Resolution No. 1

Reaffirming the conclusions of the Singapore Statement adopted at the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the ILO

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

NOTES

that the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) held in Singapore on 6-9 December 2022 concluded with the adoption of the Singapore Statement, which reaffirms the “tripartite commitments to, and the relevance of, the priorities agreed in the Bali Declaration to address the decent work deficits in Asia and the Pacific and the Arab regions”;

NOTES WITH CONCERN

that the Asia and the Pacific region has the lowest ratification rate of the ILO core conventions of that seek to ensure workers’ rights at workplaces;

RECOGNISES

the significance of the Bali Declaration and the continuing importance of pursuing the commitments therein, while tackling new and emerging challenges in achieving social justice and decent work for all;

UNDERSCORES

that social dialogue is key to building trust among social partners and critical in ensuring the effective implementation of the Bali Declaration and the Singapore Statement; and resilient labour market institutions are essential to sustained recovery and inclusive and sustainable growth, need to be strengthened in the region;

EMPHASISES

that the promotion of workers’ rights, particularly freedom of association and collective bargaining, as well as the building of resilient labour market institutions are essential in the attainment of inclusive and sustainable growth;

SUPPORTS

the call for the continuation of the APRM as it provides a space for social partners to meaningfully discuss the issues and ways forward in addressing the challenges in the world of work in Asia and the Pacific as well as in the Arab states;

CALLS THE AFFILIATES

to play a pivotal role in ensuring that the priorities for national action set out in the Singapore Statement and the Bali Declaration are implemented;
URGES THE ILO to support its tripartite constituents in developing and implementing national and regional priorities, including through the Decent Work Country Programme.
Resolution No. 2

Recognising and protecting the rights of Home-Based Workers

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

EXPRESSES serious concern over the continued absence of comprehensive policies and regulations that explicitly recognise and protect the rights of home-based workers;

DEEPLY DEPLORES that despite its 27-year existence, International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 177, also known as the Home Work Convention, has been ratified by just 13 countries, none of which are from Asia and the Pacific region;

NOTES the substantial global population of home-based workers, estimated at around 260 million in 2019, comprising 7.9 percent of global employment, of which the Asia and Pacific region accounts for the majority at 65 percent;

RECOGNISES that while home-based work is a global and regional phenomenon, it holds particular significance in many South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, where approximately 67 million individuals, predominantly women, are engaged in diverse home-based economic activities;

HOWEVER, LAMENTS that most home-based workers operate within complex and lengthy supply chains – often positioned at the lowest tier of the chain where they face exploitation, endure extended working hours, receive inadequate remuneration, do not benefit from minimum wage regulations, and suffer from the absence of social protection;

UNDERSTANDS that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges faced by home-based workers, leading to substantial loss of work and income, and their recovery in the post-pandemic period remains slow;

HOWEVER, APPRECIATES the initiatives undertaken by some countries in the region, including Thailand, Pakistan, and Australia, including the establishment of country- and province-level policies or legislation to protect home-based workers;

ACKNOWLEDGES ITUC’s leadership in advocating for an ILO convention to safeguard the rights of home-based workers, but REGRETS the persistent challenges faced in achieving additional ratifications due to employer opposition and a lack of sustained advocacy and campaigning by trade unions at the regional and national levels;
RESOLVES to take the following actions targeting all governments in the Asia and the Pacific region:

- call upon governments to ratify the ILO Convention 177 and develop comprehensive policies and guidelines for home-based workers aligned with the Convention;
- undertake data collection efforts to quantitatively assess the working conditions and characteristics of home-based workers across the region; and
- put into effect the recommendations put forward in the ITUC-Asia Pacific/SEWA Action Research Survey on home-based workers.

REQUESTS the ITUC and ITUC-Asia Pacific to take the following actions:

- collaborate with affiliates to initiate a Ratify Convention 177 campaign, including lobbying governments to convene tripartite meetings on the subject;
- partner with the ILO and its country offices to plan, strategise and implement awareness-raising campaigns to shed light on the issues faced by home-based workers;
- engage in sustained advocacy and lobbying to push for the formulation of pertinent policies and guidelines aimed at the inclusion of home-based workers in labour laws and regulations; and
- initiate data collection efforts or collaborate with other institutions to gather data on the conditions and challenges faced by home-based workers.
Resolution No. 3
Strengthening cooperation and coordination for the promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

AFFIRMS that migration remains a historic and continuous human phenomenon that offers development benefits for sending, transit and receiving countries as well as for the migrants and their families;

UPHOLDS the importance of migration for employment purposes and its contribution to human dignity, decent life and shared prosperity when it is managed with the rights of migrants and international labour standards at its centre;

