for opportunities to work in collaboration with CSO to socialize agenda 2030. • Government trying to introduce blended finance mechanisms – projects addressing poverty issues. Also introduced a programme for Debt Swap (an example: http://www.miic.gov.eg/English/Cooperation/Pages/DebtSwap.aspx)

Cambodia (CLC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government is committed to the make progress on the Agenda 2030, but implementation still a challenge. <p>Trade Union key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy with the government on minimum wage; security fund for all workers in Cambodia; • Human Rights day, that also promotes the SDGs • Trade Union committee on SDGs, we discussed an action plan and its implementation; <p>This not without challenges, as there is a law shrinking the participation of trade unions, including in the SDGs.</p>
Fiji (ETUC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government is not carrying SDG consultations, nor with the trade unions, neither with the NGOs. • The only way to be involved is by creating our own spaces for political engagement. • Fiji in the VNRs will present a positive picture, but trade unions we know is not right, we know there are a lot challenges on the ground.
India (HMS; INTUC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In India there is a lack of recognition of trade unions and on social dialogue. Thus, the Government nor Employers do just not consider trade unions as partners, no institutionalization of social dialogue. • Little participation of trade unions in policy dialogue / work. • Trade Union awareness campaigns on SDGs (youth and women committees), especially on SDG 5 and 8: pamphlets and wall posters and even media is involved.
Mongolia (CMTU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mongolian Government’s Program of Action for 2016-2020 of 9 September 2016 sets out an array of measures to be taken in promoting growth in Mongolia which is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. • The CMTU and the Mongolian Employers’ Federation are also committed to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They are also active stakeholders in the revision currently underway of Mongolian Labour Law. The ILO is providing technical assistance to the CMTU to assist it in that endeavor. • CMTU has organized awareness raising workshops among leaders of industrial and provincial union leaders on union involvements with SDG country program for 3 times in 2018. • CMTU has also organized a nationwide wage increase and decent work demonstrations and asking Government to implement its action plan for 2016-2020 which clearly supports SDG in the country. • Mongolia is currently under a bailout programme from the IMF – which is bringing very problematic decisions for workers in Mongolia.
Malaysia (MTUC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth are joining into the world of work and trade unions. • Lots of workers are currently fighting for minimum wage. As well as for an educational financing system, although education us public in Malasya, it is not sustainable.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We thought there will be a change with the new government, but this is not happening yet.
Philippines (FFW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of results, current government very much against UN, but most alarming is the red tagging to trade union leaders (neutralization of trade unions activities). Trade union representatives are being killed in the Philippines (17 people). • Wages – we have raised the issue of discrimination with wages, inequalities within regions on the wages; campaign on minimum wages. Pensions - the current pension system is very fragile. • Indigenous public schools, some of these schools are being tagged as being runned by Communists, which is generating violent reactions towards these schools. • Trade unionist are also being tagged.

SESSION II: UN REFORM PROCESS AND THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS

Pong-Sul Ahn, ILO Regional Specialist in Workers' Education, offered a presentation on the UN reform process, and the structures and mechanism in place to make this reform happen. The transition process has already started and is expected to be completed by 2022. Pong-Sul Ahn's presentation was also an opportunity for participants to better understand where the ILO seats in this process, at both national and regional level.

On the implications of the UN reform for the ILO, Pong-Sul Ahn's presentation summarised as the following:

- ILO's tripartite governance structure, and the specific role of social partners;
- The Normative mandate for standard-setting and supervisory mechanisms;
- The programmatic priorities (Decent Work Country Programmes).

These aspects are still under discussion and negotiation under the relevant mechanisms. Pong-Sul Ahn also stressed ILO's support to the UN reform process.

SESSION III:

- UN AP FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (APFSD) 2019
- REPORT FROM 2018 UN-ESCAP SDGS FORUM

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 24-26 March 2019. 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 is very relevant for trade unions with SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 13 and SDG 16 under review, which will allow to explore key areas around progress on decent work, social protection, just transition and labour rights standards in the Asia-Pacific region. This forum will also offer an opportunity to support the process of the National Voluntary Reviews in the region. During his intervention, Mesiano highlighted the importance of the data that trade unions bring to these discussions.

Mesiano also offered information about the preparatory and side events around the Forum, as well as the entry points for trade unions to engage in the process.

The next presentation from Julius Cainglet, 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 forum. Julius focused on the trade union involvement in the CSO Forum and the different spaces for interaction at the Forum itself and at the APFSD in the past, as well as opportunities for this year. 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.

SESSION IV: PRESENTATION OF THE TRADE UNION SDGS COUNTRY REPORT TEMPLATE

Nerea Craviotto, Advocacy Officer at the ESP/TUDCN department, presented the trade union national template on SDGs. The template 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 in 2019, Fiji, Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu will undergo a Voluntary National Review of the SDGs for the first time. And, Indonesia and the Philippines for the second time. Members of the APTUDCN network from these countries, in particular, are encouraged to complete the Trade Union SDG template. However, all APTUDCN members are to complete a Trade Union SDG country report.

DAY 2 – TUESDAY 22ND JANUARY 2019

SESSION V: THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEVELOPMENT: THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK APPROACH ON BLENDED FINANCE TO FOSTER AGENDA 2030

A team from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Smita Nakhoda and Lesley Lahm, ADB Strategy Department, and Haidy Seang Ear-Dupuy, ADB Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, presented ADB's approach to Blended Finance in the region. During their presentation, the speakers presented ADB's Blended Finance principles and the rationale behind using blended finance, together with some examples in the region.

The speakers also presented how ADB's work in the region aligns with the Agenda 2030 and the implementation of the SDGs. ADB's presentation finalised with detailed information on ADB's safeguard's policy, including ADB's commitments to labour standards.

The presentation was followed by active engagement on different aspects of the presentation from participants.

SESSION VI: CRITERIA FOR PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

In a context where private sector is being encouraged to contribute to funding the [SDGs](#) through blended finance mechanisms, among other. Governments are redirecting growing percentages of public Official Development Assistance (ODA) to support private investments framed as development projects, through mechanisms such as blended finance.

Paola Simonetti presented one of the latest TUDCN publications – [Making Private Sector Investments in Development Programs Align with the SDGs](#) that includes a trade union perspective on criteria for private sector engagement in development.

SESSION VI: DISCUSSION ON HLPF 2019 WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS SUBMISSION

Nerea Craviotto presented the draft Workers and Trade Unions submission to the 2019 High Level Political Forum on the SDGs. The presentation was followed by a round of comments from participants on the submission, which will be integrated in the next version.

SESSION VI: FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Paola Simonetti closed the meeting with highlights from the last two days and key moments for SDGs engagement at regional and global level. As well as stressing the importance of coordinating our work.

Main points for the way forward:

- AP affiliates are requested to deliver the SDGs country reports and ITUC secretariat will be ready to provide support for that
- UN ESCAP Forum on SDGs: we will explore possibilities for a TUs speaker in the official program. At the same time, we will seek coordination with ACTRAV/ILO re additional possible initiatives such as side event.
- At the same time re CSO AP SDGs Forum ITUC AP colleagues will coordinate with Julius to cover speaking slots
- AP affiliates are encouraged to register in order to take part in the TU delegation to both CSO and ESCAP fora on SDGs
- Follow up ADB: we will explore how to follow up with country case studies on the blending facilities/programmes of the ADB
- We will explore the possibility of involving CAPE (AP employers' confederation), related to our work on the SDGs, possibly in the next regional meeting
- We will pursue complementary approach with ACTRAV in particular concerning the country level initiatives on the SDGs



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