

CO8 Trade Union Statement

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On Behalf of:

The Global Union Federations

Thank you Chair and thank you honorable delegates. Our work here is of utmost importance to the workers of the world and I am pleased to address you today on behalf of the Global Union Federations (GUF)¹ and their 180 million members. It is our wish that workers in all parts of the world come to support the measures resulting from the work done at COP8 and at future meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP).

Workers Must Be Encouraged to Support UNFCCC Measures

However, your efforts will only bear fruit in the real world if workers help implement targets with their employers at the workplace level; at home, in their communities, they must build support with other stakeholders for much needed public policy everywhere. Only this will ensure that a strong public consensus on climate change can develop. Trade unions can help make this happen if certain key issues are addressed by the Conference of the Parties.

WSSD Outcomes Through Synergies Between Climate Mitigation & Poverty Eradication

We welcome the wording of the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on 'Climate Change & Sustainable Development', which adopts key WSSD outcomes for integrating poverty, social, and equity issues within UNFCCC frameworks.

The report "Poverty & Climate Change"² prepared for COP8 by the World Bank, key Governments and inter-governmental bodies shows the contribution of poverty to climate change and vice-versa. It indicates that reduced "income opportunities" and loss of "livelihood assets" due to climate change are key inhibiting factors in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Chairperson, such factors derive directly from whether or not people are able to work and earn sufficient income to secure a living for themselves and their families. Moreover this is the key to socio-economic security factors, which either foster or prohibit public participation.

Employment is the key to synergy between Climate and Poverty

Employment must be at the center of strategies to ensure synergy between climate mitigation and poverty eradication. To ensure practical success of such measures, employment and job creation must be key elements of any scenario for change in both.

Current figures suggest slightly positive world employment net effects, in the longer term, when job losses due to climate events are measured against jobs that will be created by disaster relief and mitigation measures. We are also aware that many jobs will likely be created, within any scenario of change, e.g. as many as 800,000 in Europe and 155,000 in Germany alone by the year 2005, particularly within the renewable energy sector. The same potential also exists in different regions of the world.

However, sector-by-sector and regional analyses show that we are in for turbulent times, times in which large numbers of workers will lose their jobs and livelihoods with little hope of access to the new jobs that will be created. This presents a challenge, which UNFCCC must overcome, or it will erode any public confidence in national efforts to address climate change.

Employment Policy & Research Is Called For

The UNFCCC approach to employment must focus on three main areas:

- *It must promote a "Global Employment Agenda", as advocated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The WSSD has called on Governments "to increase income generating employment opportunities, taking into account the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work". Agenda 21, which was reconfirmed by WSSD, makes strong reference to the need for linking employment to sustainable development.*
- *It must focus on Green job creation, re-employment programmes, training and education, and bridging compensation. These are the essential features*

of **employment transition** programmes if they are to have an impact on climate change and poverty.

- *It must facilitate Cooperation for Employment Research* among key governments and inter-governmental bodies, especially between OECD, ILO, and the EU. Both business and trade unions at the OECD³ agree that this kind of research would be necessary for different industrial sectors, and in different regions of the world.

Promoting 'Prevention' & 'Adaptation' as Joint Strategies for SBSTA Through UNDP Frameworks & ILO Involvement.

The WSSD called for the Parties of the UNFCCC to "prevent" anthropogenic interference with the atmosphere (WSSD paragraph 36), and not merely adapt to its effects. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific & Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the UNFCCC must seek to prevent further climate damage by promoting cooperation between the ILO for more rigorous workplace actions in education and conservation on the one hand, and the UNDP for promoting its adaptation policy frameworks⁴, proposed at COP8, on the other hand.

We agree with the Climate Action Network (CAN) that preventing climate change is an equity issue. The type, scale and magnitude of the adaptation problem vary according to the socio-economic, political and environmental context. As well, industrialized countries and high-income earners everywhere are in a better position to adapt. Approaches for bridging these inequities must be developed by UNFCCC.

COP9 in Italy Must Encourage SBSTA to Incorporate Employment Transition Issues into 'Policies and Measures (PAM's) Discussions'.

There is a grave danger that workers increasingly see themselves and their families as the first victims of climate change events, as they have been already in recent floods, hurricanes, droughts and other climatic disasters. There is a graver danger that they will also perceive themselves as victims of the very measures that UNFCCC institutes to mitigate such climate events. This must be avoided.

Next year's COP9 discussion by SBSTA can go a long way to promoting good practices which can help the affected Parties both address social and employment impacts of change and build public trust.

Building on the Marrakesh Accords to More Fully Discuss of UNFCCC Article 4.2.f & Kyoto Articles 2.3 & 3.14

The Marrakesh Accords provide needed direction by proposing to develop expertise for technology transfer issues among affected developing countries, and by establishing a reporting process for social impacts.

They also call for information, for the development of guidelines and for follow up workshops to study methodologies and ways to minimize adverse social, environmental and economic impacts on developing countries by Parties in Annex I countries.

The full value of this work will be limited unless it links employment measures to reporting and assessment initiatives. Trade unions are looking forward to participating with other stakeholders in the workshops that are proposed by COP8 to develop proper responses to social impacts and to formulate effective policies and measures that can be used as guiding principles for all Parties across different circumstances, and to help promote capacity building strategies.

It is our hope, however, that this work can lead to a broader discussion with all the Parties at COP9 to consider the adequacy of attention to the social impacts as required under both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

Developing Trust is a Prerequisite

Chairperson, for us to help build support among our members, UNFCCC must work with us to establish trust in decision-making. In conformity with the Secretariat's recommendation to the Subsidiary Body For Implementation (SBI) this could be promoted by involving trade unions from both initiating and recipient countries of CDM projects to observe proceedings and provide comment on proposals. Through such feedback, trust can be developed within our constituency of workers for implementation measures and overall support for UNFCCC.

NOTE: The full COP8 trade union statement, "Social & Employment Transition for Climate Change" is available through the contacts indicated below.

¹ At COP8 GUF includes the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC), European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and 12 Sector-based International Trade Secretariats.

² *Poverty And Climate Change – Reducing Vulnerability of the Poor, (A contribution to COP8)*, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, UK, The Netherlands, European Commission, Germany, OECD, UNDP, UNEP, World Bank, October 2002

³ The Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) and the Business Advisory to the OECD (BIAC) have agreed to jointly promote such employment research cooperation for climate change.

⁴ *The Adaptation Policy Framework: Summary For Policy Makers*, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York, COP8 2002