UNDERCORES that by and large, migrant workers are on their own. They are exploited by recruiting agents and employers. They do not have a voice and representation in their working places and have to endure poor working and living conditions;

NOTES WITH CONCERN that migrant workers’ rights continue to be trampled upon, abused, and denied in ways that undermine their physical integrity, self-worth, psychological sanctity, mental rectitude and economic empowerment. These abuses manifest in low and abysmal wages, delayed and withheld wages, beating and torture, slavery, and vestiges of the worst forms of slavery, starvation and sexual assaults, excessive working hours and very little rest time, racial attacks, and xenophobia, and hopelessness in the absence of legal redress to injustices, among others;

REJECTS the current narrow response of addressing migration and refugee governance through the prisms of extremism, token populism, temporal electoral quick-fix, upscaling of deportation, and the economic growth narrative that is being used to force migrants and refugees back in their countries;

ASCERTAINS that the situation of migrant workers should be addressed through the principles of international trade union solidarity, social justice, equal treatment, equal opportunity, and gender equality;

RECOGNISES that International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions No. 97 on Migration for Employment (1949), No.143 on Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) 1975, No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers (2011), and the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990, and similar other instruments are critical for the defence, protection, and promotion of the rights of migrant workers;
that migrant workers should have the same rights as those of workers of destination countries, including the right to join and actively participate in trade union activities as eloquently provided for in ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (1948) and No. 98 on Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (1949);

that trade unions are established to defend workers’ interests irrespective of race, nationality, demography, creed, and gender. All workers, including migrant workers, should enjoy full labour rights included in internationally-recognised standards, the countries’ labour laws and collective agreements in receiving countries;

to create better and improved spaces, opportunities and environment for the better defence, protection and promotion of migrants, their families, and their rights through collaborative and coordinated efforts on organising, advocacy engagements, training and education, communication, reporting and documentation, support services provision;

to promote the ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions 97 and 143, along with the UN Convention on Migrant Workers’ Rights (1990), and advocate for the ratification of ILO Conventions related to employment agencies, as well as Convention 189 and 190 for decent work for domestic workers;

to carry out joint trade union campaigns, advance trade union solidarity and to strengthen cooperation among the parties for the protection of both migrant and local workers, including harmonisation of their working and living conditions, through the agreed, but not limited to, the following actions:

- promote collaboration among employers, states, and unions to ensure a rights-based governance of migration and to pursue the commitments under the Goal 10 of the Agenda 2030 and the Global Compact on Migration. This involves raising awareness on labour rights, including freedom of association, collective bargaining and social protection, as well as campaigns and advocacy for a rights-based governance of migration, labour inspection, and legal cooperation against trafficking and forced labour;
- work with migrant workers’ networks to promote migrant workers’ involvement and organizing in trade unions;
- work towards the improvement of occupational health and safety and housing concerns of migrant workers, particularly those in precarious conditions such as domestic workers;
- campaign for social protection for migrants and returnees and facilitate the socio-economic reintegration of returnees;
- engage in pre-departure orientation training programmes that are aimed to help migrant workers in learning about the culture, language, regulations and
rights in their destination country to ensure their safety and security;

- campaign and advocate for the elimination of recruitment fees for migrant workers in both their origin and destination countries;
- ensure social integration of migrant workers;
- urge governments to acknowledge migrant workers’ contributions and actively include them in national disaster and crisis response plans, especially in Just Transition plans of destination countries. This is key in addressing past response shortcomings, fostering a more equitable and just approach to crisis management, and safeguarding the rights and well-being of all workers, regardless of their origin;

**REAFFIRMS**

the commitment of ITUC-Asia Pacific, along with the South Asian Regional Trade Union Confederation, Association of Southeast Asian Nations Trade Union Confederation, and Arab Trade Union Confederation to ensuring the complete and effective implementation of the resolutions outlined in this document.
Resolution No. 4

Solidarity with the Afghan people:
Calling for humanitarian aid and an end to gender apartheid

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

NOTES WITH CONCERN that Afghanistan is facing a serious humanitarian crisis since the Taliban took control of the country in 2021, which was further exacerbated by the catastrophic earthquakes in October 2023 that claimed thousands of casualties;

FURTHER NOTES that in 2023, over 17 million people are grappling with severe hunger, with women and girls being disproportionately impacted and potentially compelled to turn to risky survival measures;

