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UNI
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UNI Africa looks to the future with new leadership

UNI Africa is facing the future with a new sense of responsibility and leadership as it builds strong unions, empowers women and young workers and increases organising to help improve the lives of millions of working families.

As part of its mission to face the future, the 2nd UNI Africa Conference delegates passed a resolution declaring they would increase the number of women union members, maintain their membership and promote their participation in trade union activities and in decision-making processes.

"We have to adopt the agendas of young people and women," said Africa Regional Secretary Zakari Koudougou. "We have to focus on issues that are key to them - tackling insecure employment and winning a fair gender balance."

At the regional conference in Hammamet, Tunisia, UNI Africa delegates elected a new president,



Regional Secretary Zakari Koudougou (center) was elected at the UNI Africa Conference in Hammamet.



UNI Africa's women's conference brought together leaders and activists who are fighting for equality.

Bones Skulu, General Secretary of the South African

Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (SACCAWU). They also made permanent the position of regional secretary Zakari Koudougou, who had been acting in that capacity on an interim basis.

The regional secretary, president and the newly elected vice-presidents and executive committee members are now charged with overseeing the region's plans for union building, signing global agreements, fighting HIV/AIDS and achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals.

A group of bloggers from the Africa efuture group, who have been part of a UNI project to improve Internet communications in national unions, provided real-time coverage of the regional conference.

You can find their blog at: http://www.uniglobalunion.org/Blogs/UNI_AF_RC2009.nsf

UNI close to global agreement at Shoprite Checkers

UNI Africa commerce unions are close to a global agreement with South African-based retailer Shoprite Checkers.

Members of the Shoprite Checkers Shop Stewards Union Alliance met on May 15 in Hammamet, Tunisia, at the UNI Africa Conference to plan coordinated union work across Africa and assess the situation workers are facing. Many Shoprite Checkers employees face poor conditions and, in several countries, they do not have union representation.

Shoprite shop stewards are calling on the retail multinational to sign a global agreement with UNI Global Union to secure the rights of people employed at all Shoprite workplaces.

Negotiations started with the company in 2007. The African commerce unions are hopeful that Shoprite management will now move quickly to ensure workers' rights.

UNI Europa marches to demand economic justice

UNI Europa and its youth group marched with thousands of others



UNI Europa Regional Secretary Bernadette Ségol marches with union activists in Brussels

in Brussels in support of government action for employment and economic and social justice in Europe.

The Brussels demonstration, on May 15, was one in a series organised by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), gathering in total some 350,000 people in Madrid, Brussels, Prague and Berlin.

UNI Europa Regional Secretary, Bernadette Ségol, addressed the crowd, calling for a responsible and transparent finance sector that works for the real economy.

"The banks and insurance companies have a public mission," she said. They are not supposed to create a phantom economy that jeopardises jobs."

The ETUC is demanding a new social agenda that takes into account employment, pay, equal treatment, an increase in purchasing power and a social reorientation of policies.

The marches were a reminder of the trade union demands for a so-

cial Europe just weeks before the European Parliament elections.

UNI Finance outlines plan to EU on financial supervision

Head of UNI Finance Oliver Röthig sent a clear message to the European Commission, supervisors and other stakeholders that finance unions must be on board in discussions on a new EU supervisory system.

In early May the Commission held a conference entitled "Towards a new supervisory architecture in Europe," allowing stakeholders, supervisors and other interested parties to discuss and comment on the suggested approach from the Commission, based on the recommendations from the de Larosière High Level Group.

"At the core of a functioning financial system are the employees – their voice must be listened to," Röthig said. "The de Larosière report is a good base for the reform, but it does not take sufficiently into account the central role of employees in companies."

Röthig said finance unions must be on board in discussions on financial market reform and in the development of a new supervisory structure in Europe. He called for establishing formal dialogue structures in the new system between unions, financial supervisors and a

company's risk management.

At the end of May the European Commission will publish an outline of the principles in the forthcoming legislative proposals, which are due in the fall. The new supervisory structure is expected to be in place by the end of 2010.

UNI unions support US Employee Free Choice Act

UNI's member unions have started making visits to US Embassies around the world in support of the Employee Free Choice Act. Visits in Argentina and Japan in May will be followed with more visits planned in June.



