

# ***HRCT Trade Group Conference***



**Geneva, September 22-23, 2011**

## ***Summary Report***

### Item 1: Opening

The opening of the conference was carried out by the president Norberto Latorre. The Vice President Yoichi Tagami expressed his gratitude to the conference, and the affiliates of IUF for the support during and after the catastrophe with the earthquake and the tsunami in Japan.

### Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed from the secretariat.

### Item 3: Summary record of the Board meeting in Istanbul

The summary record from the board meeting in Istanbul was adopted with the general secretary's remark that it is important we find ways to prioritise activities.

### Item 4: Membership

The general secretary pointed out how difficult it is to determine how many members the affiliates have in specific sectors or groups and the challenge this poses concerning representation rights at the HRCT Trade Group Conference.

He outlined why the Administrative Committee had decided to suspend all Egyptian affiliates' memberships pending a fact-finding visit in January/February 2012 to review the role of unions in the January 2011 event and the evolution of the current situation.

He also explained why the losses in Unite HERE and HRF Sweden are significant and asked how can we learn and exchange ideas and experiences to gain strength.

The debate focused on the challenges in the different countries and regions.

#### Item 5: Trade Group By-Laws – proposals for amendments

The general secretary proposed that the MENA region (Middle East/North Africa) be added as an electoral region for Trade Group Board elections.

The conference adopted the proposal.

#### Item 6: Review of HRCT Steering Groups

The conference agreed that the steering groups should continue informally and that those who want to participate do so. It is important that the groups are “member driven” and not “secretariat driven”. The activities depend on affiliates’ interest in meeting and using the steering groups as a tool in their trade union work.

#### Item 7: Organizing HRCT workers

There were five points under this item.

- (a) Strategies to overcome precarious work
- (b) Transnational companies
- (c) Health and safety as an organising tool
- (d) Promoting union hotels and resorts
- (e) Organising in other sectors (airline catering, casino hotels, theme parks, etc.)

The secretariat made presentations under points c and d.

- IUF must intensify our work on precarious work. We should put together a policy document and raise the issues in all forums where we are present.
- The agreement with Compass will not be signed before the first members are reinstated.
- The Sodexo framework agreement can be used as an incitement for other TNCs.
- Franchise hotels and their inclusion in EWC’s should be address.
- The proposal for an international campaign regarding the working environment for housekeepers, “The bed issue ...”, was positively received.
- The secretariat presented five different internet sites that promote fair hotels or hotels with collective agreements. IUF should link the different sites, but it must be a national task to create and update these sites.
- The issue of theme parks was raised and Disney was specifically mentioned. IUF will try to convene an informal meeting for Disney affiliates.

#### Item 8: Working with other organizations

Wolfgang Weinz from ILO made a presentation about ILO work. He discussed ILO work around the decent work agenda, tourism and poverty and the need for quality and competence in the tourism industry.

The general secretary gave a brief presentation about IUF work in UNWTO and our place in the World Committee for Tourism Ethics (WCTE) mentioning that we have raised the questions on precarious work. We will present a report on precarious work and stress that it is an ethical issue for tourism.

The following was adapted as the conclusion of the conference.

HRCT Trade Group Conference in Geneva, September 22-23, 2011 agreed on this future goals and action plan for the HRCT Trade Group Board 2011-2016

At the 2007 IUF World Congress a resolution on sustainable tourism was passed, mandating the following goals for HRCT sector work:

- to formulate an action plan for the signing of global framework agreements with transnational companies in the HRCT sector
- to compile examples of efforts focusing on Responsible Tourism among its member organisations
- to strive, together with the travel industry, to formulate a code of conduct for Responsible Tourism
- to appoint a committee to formulate criteria for a system of fair trade labelling of hotels at tourist destinations
- to work through its member organisations to inform the public and generate public opinion with regard to employee conditions at various destinations

The following sets out proposed broad goals for the HRCT sector for the period 2011-2016, which can be developed into concrete plans by each of the steering groups. These objectives can then be reviewed at each meeting of the HRCT Board.

#### Hotels, Restaurants and Catering

1. Support the efforts of affiliates to organise new members and increase union density in general but also specifically in transnational companies

##### Steps to achieve goal

- Conduct research and analysis of current union density
  - Support unions to develop organising capacity and implement organising initiatives
  - Identify targets for joint organising initiatives
  - Develop IUF website promoting unionised hotels which respect union rights
2. Build international organisation within the sectors with a strong network of affiliates within each sector with the capacity to act collectively at a global level

##### Steps to achieve goal

- Facilitate participation in steering groups of at least one representative from each region, either in person or remotely
- Determine targets for joint work
- Hold regular company-specific forums of worker representatives from target TNCs to establish networks and develop and implement strategy

- Support unions to actively participate in networks
3. Achieve IUF recognition in the major TNCs within the sectors at global corporate level to enable affiliates to organise workers and bargain collectively to raise standards

Steps to achieve goal

- Conduct analysis of trade union recognition and relationships within key TNCs
  - Identify TNC targets based on agreed criteria
  - Build a strong network of affiliates within target with the capacity to act collectively at a global level
  - Work collectively through organising, campaigning and negotiation to achieve recognition
4. Combat abuses of members rights in particular by transnational companies

Steps to achieve goal

- Build international organisation within the sectors with a strong network of affiliates within each sector with the capacity to act collectively at a global level to combat rights abuses
5. Raise awareness and mobilise around issues specifically important to workers such as casualisation and outsourcing and health and safety

Steps to achieve goal

- Conduct research into key issues identified by affiliates
- Share best practice for combating issues through organising and campaigning, legislation and policy
- Coordinate our efforts to raise issues with companies at national, European and international level

## Tourism

1. Work with allies and supporting organisations including our sister GUF's, the ILO and UNWTO to promote sustainable tourism policies which support the rights of workers within the sector to organise and bargain collectively and promote decent work

Steps to achieve goal

- Continue to build relationships with ILO and UNWTO and participate in key forums and events
  - Develop work with ITF internationally on tourism and hold joint annual meetings
  - Identify and build links with other key organizations who would support our work, both nationally, at European level and internationally
  - Promote the IUF policy on tourism within the industry
2. Continue to work towards the elimination of child labour and sexual exploitation of children within the tourism sector

- Work with likeminded organisations on campaigns and awareness raising
- Continue to participate in forums tackling these issues
- Promote our policy to TNCs within the sector

A statement on the recent Palestinian application for full statehood at the United Nations was agreed by broad consensus and will now be sent to the Administrative Committee for consideration.