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Speech by George Mavrikos in the ILO

Intervention of George Mavrikos, general secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, in the 99 plenary session of the International Labor Conference (ILC), in Geneva, Switzerland.



WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

99 Plenary Session of the ILC
Geneva, 18 Jun 2010

Speech by George Mavrikos, General Secretary of the WFTU

Ladies and gentleman,

I would like to start my intervention at the Plenary session of the 99 ILC with a criticism to all those who released the government of Colombia and who condemned the government of Venezuela. Those are unacceptable decisions that reduce the ILO prestige. They show that objectivity is not ruling but injustice, darkness and secret negotiations. We condemn those trade unionists that betrayed their class and who agreed on those decisions.

Dear Colleagues

In 2009-2010, we live in a period of global crisis of the capitalist system. This crisis is deep and embraces all areas of the system: the economy, politics, society, culture,

environment, even the personal relationships of the people.

All governments are either neo-conservative or social-democrat and follow the recipes and the directions jointly decided in Brussels and Washington. Take a look at

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the governments of Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain, everywhere they follow the same policies: to attack on workers. Removing trade union and labour rights. Redundancies, poverty, privatization.

The ILO data have shown a big rise in unemployment and poverty rates.

In Greece, the social-democratic government reduced the wages of civil servants by 25%, it doubled the lay-offs percentages and increased the retirement age by five years for women and three years for men. It reduces all pensions by 40%. It is selling public assets, abolishes collective contracts, increases taxation on ordinary people, etc.

In Britain, the conservative government follows the same policy. Two weeks ago they announced cuts on public spending by 7 billion euros.

In Spain already the salaries of civil servants were decreased by 5% as a first step and other measures will follow.

In Germany, the famous car industry OPEL announced 8000 layoffs in Europe and at the same time reduction of 265 million euros during 2010 in the annual salaries of workers. The same situation exists in Portugal, Romania, Denmark, everywhere. The situation is the same in the USA, in Asia and all continents.

This financial crisis of the system is very deep. We believe that in the years to follow the crisis will further worsen and become deeper. This situation creates and exacerbates the competition between monopolies and multinationals. Between states. Between the EU and the USA. The conflicts on the rate between euro and dollar rate are hard and will continue.

The strong intra-capitalism rivalries embrace the roads and pipelines of gaz and energy, the control of new markets for new spheres of influence etc. You all follow the confrontation that takes place between Germany and France about who will capture Africa and Middle East. You see what happened in Haiti immediately after the recent earthquake. The socialist Cuba has sent 1.600 doctors. The USA sent 16.000 soldiers. Take a look in Latin America, the

militarization of Colombia to hit the Bolivarian processes in Venezuela, in Ecuador, in Bolivia and elsewhere.

Look at the brutality and the crimes of Israel against the Palestinians, against the Gaza Strip, against all Arab People. Crimes are done with the tolerance and the hypocrisy of the International Organizations.

Look at Mexico, where the government is attacking SME trade union (Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas).

This is on titles, the picture of the capitalist system today. Is there a cure? Is there a way out?

The international capital is attempting to control the anger of the people by changing governments, by changing people and putting businessmen as Prime Ministers. With a paid propaganda they are trying to convince workers that the IMF has labour friendly and social purposes. The ruling class tries to convince that the crisis and the difficulties are temporary.

We, the World Federation of Trade Unions do not believe this kind of analysis. We use the analysis done by Karl Marx for the cyclical crises that keep coming back. Because crises exist deep in the DNA of capitalism. Even the slightest development, any development rates may occur in the coming years, will be low and temporary and weak. And most of this development will be based on the bleeding of workers, on the poverty among the unemployed, on the uncertainty of youth for the future. Any little development will be based on social ruin.

So far as World Federation of Trade Unions we have organized many seminars, meetings with specialists and we also have organized major struggles.

The hope for workers lies at the struggles, at involving young people, women, immigrants, indigenous people in these fights.

In Europe, Asia, Latin America, the people march on the streets and demand.

Today everybody understands that the crisis concerns everyone. The crisis is everywhere. So the coordination should be generalized. Coordination, cooperation - Internationalism and solidarity. Not each one

alone but all together, in all countries, all workers, all the unemployed. All together to fight with modern demands to respond to the current needs.

Based on today's data we ask:

- The workers not to pay for the crisis. Dismissals to be prohibited.
- To stop the expenditure on military equipments and this money to be granted to the unemployed and the poor.
- To take action now on erasing the debts of Third World Countries.
- Free and Public health, education, food and water for all.

Our organization, with these main objectives, but also with others corresponding to the needs of each continent and each country, is going to hold on September 7, 2010 the International Day of action of the trade union movement. We urge all fighting trade unions to act, to participate, to join us.

Through small and big struggles, the international working class will understand that the future of humanity can be drastically improved only through the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.

Thank you.

Source: www.wftucentral.org



George Mavrikos during his intervention in the plenary session of the 99 ILC

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WFTU's Presidential Council Meeting in Geneva, Switzerland



Assistants to the WFTU's Presidential Council

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