HIGHLIGHTS that the systematic discrimination of women and girls, including their complete exclusion from the public life and violation of their rights such as the right to education and the right to work, has been dubbed by international organisations as tantamount to “gender apartheid”. This has been raised in international forums, such as in the United Nations Security Council meeting on 26 September 2023 as well as in the discussion of Afghanistan case related to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 111 (Discrimination in Employment and Occupation) at the Committee on the Application of Standards on 8 June 2023 during the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference;

CONDEMNS the continued violations of human and labour rights in Afghanistan under the Taliban rule, including the rights to education, decent work, and freedom of expression, assembly and association, as well as the pervasive discrimination and attacks against women and girls, LGBTQIA+, religious and ethnic minorities, trade unionists, human rights defenders, journalists, and other vulnerable groups;

UNDERSCORES the critical importance of respecting human rights and democratic values in maintaining peace and security. Ensuring the safety, free movement, wellbeing, and dignity of the Afghan people is paramount;

DEMANDS the Afghan government to end gender apartheid and establish a society that restores and upholds the dignity and rights of its citizens, including women’s and girls’ right to education and right to work;

URGES the international community and world leaders to:
  • augment the humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to urgently address the poverty and hunger suffered by the Afghan people, which was further aggravated by the tragic earthquakes;
• provide safe havens for Afghans who have left their country in pursuit of security; and
• take actions to safeguard the security of those who remain in Afghanistan and seek humanitarian visa;

CALLS ON

the ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates to stand in solidarity with the National Union of Afghanistan Workers (NUAWE) as it continues to demand for its legal existence and recognition, restoration of its license, and return of its properties as recommended by ILO Governing Body in June 2022;
Resolution No. 5

Solidarity with Nagaworld Union Leader, Chhim Sithar

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

RECALLS

that Chhim Sithar, President of the Labor Rights Supported Union (LRSU) of Khmer Employees of Nagaworld, was arrested at the Phnom Penh airport upon her arrival from the ITUC World Congress held in Melbourne, Australia in November 2022. The authorities alleged that she had violated her bail conditions by traveling abroad, resulting in her imprisonment;

DENOUNCES

the Phnom Penh Municipal Court's decision on 25 May 2023, imposing sentences of two years on, Chhim Sithar and one year and six months on eight other leaders of the union;

NOTES WITH CONCERN

that these sentences, handed down by the court for the charge of 'incitement to commit a felony,' are a severe injustice against the LRSU leaders for exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly;

URGES

the government of Cambodia to respect and protect the human and trade union rights of workers as part of its obligations under the international human rights laws and labour conventions;

CALLS ON

the Cambodian government to immediately overturn these sentences and unconditionally release Chhim Sithar and her fellow union leaders; and

STANDS IN SOLIDARITY

with Chhim Sithar, the LRSU, and all workers in Cambodia who are fighting for their rights, and will continue to support their struggle and advocate for justice, fairness, and respect for workers' rights in the country.
Resolution No. 6
Solidarity with the independent trade union movement and the imprisoned trade unionists in Hong Kong

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

EXPRESSES grave concerns over the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities’ persistent attacks against independent trade unionists, including Elizabeth Tang, General Secretary of the International Domestic Workers’ Federation, who was arrested in March, and Chris Mung, former Chief Executive of the defunct Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU), who was issued an arrest warrant in July, due to allegations that they committed serious offences under the National Security Law (NSL), including foreign collusion and incitement to secession;

CONDEMNS the Government of Hong Kong for weaponising the NSL to arrest and detain trade unionists and human rights defenders, clamp down on civil liberties, instill fear, and silence dissidence both within Hong Kong and internationally;

RECALLS that former HKCTU General Secretary Lee Cheuk Yan, former HKCTU Chair Carol Ng, and former Chair of the Hospital Authority Employees Alliance (HAEA) Winnie Yu have remained under remand since February 2020 and April 2021 for charges of subversion of the state, and that five leaders of the General Union of Hong Kong Speech Therapists were sentenced to 19 months’ imprisonment for allegedly seditious publication of three children’s story books published by the union;

NOTES that the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities do not respect their international obligations nor the recommendations of the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which have called on the government(s) to release the imprisoned trade unionists, refrain from using the NSL to arrest and prosecute human rights defenders, and repeal the NSL;

FURTHER NOTES that, on the contrary, more organisations and activists, including moderate critics, have fallen foul of the broadly scoped law and the authorities have announced new legislative plans to cover more national security offences and impose restrictions;

EXPRESSES grave concerns over the safety and situation of Hong Kong and diaspora trade unionists, human rights defenders, protesters, and civil society organisations, who are subjected to the ‘long arm’ application of the NSL through cross-border surveillance, censorship, freeze on assets, travel restrictions, and harassments by the authorities which claim that the law has extra-territorial applications;
COMMENDS the courage of trade unionists, human rights defenders, protesters, and civil society organisations for continuing to speak up and safeguard their role in defending human rights, civil liberties and the rule of law both within and outside Hong Kong;

