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Onderwerp: Copenhagen: an anti-climax



European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
 Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

COPENHAGEN: AN ANTI-CLIMAX

Brussels, 21 December 2009

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) considers that the outcome of the Copenhagen climate negotiations is a failure at both the environmental and social levels. It is also and above all proof of the institutional collapse of the international negotiation system. For the European trade union movement, the European Union must make a commitment to an urgent resumption of the negotiations.

ETUC General Secretary John Monks declared: "During the financial crisis, huge amounts of resources were found to save banks and guarantee financial assets. The climate crisis was not entitled to the same treatment, however, which is extremely regrettable. We witnessed negotiations where each party was determined to be the lowest bidder. This is extremely serious for the future of humanity. This failure also brings to light the severe crisis of the United Nations institutions."

As we saw with the banking crisis, good intentions are not enough. Binding targets need to be put in place that will allow a reduction in CO2 emissions to limit global warming. The ETUC reiterates the need for an ambitious negotiated agreement. That is why it is urgent to define at international level a financial, economic, environmental and social system that can lead to a new development model, in particular for the poorest countries. This system must be transparent and steered by good governance, in the interest of all.

If we do not move in that direction, we should expect a serious risk of aggravation of conflicts related to resource management, due to their scarcity in certain regions of the world. Climate change will also lead to an increase in migratory flows.

The ETUC calls on the European Union to take initiatives during the 2010 negotiations with a view to serious commitments on ambitious target figures.

The intermeshing of the financial, environmental, economic development and social spheres also necessitates the urgent creation of new financial instruments such as the taxation of financial transactions.

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 82 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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