

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

CONTRIBUTION OF THE BALKAN TRADE UNIONS FOR THE INTEGRATION PROCESS THE RIGHT OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ILO CENTENARY

Sofia, 22-23 April 2019

We, as South East European trade union confederations, affiliated to ITUC and as a part of PERC of ITUC, gathered in Sofia on 22 and 23 of April 2019, rise our voice for a **New Social Contract** to be adopted at the International Labor Conference this June and for strong actions to secure the rights of **freedom of association and collective bargaining**, especially in our region.

- We express our general approval and satisfaction with the **ILO Global Commission of Future of Work Report** on WORK FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE (The Future of Work) and find that it contains remarkable statements reflecting the real situation of tripartite relations on a global scale and at the same time contains guidelines provoking reflection and giving points of reference for work in the medium and long term with a view of realizing the ideas for adapting the subjects of the labor relations to the 4th industrial revolution.
- We consider it necessary to take **full advantage of the opportunities provided by these transformational changes** in order to create a better future and ensure economic security, equal opportunities and social justice, with the ultimate aim of strengthening all societies and improving their welfare.
- The three **pillars of action** and the 10 Recommendations outlined in the Report will encourage us to achieve economic growth, fairness and sustainability for the present and future generations in our countries. We welcome the launch of a new human-centered agenda, putting people and their work at the center of the economic and social policy and business practice.
- We pay special attention to the ILO appeal to all stakeholders to take **responsibility for building a just future of work**. The basis for this future is the urgent action for strengthening social dialogue and collective bargaining.
- We call for a change in the rules **for achieving a new social contract**, in which trade unions play a key role. We warn the political elites that if we do not make the necessary radical changes to achieve a new social treaty, economic and social differences and inequalities will grow and this poses enormous risks for the future.

We believe that this new social contract should achieve full employment and fairer distribution of the produced common good for overcoming the inequalities in income and wealth.

The new social contract should provide all workers regardless of their contractual arrangements or employment status with:

- ✓ The universal right for Life Long Learning;
- ✓ Universal guarantee for labor, including Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, Standards for Health and Safety at Work, Minimum “Living Wage” and adequate Limits of Working Times;
- ✓ Universal social protection.

We call the International Labor Conference which will be held in June 2019 to include in the New Social Contract provisions on:

- ✓ Recognition that the Labor, Social and Trade union rights fall outside the scope of market competition
- ✓ Mandatory due diligence along the Global Supply chains of the multinational companies;
- ✓ Negotiations on regional and sub-regional wage floors and minimum labor standards for payment and work conditions, respecting international labor standards;
- ✓ New social and economic global indicators beyond the GDP to measure the social and economic development and wellbeing.

During the Conference deliberations and discussions we noted **the violations**, both in law and practice, of freedom of association and collective bargaining in South East Europe as a common phenomenon. The role of state to provide **legal provisions** but also **to guarantee** in practice the **law enforcement** is crucial. Therefore **we demand** that all respective national parliaments, governments and employers organizations:

- ✓ Establish **National Tripartite Alliances** (in a spirit of responsible Social Dialogue), followed by a **SEE Tripartite Alliance** to address the challenges and opportunities of **Future of Work** at country, sub regional and regional level and to elaborate strategy for WORK 4.0 for SEE.
- ✓ To unite the efforts and secure the introduction and implementation of **Universal Labor Guarantee**, as stated in the Draft Centenary declaration of ILO.
- ✓ To create enabling environment and conditions in the SEE region and **to guarantee in practice the freedom of association in trade unions and efficient collective bargaining, including sectoral collective bargaining.**
- ✓ Ensuring collective representation of workers and employers through social dialogue as a public good, actively promoted through public policies.
- ✓ To promote and strengthen both **tripartite and bipartite social dialogue**, as well as **genuine collective bargaining**, as the only balanced mechanism to achieve fairer distribution of wealth produced.

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