SUPPORTS firmly the struggle of the independent trade union movement in Hong Kong and stands in solidarity with Lee Cheuk Yan, Carol Ng, Winnie Yu, Elizabeth Tang, and Chris Mung;

URGES the ITUC and the ITUC-Asia Pacific to take the following actions:

• provide support to the independent trade unionists in Hong Kong to maintain their normal operation, services, legal advocacy, and international trade union exchanges;
• provide regular updates on the developments in Hong Kong to ITUC and ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates;
• exhaust the complaint and reporting mechanisms of the ILO and UN treaty bodies; and
• organise campaigns to call for the release of Lee Chuk Yan when the trial commences;

CALLS ON the ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates to stand in solidarity with Hong Kong trade unionists and commit to inform the ITUC-Asia Pacific office of any official meetings or visits requested by the Chinese authorities and Chinese trade unions and to raise the issue of Hong Kong and the imprisoned trade unionists with the Chinese counterparts in all these meetings.
Resolution No. 7
Sustaining the struggle of the Indian trade union movement against the National Democratic Alliance NDA-led government’s anti-labour policies

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

RECALLS that the 23rd Regional General Council of the ITUC-Asia Pacific adopted a resolution on India that:

- denounced the amalgamation of 29 labour laws into four codes that undermine the previously won rights;
- spotlighted the non-compliance to labour standards of multinational corporations;
- drew attention to the restrictions imposed by the government in sending workers’ delegates to relevant tripartite meetings, such as the International Labour Conference (ILC) and the Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM);
- condemned the barring of the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), an affiliate of ITUC-AP, from tripartite bodies, including the International Labour Organization, based on unfounded charges;
- expressed support to the joint national convention of central trade unions and farmers on 24 August 2023 that forged unity to tackle the pressing issues that they face;
- outlined the Indian trade unions’ demands to the Indian government; and
- urged affiliates to show their solidarity with the struggle of the Indian trade union movement;

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

UNDERSCORES that there have been no substantive changes in the human and trade union rights situation in India, as evidenced by the exploitation of anti-terrorism laws to intimidate and punish journalists, thereby stifling the independent media’s crucial voice;

APPLAUDS the united efforts of central trade unions (CTUs), including 10 CTUs and several national independent federations and associations, and the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), representing over 500 farmers’ organisations, which led to the successful observance of 3 October 2023 as a solemn Black Day dedicated to the memory of the four protesting farmers who lost their lives on the same day in 2021;

SUPPORTS the subsequent three-day Mahapadav (massive protests) from 26 to 28 November 2023 and extensive preparations for large-scale protest actions in December 2023 and January 2024;
APPRECIATES the solidarity received from ITUC and ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates on 3 October 2023, as demonstrated by their observance of the Black Day by holding protests outside the Indian embassy in their respective countries and sending letters to the Prime Minister of India in support of Indian workers and farmers;

REITERATES the following demands to the Government of India:

- withdraw the four labour codes and the rules formulated by the Indian Government, which favour big corporations over workers;
- 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;
- withdraw the unlawful restrictions on sending workers' delegations for APRM, ILC and other meetings;
- 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-Asia Pacific Affiliates to continue to:

- raise concerns of Indian affiliates at the ILO Governing Body meetings, particularly the refusal of the Indian government to implement the decision of the Committee on the Application of Standards to conduct a Direct Contact Mission for ILO Convention 81 on Labour Inspection;
- express solidarity with the Indian working class, particularly on the days that the trade unions and farmers are organising massive protests. Such solidarity can be conveyed through diverse means, including, but not limited to, conducting demonstrations outside Indian embassies/missions, dispatching protest letters to prominent Indian government officials, and orchestrating social media campaigns that amplify the demands of Indian unions and farmers' federations.
Resolution No. 8
Urging Asian and Pacific governments to take decisive actions towards the restoration of democracy in Myanmar

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

EXPRESSES serious concern over the situation in Myanmar, where the military has taken control of the government through a coup since 1 February 2021, derogating all democratic principles and violating the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people, causing loss of lives and liberty of the country’s citizens;

RECOGNISES the Myanmar Spring Revolution and the people’s struggle for a federal democratic system;

ACKNOWLEDGES the efforts of the leadership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to find solutions to the Myanmar situation through the Five-Point Consensus;

