Resolution No. 2

Solidarity with the Indian workers’ struggle against the anti-labour policies of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)-led Indian Government

The 23rd ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional General Council Meeting, Phuket, Thailand, 29-30 August 2023

NOTES WITH SERIOUS CONCERN

the increasing incidence of violations of fundamental rights of workers and farmers in India;

DENOUNCES

the consolidation of 29 central labour legislations into four labour codes. This approach will lead to increased casualization of the workforce and will compromise workers’ well-being and safety, erode job security, undermine tripartite agreements, and violate fundamental labour rights, including freedom of association, collective bargaining, and the right to strike;

FURTHER NOTES

that many multinational enterprises (MNEs) operating in India, including Maruti Suzuki, are not adhering to the core labour standards and national laws and regulations.

Despite the strong opposition by the Credentials Committee of the Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) and the International Labour Conference (ILC), the government also imposed unlawful restrictions on sending delegations to the APRM and ILC to exclude independent union leaders in said tripartite processes.

Moreover, the Government of India rejected the involvement of independent unions and favoured its own labour wing, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), in organising the L20. Hence, the government-organised L20 has been deemed illegitimate and dubbed as ‘FAKE L20’, prompting the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to host a virtual L20 as a response.

RECALLS

that in 2019, the Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) of the ILO concluded that a Direct Contact Mission should be sent to India to investigate severe violations of ILO Convention 81, commonly known as the Labour Inspection Convention. However, Indian government representatives, questioning the ILO’s integrity, adamantly opposed such a mission. As a result of the government’s inaction, these violations persist.
REAFFIRMS the previous resolution condemning the decision of the Government to prohibit the participation of Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), one of the largest trade union centres in the country and ITUC-AP’s affiliate, in various tripartite bodies, including international fora like the ILO on grounds of frivolous charges and imaginary court cases;

SUPPORTS the joint national convention of central trade unions (CTUs), which include 10 CTUs and several national independent federations and associations, and Sanyuk Kisan Morcha (SKM), which represents over 500 farmers’ organisations, in New Delhi on 24 August 2023. The joint national convention expressed a clear and powerful message that workers and farmers will stand united to confront critical issues: inflation, unemployment, privatization, social security, and Minimum Support Price (MSP). The outcome: a resolute commitment to stage impactful protests, particularly marking 3 October 2023 a solemn black day — a reminder of the tragic 2021 incident when four farmers were killed by a union minister’s son’s convoy;

DEMANDS the Government of India to:
• withdraw the four labour codes and the rules formulated by the Indian Government, which favour big corporations over workers;
• withdraw the unlawful restrictions on sending workers’ delegations for APRM, ILC and other meetings;
• implement the conclusion of the CAS during the 2019 ILC, which recommended sending a Direct Contact Mission to India in response to the government’s violations of ILO Convention 81.
• ensure portability in comprehensive social security, including pensions, for all categories of unorganised workers in the informal sectors and agricultural workers;
• remove restrictions on INTUC’s participation in all tripartite and international meetings, including those organised by the ILO;
• reinstate the 117 dismissed workers of Maruti Suzuki Pvt Ltd India, along with all consequential benefits and recognition of their honourable acquittal by the court of law;
• stop the privatisation of Public Sector Enterprises and government departments, and abandon the National Monetization Pipeline (NMP);
• reinstate the regular convening of the Indian Labour Conference, a tradition that has been neglected since the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) came into power;
• cease the erosion of the core values of the Constitution, including freedom of expression, the right to dissent, freedom of religion, and respect for the federal structure of the country;
URGES the ITUC and the ITUC-AP to take the following actions:

• urge their affiliates to refrain from participating in the FAKE L20 summit, organised by the government of India;
• raise concerns at the ILO Governing Body meeting regarding the refusal to implement CAS's decision to conduct a Direct Contact Mission for ILO Convention 81 on Labour Inspection;
• urge their affiliates to organise an Action Day (Black Day) on 3 October 2023 in support of Indian workers and farmers. This involves staging peaceful demonstrations in front of the Indian embassy or consulate in their respective countries and submitting a protest letter condemning the Indian government anti-workers and anti-farmers policies, led by the NDA, to the Indian Ambassadors.