

## The future that workers want

União Geral dos Trabalhadores (UGT) gets ready for Rio+20

The Trade Union Conference is among the most awaited events at Rio+20, in which the attendance of nearly 500 unionists, representatives of institutions from the five continents - Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and America - is expected.

PARA UMA SOCIEDADE MAIS SUSTENTÁVEL,  
UGT PREPARA AÇÕES PARA RIO+20.



This conference is being organized by **ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation)**, **TUCA (Trade Union Confederation of the Americas)** and by the three most important Brazilian trade union centrals (**CUT, FS and UGT**). The topic that will be discussed is "Workers searching for Sustainable development". The event will take place at the Windsor Guanabara Hotel, from June 11 to 13.

At the opening, speeches from **Sharan Burrow** (ITUC), **Victor Báez Mosqueira** (TUCA) and **Ricardo Patah**, national president of UGT are expected.

We are convinced that this conference should turn into an occasion to step pressure on world leaderships so that they move into a different path, a path towards an authentically sustainable economic model, and this pressure should be stronger than ever.

We want job positions, green jobs and decent work. We want guarantees concerning the level of social protection to the entire world population, with the proper financing to implement it and reinforce the social protection in the poorest countries. We want the greed of the financial sector to contribute to finance sustainability through a tax on financial transactions.

The last session of negotiations for Rio+20 ended on Saturday, June 02. The priorities of trade unions - general concepts of decent work and social protection (including a level of social protection) have a general support. But we face a fierce opposition to concrete proposals: on one hand, developed countries (some, more than others, such as USA, Canada, Australia and Japan) are opposed, for instances, to an initiative of "social protection to everyone in 2030" or to the adoption of a goal such as "decent work to everyone", guided towards the eradication of poverty, decrease of unemployment, increase of green and decent jobs and guarantee of equality at the workplace.

This situation leads us to ask if some developed countries believe that challenges of unemployment and poverty could be solved without an international cooperation.

On the other hand, G77 (that represents developing countries) is opposed to the need to mention the ecologic transformation of all job positions and the creation of green jobs. How do they think we are going to build a sustainable development if the world does not participate in the change?

## The time and the place of workers

By Mónica da Costa Mata Roma, director of UGT's International Affairs Department

The speech of **Juan Somavia**, director-general of ILO, at the opening session of the **101st International Labour Conference** in Geneva, not only marked the end of a long period of the Chilean ahead of ILO, but also takes place at a moment in which the world is hit by a financial and economic crisis that, according to Somavia, will not be successfully struggled with austerity and tax squeeze policies that have been implanted by countries that were affected the most by the crisis, especially those in Europe.

According to him, the 2008 crisis pointed out the beginning of the end of the globalization model and the ruling growth of the world, and that this crisis represents a historical mark, a turning point, in which ILO has the opportunity to act as a leader and as a leading actor in the processes of change of social and economic paradigms.

The director-general also emphasized the fact that there are countries that have been adopting austerity measures that do not protect their workers, a practice that will lead to an economic stagnation, decrease on employment, reduction of protection and a huge human cost, denying the own values that were praised in Europe.

The economic success of policies to reduce European debts has had a very high social cost, and that will get worse with the deepening of a crisis that will not be solved with tax exemptions and tax settlements, or with an IMF loan, an institution that once again proves to take advantage of the desperate, or these countries that have been presenting themselves as crises solvers, such as Germany, that currently faces a trust crisis regarding its government, and that does not have political conditions of maintaining all the weight of the crisis of the Eurozone countries.

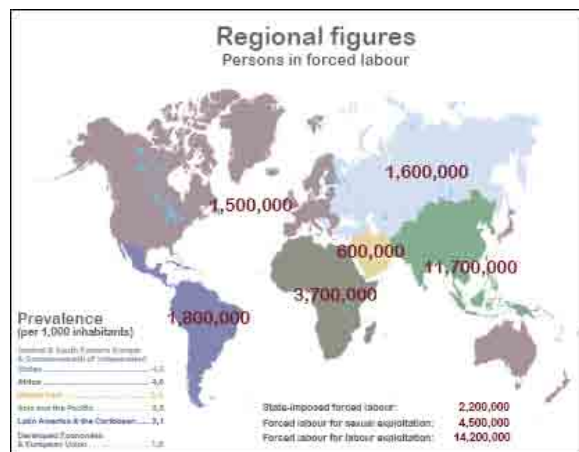
In the evaluation of UGT and its Department of International Affairs, workers are the key to get out of the crisis, and their strength and determination should be the engine to build a new economic and development model, that would prioritize not the construction of a State of social well being, but still, of a fair and solidary world, worker and builder of their own well being.

### 21 million are victims of forced labour worldwide

Nearly 21 million people are victims of forced labour in the world - trapped in jobs that they were imposed by coercion or were tricked into it, and they cannot leave these jobs, says a new study of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Three out of 1000 people are currently forced to work.