URGES all ASEAN member-states to implement concrete and decisive actions with timelines to ensure that the ASEAN’s Five-Point Consensus is fully realised;

HOWEVER, NOTES that the ASEAN’s Five-Point Consensus is not sufficient to restore democracy in Myanmar as the military junta’s State Administration Council ignored and disregarded the agreements therein, as demonstrated by the continued use of airstrikes and attacks against civilians. In this regard, the ASEAN must take stronger and more decisive actions against the military junta in support of the Myanmar peoples’ aspiration for a genuine democracy;

SUPPORTS the Prague Appeal to the European Member-States and the European Union by the National Unity Consultative Council, the National Unity Government (NUG), ethnic resistance organisations, and the Spring revolutionary forces of Myanmar, particularly the call for the:

• expansion of sanctions against junta-affiliated enterprises, financial institutions, extractive operations and the jet fuel sector, while enforcing the sanctions that are already in place; and
• rejection of the junta’s claims to legitimacy, opposition of its attempts to stage sham elections, and blocking the junta’s participation in European and international forums including at United Nations meetings;

RESOLVES to take the following actions:

• urge the ASEAN member-states to support the recognition of the NUG as the legitimate government of...
Myanmar as this is an essential step towards resolving the political crisis in the country and restoring democracy. By taking this step, the ASEAN can demonstrate its commitment to protecting human rights and upholding democratic principles;

- call upon all governments in Asia and the Pacific region to reject the regime’s illegitimate, sham election and to support the demand for the immediate release of all political prisoners, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint;
- urge the ASEAN Foreign Ministers to develop an implementation plan that outlines concrete, practical, and measurable indicators with specific timelines to support the Five-Point Consensus as decided in the ASEAN Leaders Review and Decisions on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus on 11 November 2022 by engaging all stakeholders in Myanmar, including the democratically elected representatives, workers’ organisations, civil society, and ethnic groups;
- call on Asian and Pacific states to exert pressure on the military regime in Myanmar to comply with the Five-Point Consensus, including the immediate release of all political prisoners, the cessation of violence against civilians, the establishment of a dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, and the restoration of democratic rights and freedom in the country; and
- demand the ASEAN governments, specifically Singapore and Malaysia, to urge shipping companies, bunker companies, and fuel sellers headquartered in their respective countries to stop selling fuel or chartering tankers to the Myanmar junta, are these are instrumental in oppressing the people of Myanmar;

STANDS IN SOLIDARITY with the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM), the Myanmar Labour Alliance, and the people of Myanmar, and will continue to work towards defending the rights and freedoms of all workers;

REAFFIRMS its commitment to strengthen trade union solidarity and closer coordination to work towards restoring democracy and fundamental freedoms in Myanmar;

REQUESTS

- the CTUM to provide periodic progress reports to the ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional General Council and Regional Executive Bureau;
- the ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates to meet with and persuade their governments to stand up for the people of Myanmar and take urgent and decisive measures to support their call for the restoration of democracy in their country;
- the ITUC and the ITUC-Asia Pacific to refer to the decision of the International Labour Organization Governing Body Meeting regarding Myanmar.
Resolution No. 9

Urging the Philippine Government to spearhead sincere, meaningful, and tangible action to end all forms of violations of freedom of association and promote progressive, worker-centred, and race-to-the-top labour relations in the light of the 2023 ILO High-Level Tripartite Mission

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

EXPRESSES WITH GRAVE CONCERN that the climate of impunity in the Philippines has not ended in the light of the dark history of killings, political profiling and violence directed to trade unionists beginning during the Duterte Administration and now even after the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) High Level Tripartite Mission’s (HLTM) visit in January 2023;

CONDEMNS the murder of four (4) additional trade union leaders since January 2023 with the latest case being the killing of 67-year-old labor organiser, Jude Thaddeus Fernandez, on September 29, 2023, putting the number of trade union killings since 2016 at 72, with not a single case resolved;

FURTHER CONDEMNS the continuing red-tagging and other forms of trade union harassment, particularly those directed against Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (SENTRO), and Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) across the different regions in the country with an alarming number of cases in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, Central Visayas, and the entire island of Mindanao;

UNDERSCORES that these systemic violations of freedom of association are borne out of the aberrant viewpoint whereby state forces view labour relations through the perspective of anti-insurgency, rather than through the lens of human rights and labour rights;

IS DEEPLY ALARMED that the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) continues to drag its feet on the substantive implementation, even cherry-picking the recommendations, of the ILO HLTM to create the impression of progress, and deliberately carrying out actions that violate the spirit of tripartism enshrined in ILO Convention 144. This includes misrepresenting before the ILO last September 2023, that there is tripartite support for a Roadmap on Freedom of Association (FOA), despite that the majority of trade union representatives in the National Tripartite Industrial Peace Council (NTIPC) either did not sign or withdraw their support for its endorsement;

