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Onderwerp: Sommet social tripartite : l'Europe doit redevenir un projet d'avenir

**TRIPARTITE SOCIAL SUMMIT:
EUROPE MUST GET BACK TO
BEING A PROJECT WITH A FUTURE**

17 October 2011

**A European trade union delegation
led by Bernadette Ségal and
Ignacio Toxo, General Secretary
and President of the European
Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)**

will participate in the Tripartite Social Summit on 17 October. This meeting will be the opportunity for the European trade unions to voice their grave anxiety about the evolution of the economic situation and propose some emergency measures. What is needed is to prevent the situation worsening and having a contagion effect, which would have a dramatic impact on the daily lives of millions of Europeans.

This crisis, which is on an unprecedented scale, calls for exceptional measures. Yet the attitude of Europe's leaders thus far has been to impose austerity or sanctions, when everyone knows that blind austerity is not the cure for the crisis: it actually makes matters worse. The European Union needs to get back to growth and jobs!

Bernadette Ségal, the ETUC General Secretary, stated: 'Europe needs something to look forward to, yet nowhere can we see any light at the end of the tunnel. Europe's trade unions do, however, see a way forward. The answer lies in a combination of reducing deficits and adopting investment measures for employment and for a sustainable recovery. We have long been advocating the idea of a New Deal where the priorities would be a social Europe and a green Europe. The markets need to stop calling the tune. We say that to stop the attacks on sovereign debt, we need a partial mutualisation of the debt, a central bank that can guarantee these European bonds. We need to stamp out speculation; we need to introduce a tax on financial transactions and a fair fiscal system. We need to do away with tax havens and tax fraud'.

The ETUC will have other demands to press, specifically regarding the extremely worrying situation facing Europe's crisis-struck young people (youth unemployment is running at 20%, twice the rate for older people). Europe must tackle this problem as a matter of urgency by proposing some global policies. The future and stability of our societies are faced with a massive challenge.

Furthermore, the quality of the European social dialogue needs to be improved. We need a qualitative leap, faced with the new Governance, so as to better involve the social partners in the decisions being taken. This is a priority for Europe's trade unions.

Bernadette Ségal concluded: 'The crisis cannot be used as an excuse for reforms that strike at fundamental social rights and trade union rights. It is unacceptable for certain recent interventions by the European Central Bank or the Troika to be clearly trampling the autonomy of the social partners'.

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 83 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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