Out of a total amount of 20,9 million victims of forced labour, the study also provides estimates for different sectors of economy:

- 18,7 million (90%) are explored in the private economy, by people or companies. Out of which, 4,5 million (22%) are victims of forced sexual exploration and 14,2 million (68%) are victims of slave work in economic activities, such as agriculture, civil construction, domestic or industrial work.



- 2,2 million (10%) are in slave work imposed by States, for example in prisons, which violates ILO rules, or imposed by rebel forces or national armies.

As for the age of slave workers, 5,5 million (26%) are under 18. (*ILO News*)

[Check the main facts of the report](#)

Yearly report on

## Trade union violations in the world

All over the world there are threats against trade union rights and the most vulnerable ones are domestic workers, as the ITUC report shows.

76 unionists were killed in 2011 and the Americas are still the most dangerous continent. There were thousands of dismissals and arrests. In the Arab Spring, workers had to pay to get to democracy

2011 was an extremely hard year and, many times, a dangerous time for workers all over the world, since those that dared to defend their union rights were victims of dismissals, arrests, detentions and even death. Summoning up, that's what the yearly report on trade union rights violation published by the International Trade Union Confederation, which UGT is affiliated with. The report examined 143 countries this year, including Brazil.

Once again Colombia is the most dangerous country for unionists. Out of 76 people that were murdered due to their union activities, not to mention workers that lost their lives during the Arab Spring, 29 were killed in Colombia. Guatemala, as it turns out to be usual, had 10 murders, crimes that took place with a complete impunity.

Global tendencies that were emphasized in the report include lack of respect to the labour legislation by the government, lack of support to finance inspections or protections to accomplish it, absence of rights and abuses that were committed against migrant workers all over the world, and, especially, in Middle East countries, and the exploration of work essentially female, in free zones at a world level. 100 million domestic workers are also among the most vulnerable ones.

According to the ITUC report, workers are still the most vulnerable ones due to the world financial crisis, once most governments chose austerity measures instead of stimulating growth and employment. The consequences are terrible, especially for the youth.

"The situation of hundreds of thousands of workers is rather worrisome", said Sharan Burrow, ITUC secretary general. "Most of them do not have essential rights such as collective bargaining and free association, and have a precarious job. Their lives are disturbed since they must work for hours in dangerous and unhealthy situations, in exchange of salaries that are so low that they cannot afford their expenses and the expenses of their families. That explains a part of the world recession". (ITUC Online, 06.06.2012)

### Highlights of the report on Brazil



During 2011, important labour conflicts were recorded in the bank and aeronautic sectors, and in the industry of pesticides.

Slave work still exists, and so does the fight of authorities to persecute and judge the responsible parties. In 2011, seven field workers were murdered.

The Spanish company Zara Brasil was fined 52 times for several irregularities, including the outsourcing of the manufacture of its products through companies that employ migrant workers in slave like conditions.

From May to August 2011, seven rural workers that were defending the right to land were killed in the States of Para and Rondonia.

### UGT participates in ILO workshop



**União Geral dos Trabalhadores (UGT)**, through its National Department of Human Diversity Issues, represented by **Ana Cristina dos Santos Duarte**, participated in the Workshop on Capacitation and Information on Gender, Race, Poverty and Employment - GRPE, promoted by the International Labor Organization (ILO), on May 28 and 29, 2012, at the head office of OPAS, in Brasilia/DF.

The goal of this workshop consisted of presenting conceptual marks in this issue, produced under ILO and also elaborated in different spaces of knowledge creation in Brazil; in good practices concerning public policies, programs and actions, either governmental as those that were held by organizations of workers and employers; and in guidelines to improve action, based on its focus and on the promotion of model of development that are more equitable and fair, that promote equality of gender and race.

### Workers go on strike at Regap

Outsourced workers of Petrobras went on strike for an unlimited time and promoted a protest in front of the Gabriel Passos refinery (Regap), in Betim, metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte.

According to the **Union of Workers in Industrial Assemblies of Minas Gerais (Sitramonti-MG)** affiliated with UGT, the stoppage reaches nearly 4.000 employees and was defined in an assembly. Workers request a 15% salary adjustment, participation in profits and results, besides a \$ 120 food allowance, days off and permission to return home every two months.



**Vilmar de Sousa e Silva**, supervision director, said that the companies that were in charge of hiring employees offered a 9,5% adjustment, which was rejected by the class, another important request concerns housing conditions, since hundreds of workers from other States are accommodated under precarious conditions in slums of the metro region.

### Political parties hold conventions for municipal vote

The deadline established by the Electoral Court for political parties to hold their conventions and define coalitions and choose candidates for mayor, vice-mayor and city councillor is June 10, for the 2012 elections.

According to a release that was published in the Superior Electoral Court, the Election Law (Law 9.504/1997) determines that the party conventions should take place from June 10 to 30.

The law also establishes that, starting on June 10 and until the end of the electoral campaign, radio and television networks are prohibited to broadcast programs that are presented or commented by candidates that were chosen in party conventions.



"The **União Geral dos Trabalhadores** reaffirms its historic commitments to the working class, while seeking to expand its methods of action, with ethics, courage and the certainty that Brazil can be better and more just. "  
**Ricard Patah** – UGT's President ]

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