UNI-Argentina Liaison Council meets with the Labour Attaché at the US Embassy in Buenos Aires.

UNI is working with other Global Unions and the International Trade Union Confederation to provide global support to US unions, who will only enjoy the same level of union rights as other democracies in the world when this bill is passed.

For more information go to: http://www.uniglobalunion.org/Apps/portal.nsf/pages/20090212_715fEn

UNI supports Quebecor World's bid to remain independent

The members of the UNI Graphical & Packaging Global Union, representing a membership base of 828,000 workers, unanimously support the emergence of Quebecor World from bankruptcy proceedings as an independent entity. A stand-alone, reorganized Quebecor World represents the best alternative for maintaining a competitive marketplace in the commercial printing industry, particularly in North America where RR Donnelley and Quebecor World combined represent about 50% of the market in a number of key product categories.

On May 12, RR Donnelley announced an interest in acquiring all or substantially all of the assets and properties of Quebecor World Inc., currently in bankruptcy court reorganization proceedings. The proposed combination of the two companies would create a global conglomerate with an estimated \$16 billion in annual revenues, roughly eight times the size of the next largest competitor.

In light of RR Donnelley's poor history of collaboration with its employees, UNI and its unions strongly believe the existence of a viable competitor such as Quebecor World will ensure continued fair pricing for customers, free markets for regulators and improved job quality for workers.

Nyon-Nagasaki: Tanabata peace tree initiative



To celebrate the Tanabata festival with UNI and telecom unions around the world, Japanese union NWJ brought a 180 cm bamboo tree to the UNI Telecom World Committee in Nyon in May.

The Tanabata festival is celebrated in Japan on July 7; people write wishes on small pieces of paper and attach them to a bamboo tree. This year, NWJ is encouraging people to write wishes for peace.

In 2010, UNI will hold its World Congress in Nagasaki, Japan. UNI chose Nagasaki to show support for the peace initiatives running throughout Japan more than 60 years after the atomic bomb attacks of 1945 in Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

The peace tree is part of an education process that encourages Japanese children to become advocates for peace. Children of NWJ members wrote peace messages and attached them to the tree before its journey to Nyon, where UNI Telecom affiliates added their own messages.

UNI study reveals post liberalisation disasters globally

By Esther Bares, Research Assistant – UNI Post & Logistics

"I am a single mother with two school-going children...If I calculate it correctly, I earn approximately 3 Euros per hour...Officially, I work on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, but, in reality, this work keeps me occupied every day."

This is the working life of a mail deliverer in the Netherlands. How is this possible in the 21st century?

UNI Post & Logistics has released its study on the effects of the liberalisation of postal services and its impact on workers. The study will be used to help UNI affiliates fight the detrimental effects of liberalisation on their members.

The research is based on case studies from 13 countries around the world, some of which have experienced liberalisation for many years and others still fighting to avoid it. It touches upon the driving forces of liberalisation as well as the liberalisation process itself and what its effects are in terms of competition. Most importantly it looks at the effects on workers themselves and how unions have dealt with this issue.

The main findings are that the economic theory backing up liberalisa-

tion cannot be proven in the postal sector. Indeed there is only very little competition in the liberalised postal markets, with new entrants holding 0.1% to around 10% market shares. Furthermore, there are very few main competitors to the incumbent, in most cases between one and four.



When it comes to employment, the study found job losses caused by the liberalisation process (privatisation, restructuring, automation), a deterioration of working conditions in competing postal operators, increasing precarious working conditions as atypical forms of work increase, wage cuts and wage dumping.

According to its advocates, liberalisation was supposed to yield competition in the postal market, and in turn bring innovation, price reduction, better services and growth and employment.

The UNI study makes it clear that this has not happened.

You can find the study on the UNI website at: http://www.uniglobalunion.org/Apps/portal.nsf/pages/20090128_qh9xEn

UNI Bulletin

UNI is the global union for skills and services. We represent 900 trade unions and 20 million workers worldwide. Our bulletin is published 10 times per year with information about our work and the work of our affiliates. You can find more information on our website: www.uniglobalunion.org

Find information on

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