EXPRESSES solidarity with the struggles of the Philippine labour movement as it continues to defend and advance workers’ and trade union rights amidst tremendous challenges;
RESOLVES to urge the Philippine government to end impunity by earnestly investigating trade union killings and ensuring that the perpetrators of the crimes and their principal planners are held to account;

RESOLVES FURTHER to urge the Philippine government, jointly working with ILO stakeholders, to undertake genuine consultations to finalize the Roadmap on FOA in line with all the recommendations of the ILO HLTM, including:

- amending Executive Order 23 towards a Presidential Commission with tripartite representation;
- establishing a truth commission - a 'specialized, eminent, independent non-judicial body to review cases referred by the presidential commission with a view to receiving and documenting testimony and making proposals for compensation' - through legislation or by working with the Commission on Human Rights;
- strengthening the National Tripartite Industrial Peace Council Monitoring Mechanism;
- elevating the Revised 2011-2012 Guidelines for engagement protocol for state forces as it relates to legitimate trade union activities into an Executive Order issued by no less than the President to ensure full enforcement;
- certifying as urgent and immediately pass and enact long-pending priority labour legislations, especially on Security of Tenure and FOA; and
- immediately ratifying essential ILO Conventions, such as the Violence and Harassment Convention of 2019, (No. 190) and the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81).
Resolution No. 10
Promoting an inclusive and sustainable trade, investment, and economic integration in Asia and the Pacific

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

RECOGNISES
the relentless struggles and engagements of trade unions for inclusive and sustainable trade, investment and economic integration in Asia and the Pacific;

HOWEVER, NOTES
the current model of international and regional trade, investment and economic integration still has serious deficits in rights, decent and quality job creation, accountability, labour and social protection, and inclusion, thereby continuing to perpetuate different forms of inequalities;

IS DEEPLY CONCERNED
about the secrecy in the process of trade and investment negotiations without a meaningful dialogue with workers and their trade unions. This results in inadequate impact assessment and remedial measures, as well as empty labour and environmental chapter without an enforceable mechanism;

UNDERSCORES
that a New Social Contract is key to advancing sustainable and inclusive trade, investment, and economic integration to serve the people and the planet;

THEREFORE, URGES
governments to invite social partners from the beginning of any negotiation on trade, investment or economic integration and ensure that the ensuing agreements have a clear reference to international instruments that protect labour and human rights as well as the environment, such as the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization. Such steps are integral in creating decent and quality jobs, promoting a just transition, fostering equality for all, to name a few;

IN PARTICULAR, NOTES
that the following pillars of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) among Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the United States, representing 40 percent of the global gross domestic product, has been negotiated: Trade, Supply Chains, Clean Economy, and Fair Economy;

HIGHLIGHTS
that the IPEF Supply Chain Agreement, finalised in September 2023, would establish a tripartite IPEF Labor Rights Advisory Board, with government, worker, and employer representatives;

IN THIS REGARD, REAFFIRMS
its commitment to ensuring close coordination with the concerned ITUC/ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates as well as like-
minded organisations to make the IPEF Labour Rights Advisory Board truly effective and representative, as well as to make sure that the other pillars of IPEF (Trade, Clean Economy, and Fair Economy) respect human and trade union rights;

FURTHER RESOLVES to take the following actions:

• advocacy for a legally binding treaty on business and human rights to make due diligence in supply chains in line with the ILO Fundamental Conventions, the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and other international instruments for protecting workers’ rights mandatory; and

• campaign for the incorporation of labour and environmental rights compliance in trade and investment agreements with enforceable mechanisms in case of any violation, for example, like the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement’s Rapid-Response Labor Mechanism;

REQUESTS the ITUC-Asia Pacific, together with the ITUC, to take the following actions:

• develop an international labour standard on supply chains as a follow-up work to the ILO supply chains and decent work gaps analysis;

• continued policy dialogues with international financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank, to ensure that labour rights are respected and that the production, trade, or use of any toxic substance, including asbestos, are banned in their projects.
Resolution No. 11

Upholding the fundamental rights of all workers in Korea

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

RECALLS the resolution on Korea, adopted by the 23rd Regional General Council of ITUC-Asia Pacific in Phuket, Thailand on 29-30 August 2023, to express its grave concern about the increasing labour suppression under the Yoon administration and to urge the Korean government to revise the Trade Union and Labor Relations Adjustment Act (TULRAA);

