

CONCLUSIONS AND ACTIVITY PLAN FOR THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF METALWORKERS' TRADE UNIONS OF SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

Participants of the First Conference of Metalworkers' Trade Unions of South-East Europe agree that:

- in order to increase the profit, capital demands cheaper and cheaper labour force and less and less workers' rights;
- employers and owners opening branch offices and moving the capital to other countries often do not comply with the regulations existing in those countries, especially the ones related to workers' rights;
- employers to which the capital has moved do not wish to apply even the concluded collective agreements regulating workers' rights on a higher level, but in their negotiations with trade unions try to decrease almost all worker' rights, especially those related to the annual leave, wage, wage increase, wage contributions and severance pay;
- through special methods employers are trying to reduce organisation of local trade unions and in collective bargaining processes often demand decrease of the right to exemption from work with wage compensation for shop stewards. They do it skilfully through elections for works councils or by not prolonging fixed-term employment contracts;
- workers' wages are different in different countries which demands special trade union engagement;
- migrant workers have a subordinated position because they are willing to work in more difficult working conditions and for much lower wages than domestic workers, they do not join trade unions either in the country of their origin or in the destination country.

Participants of the First Conference of Metalworkers' Trade Unions of South-East Europe agree that:

- so far there was no exchange of data on the movement of capital, employers, trade union structures and workers' representatives in multinational companies;
- they were not informed about concluded collective agreements and workers' rights regulated in those agreements;
- they were not informed about legislative regulations;
- they were not informed about past or prospective trade union actions;
- they were not informed about the work of migrant workers from different countries.

Therefore, trade unions propose the following actions and measures:

1. Regarding the establishment of database trade unions commit to:

Exchange legal regulations related to defining workers' rights (such as Labour Act, Aliens Employment Act, etc.) within six months;

Update the table on multinational companies within six months;

Deliver the existing collective agreements according to the list of employers from the table within six months;

2. In order to be continuously informed, trade unions will exchange information about:

Changes and updates in the table of multinational companies – once a year;

Changes in regulations influencing the position and rights of workers in employment relationship;

Changes in collective agreements;

Industrial actions undertaken by trade unions towards employers in their country.

When they find it necessary trade unions will implement joint actions towards employers operating in two or more countries.

Trade unions will inform each other on migrant workers and provide them services to protect their rights resulting from employment relationship.

3. As result of work performed in workshops trade unions agree to undertake the following in special areas:

3.1. Regarding labour standards:

- (a) implementation of relevant ILO conventions,
- (b) labour legislation,
- (c) collective agreements in multinational companies.

3.1.1. The workshop participants agreed that the level of implementation of international conventions and labour standards differs in individual national legislations.

3.1.2. In all the countries of the South-East Europe there are labour acts, national and branch collective agreements, which are not complied with by the multinational companies, in terms of some of their provisions or in entirety, and the multinational companies aim at lower level of regulation of employment relationships;

3.1.3. In situations when MNCs violate international conventions and national labour legislation it is necessary to inform the public, where the media play a significant role. OECD guidelines for MNCs are a good tool for operation within multinational companies, however, apart from them, it is also necessary to use other trade union methods of exhorting pressure (strikes, media, etc).

3.2. Regarding wages and material rights of workers in multinational companies, trade unions commit to put extra efforts aiming at:

3.2.1. implementing concluded collective agreements, i.e. concluding the agreements in case where they have not been concluded in order to maintain material rights of workers.

3.2.2. increasing labour cost in line with the increase of the costs of living and financial results at the level of MNCs, in order to improve material rights.

3.3. Regarding metalworkers` trade union actions towards employers in multinational companies with special emphasis on migration of workers and starting from the Declaration from Rome as of 1999, Vienna Declaration as of 2000 on the price of workforce, the working group at this workshop concluded the following:

3.3.1. The basis for any trade union activity is mutual information and exchange of documents, and the creation of the data basis.

3.3.2. The basis for trade union organizing is also a corporate social responsibility.

3.3.3. Flexible organization of trade unions and their adjustment to the new conditions of reorganization of MNCs, and which does not imply violation of the adopted trade union statutes. Trade union has to take over the role of connecting workers within MNCs, even in those companies where there is no works council. Such organization would contribute to the control of employment and fluctuation of workforce, and to the reduction of undeclared work, i.e. to the control of the employment through temporary work agencies.

3.3.4. In order to achieve the above stated, it is necessary to educate the membership in the MNCs.

3.3.5. The trade unions at the national level should demand from the governments to provide legal prerequisites for demonstrating performance success of the MNCs, so that the workers could participate in the profit of those employers.

4. To monitor the realisation of the previous conclusions, a Working Group is established, composed of Jakov Nikić, Vlada Miljuš, Mare Ančeva, Albert Vodovnik, Dragan Mijanović i Vesna Mlinarić

The work group will additionally develop a monitoring system and all the trade unions oblige themselves to respect it.

Until the second Conference, all the above stated information should be submitted, and these Conclusions implemented.

Participants of the First Conference of Metalworkers' Trade Unions of South-East Europe agreed that the host of the Second Conference of Metalworkers' Trade Unions of South-East Europe would be the Autonomous Metalworkers' Trade Union of Serbia – Regional organisation Vojvodina, and that the host of the Second Conference will hold the database.

The participants of the First Conference of the Metalworkers' Trade Unions of South-East Europe