



# elektron

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## ¡Long live May 1, 2010, Workers will not pay for the crisis!

Message from the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010.



WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

Workers, women and men,

The period we live in is one of aggressive imperialism, anti-labour neo-liberal policies and of the international economic crisis of the capitalist system. This crisis is expressed in all sectors: in the economy, the environment, the quality of life, culture and climate change. Crises are in the DNA of capitalism and for this reason they come again and again. It is impossible for capitalism to solve the problems of the peoples of the world. Look at what is happening in Africa; a continent rich in wealth-producing resources but with the poorest people.

The average life expectancy at birth in Zambia is 38.6 years. In Nigeria, Africa's richest country in oil, 3/4 of the population are homeless and, according to UNICEF's 2010 Report, 42% of the population in Nigeria with no access to drinking water, while diarrhea is

the second largest killer of children, causing as many as 17% of the deaths of those under the age of five. In Somalia the imperialists are exacerbating conflicts, in Sudan the USA and its allies are trying to dismember the country, in the Sahara the problems continue. The monthly minimum salary in South Africa is 104€ for farm workers. In Botswana minimum wages for urban workers are 43€ per month. In the Ivory Coast the minimum wage varies by occupation, with the lowest set at 56€ per month for the industrial sector.

In Asia the picture is no better: in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, the USA and the European imperialists are continuing their occupation and military operations. They are threatening Iran and plundering the Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union. In Bangladesh the basic salary is \$26 per month,

2010 elektron 10 (135) 2, FTE in Mexico  
in Sri Lanka \$59 per month and in Pakistan  
\$71 per month.

In the Middle East the torment of the heroic Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian peoples continues. Israel, with the substantial support of the USA, the European Union and its allies is still illegally occupying the Syrian Golan Heights, keeping Gaza isolated, murdering people in Lebanon and posing a grave danger to stability and peace in the Southeastern Mediterranean.

In the Americas the situation is also complicated. In North America, unemployment and poverty are growing. The unemployment rate in the U.S. is 9.7% .

Latin America feels the aggressiveness of North America. Slander and attacks against the heroic Cuban Revolution, attacks against Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, the occupation in Haiti, support for the dictatorship in Honduras. In Colombia, in the last five years, more than 210 trade unionists have been assassinated and the country is being transformed into an American military base.

But also in Europe, capitalism creates and multiplies the problems. Unemployed workers in the countries of the European Union number in the millions today. Privatizations, the undermining of social security and the reduction of wages and pensions are a common strategy of all the European Governments, both neoliberals and socialdemocrats. The Lisbon Treaty shows the reactionary attitude and the real role of the European Union. In February 2010, 23 million workers in the European Union were unemployed. The highest official unemployment rates among the member-states are in Latvia with 21.7% and Spain with 19%.

### **Important Struggles**

To this policy of capital and the imperialists, the global working class is responding with

initiatives and struggles all over the world. The demonstrations of children in Pakistan against child exploitation, the struggles of teachers and electricians in Mexico, of fishermen and coalminers in Chile, of metalworkers in Peru, of construction workers, of immigrants in France and the USA, of air and land transport workers and workers in the car industry in many countries, of workers in the oil industry in Nigeria, of workers in India, coordinated militant action in Brazil and Bangladesh, the dynamic strikes in Greece, Portugal and Turkey have traced new paths in the class-oriented struggle. Millions of strikers with the participation of youth, women and migrant workers have provided a new dynamic and fresh hopes.

The WFTU has always been ahead in the front line of struggle! And it will continue this way, with class unity and a militant perspective, against the policies of the monopolies and multinationals that create poverty for the many and big profits for the few.

Dear colleagues:

The WFTU has chosen the symbolic date of May Day 2010 to announce the call of the 16th World Trade Union Congress on April 6-9, 2011 in Athens Greece.

The 16th Congress will be a trade union and social event of major importance for all workers the world over. Inform workers about the 16th Congress!

- Take part in the open and democratic dialogue!
- Make your proposals and criticism!
- All together we will strengthen the international class-oriented trade union movement.

Long Live workers May Day!

Proletarians of all countries unite!

Energy Workers' Front, FTE, in Mexico