DEEPLY DEPLORES that the Yoon administration has continued to destroy the trade union movement with illegitimate interferences, dirty tricks and skewed information, and to undermine social dialogue by excluding the most representative trade union from tripartite structures;

DRAWS ATTENTION TO the poor implementation of the Serious Accident Punishment Act, which is lacking in timely and swift investigation and prosecution. Since the introduction of the Act in January 2022, there were more than 300 major and fatal accidents subject to the Act but only 21 cases were prosecuted with a delayed investigation and lenient punishment. Furthermore, the government is pushing for a retrogressive revision of the Act to extend the grace period for businesses with fewer than 50 employees, where 80% of the fatal accidents occurs. In contrast, in the present climate of labour suppression, thousands of workers and unionists are being investigated and prosecuted for their legitimate union activities;

DENOUNCES the further infringement of migrant workers’ rights through the pilot programme to introduce domestic migrant workers without rights as well as following the regressive change in the decree of the Act on the Employment of Foreign Workers. In addition to the existing restrictions on the change of workplace, migrant workers cannot move out of the local area where they are employed upon their arrival;

STRONGLY URGES the Korean government to:

1. stop its suppression of labour and to revise the TULRAA to bring it in line with the ILO Conventions No. 87 and No. 98 and to ensure that all workers can fully exercise the right to form and join a trade union, the right to bargain collectively and the right to strike, as recommended by the United Nations Human Rights Committee. Particularly, the government should immediately proclaim and enforce the amendment to the Article 2 and 3 of the Act which has been passed in the plenary of the National Assembly on 9 November 2023;
• fully implement the Serious Accident Punishment Act without the extension of grace period for the businesses with fewer than 50 employees and ensure a timely and swift investigation and prosecution, so that the government fulfils its obligation to protect the safety and health of all workers;
• reinvite the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), the most representative national trade union centres, to tripartite committees and social security governing bodies to restore genuine and meaningful social dialogue;
• repeal the regressive change in the decree of the Act on the Employment of Foreign Workers that restricts migrant workers’ right to mobility;
• withdraw the pilot programme that introduces migrant domestic workers without rights; and
• release workers and trade unionists detained because of their legitimate union activities;

STANDS IN SOLIDARITY

with our Korean affiliates, the FKTU and the KCTU, for their relentless struggles against the anti-labour Yoon Suk-Yeol administration in order to ensure that all workers can exercise their fundamental rights, in particular, freedom of association, right to bargain collectively, and occupational health and safety, to name a few;

REAFFIRMS

the commitment of the ITUC-Asia Pacific, as well as the FKTU and the KCTU, to take necessary actions to amplify the voices of Korean workers at all levels.
Resolution No. 12

Combatting racism, hate crime, xenophobia, and Islamophobia

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

COMMITS TO

the principles of equality, justice, and dignity for all individuals, regardless of their gender, race, religion and ethnicity;

RECOGNISES

that hate crime and hate speech are a violation of human rights and an affront to the values of our union and our society;

NOTES

that there has been a worrisome rise in hate speech and xenophobia, particularly against Muslims. This has been fuelled by the spread of misinformation and by the actions of certain political figures. Its impacts have been felt strongly, with many people feeling targeted, harassed, or even attacked because of their religion or ethnicity.

FURTHER NOTES

that in March 2019, a gunman attacked two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, killing 51 people and injuring many others. The attacker was motivated by white supremacist beliefs and hatred towards Muslims. Moreover, in January 2023, an anti-Islam activist burned copies of the Muslim holy book near a Copenhagen Mosque and outside the Turkish embassy in Sweden and Denmark;

HIGHLIGHTS

that the Rohingya Muslims have faced severe persecution, largely driven by their religious beliefs. The Rohingya have been subjected to violence, displacement, and systemic discrimination, leading to one of the direst humanitarian crises in recent times;

ACKNOWLEDGES

that the declaration of March 15th as the International Day for Combating Islamophobia by the United Nations in 2022 marks a significant and commendable step towards raising awareness about the pervasive issue of Islamophobia worldwide. This designation underscores the importance of addressing and combating discrimination against individuals based on their Islamic faith;

STANDS AGAINST

hate speech and xenophobia to ensure that everyone is able to live peacefully without being subjected to discrimination or violence;

CONDEMNS UNEQUIVOCALLY

hate crime and hate speech, reaffirming its commitment to combating all forms of discrimination and prejudice;

CALLS ON

government officials and leaders to take decisive action, including the implementation of laws and policies to protect vulnerable groups and hold perpetrators accountable;
URGES its members to:

- proactively engage and promote tolerance and diversity within their workplaces and communities. This includes educating members about the impact of hate crime and hate speech, fostering reporting mechanisms, and providing support to those affected;
- take a resolute stance against hate crime and hate speech, emphasising the importance of speaking out against these forms of discrimination and prejudice wherever they may occur.

