

Report to Plenary on the Sustainable Jobs, Secure Incomes and Social Protection sub-plenary: Mody Guiro

President –

We began the discussions on Monday afternoon, following on from where the plenary on the global economy had ended - focusing on the critical issues of the jobs crisis, income inequality and what we need to do to boost redistribution and jobs and to re-harness finance to support the real economy and not speculation. We are suggesting sharpening the action points and will campaign for targeted investment in infrastructure, quality public education, the green economy, the care sector and quality apprenticeships. Here, in Berlin, we showed that we as unions are a central part of the solution to reducing inequality and attacking the injustice in the global economy.

On Tuesday morning, we had a lively discussion focused on trade and supply chains. The interventions showed that the current trade and investment agreements are designed to increase corporate power, promote neoliberalism, deregulation and lower standards. Such neoliberal agreements should be opposed. There was strong opposition to the investor-to-state dispute settlement and the ITUC was called to take action to stop those mechanisms that threaten democracy and sovereignty.

Regarding the pension session, we agreed on the need to invest in broad-based alliances to protect workers' right to decent, adequate and secured retirement incomes, and to extend social protection and pension coverage in the population, not least in the developing world. On the investment side, we need to worker harder to insure workers' pension fund money is invested in the real economy, not in the speculative financial markets.

This session was followed by the debate on climate change that allowed for a lively exchange on experiences and positions on the subject, with which many trade unions are still not as familiar with. The support for the ITUC work on this subject was consensual, as well as on the action points coming out of the discussions: to mobilize in order to achieve the conclusion of an ambitious agreement on climate change in Paris in 2015, to promote the work between social partners to realise industrial transformation and just transition, and to enhance and promote the work of trade union organizations in the creation of green jobs to ensure that they become decent jobs, as well.

On Wednesday afternoon, we looked at women's participation in our unions and in our economies. Everywhere around the world women participate less in economic activity than men. Unpaid care work plays a significant role in limiting women's possibilities to participate fully in the labour force, to earn equal pay for work of equal value, to progress in their careers and to take up leadership positions.

Colleagues, I strongly encourage you to sign up to the Count Us In campaign, so as to achieve at least 30% of women in leadership positions in our organisations by 2018. Sixty-two of us have already signed up. Let's make it 100 by the end of this month.

Our last sub-plenary session discussed the role of trade unions in development cooperation frameworks given that consultations on the post-2015 framework are ongoing and trade unions become increasingly engaged as actors in their own right. It will be crucial to strengthen our advocacy at international level, especially towards the UN system and as counterbalance to corporate influence and those that continue to promote the private sector led growth model, to secure sustainable and inclusive development in the 2015 agenda and beyond.

So, in conclusion, I would like to congratulate the ITUC on using the format of sub-plenary sessions at Congress to allow participative discussion on our key priorities for action. I hope that it will be repeated at future Congresses.