COMMITS to working towards a more inclusive and tolerant society by collaborating with other organisations in advocating for the rights and dignity of all individuals, irrespective of their race, religion, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics.
Resolution No. 13

Solidarity with the earthquake victims in Türkiye

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

EXPRESSES its solidarity with the people of Türkiye who have been affected by the devastating earthquakes that struck the country at a magnitude of 7.8 and 7.5 resulted in death of 50,703 and hundreds of thousands injured;

NOTES that the earthquake was recorded as the biggest earthquake of the century in the region, directly affecting 11 cities and 14 million citizens of Türkiye. A total of 227,027 buildings were demolished or highly damaged leaving millions of people without home;

COMMENDS the efforts of the Turkish Government, emergency responders, international organizations, all workers, and Turkish unions as well as the volunteers involved in providing assistance to those affected by the earthquake;

RECOGNISES the vital role that labour unions play in ensuring the safety and well-being of workers during public emergency situations;

DEMANDS for increased collaboration between labour unions and relevant authorities to develop and implement effective emergency response plans as well as for increased efforts to promote earthquake preparedness and mitigate the potential damage caused by these natural disasters;

UNDERSCORES such plans and efforts should prioritise the protection of workers and their families, and incorporate the expertise and resources of labour unions in order to strengthen the overall response to emergencies. This includes investing in early warning systems, developing and enforcing building codes that prioritise earthquake-resistant construction, and providing education and training on earthquake safety and response;

STANDS IN SOLIDARITY with the people of Türkiye and calls on governments, employers and international trade union movement for a coordinated response to support those affected by the earthquake;

RECOGNISES that by prioritising earthquake preparedness and resilience, we can help to protect our communities from the destructive impact of these disasters and ensure that we are better equipped to respond and recover in their aftermath.
Resolution No. 14

Solidarity with the Rohingya People and the Chin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Shan, Rakhine and all other ethnic groups in Myanmar

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

REAFFIRMS

Its commitment to upholding the principles of justice, human rights, and solidarity among all marginalized and oppressed communities;

NOTES

• that the Rohingya People have been subjected to a long-standing and ongoing humanitarian crisis characterized by persecution, displacement, and violence, causing immense suffering to the Rohingya People and other ethnic groups in Myanmar, such as Karen, Karenni, Kachin, Mon, Shan, Rakhine, and Chin;
• that the Rohingya People have faced systemic discrimination and violence in Myanmar by the oppressive regimes leading to their massive displacement and forcing them to live as refugees and undocumented migrants in neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh, Thailand, India and China;
• that the Rohingya refugees as well as all other refugees from the bombed, burnt villages of Sagaing, Magway, Karenni, Karen and Chin regions have been living in overcrowded and precarious conditions in refugee camps that are lacking in essential resources and infrastructure to support their basic needs;

FURTHER NOTES

that the United Nations has referred to the Rohingya crisis as a ‘textbook example of ethnic cleansing’ and that the United States government calls it a ‘genocide’. Numerous reports from international organisations and human rights bodies have highlighted the severity of the situation and the urgent need for intervention;

HIGHLIGHTS

that the international community, including International Labour Organization (ILO), has recognised the need for action to address the root cause of the Rohingya crisis, which is the military regime, and to provide support to the affected communities;

STRONGLY CONDEMNNS

the ongoing persecution and violence against the Rohingya People and all ethnic groups in Myanmar by military regime that pushes them to live in dire and precarious conditions in refugee camps;

CALLS UPON

the international community, governments, and relevant international organisations to take immediate and sustained actions to address the root cause of the Rohingya crisis, which is the military regime, including ending the discrimination, violence, and displacement faced by Rohingya people;
URGES all ITUC-Asia Pacific affiliates to express their solidarity with the Rohingya People as well as with the Chin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Rakhine, Shan, and TaAung communities, and support campaigns and initiatives aimed at raising awareness and providing assistance to Rohingya refugees and all displaced individuals;

COMMITS to working in collaboration with other labour organisations, non-government organisations, and human rights groups to exert collective pressure on governments and international bodies to take a decisive action on the Myanmar crisis, recognising that a regime change is necessary to solve the Rohingya crisis.
Resolution No. 15

Solidarity with the victims of the earthquake in Nepal

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

NOTES that on the night of 3 November 2023, an earthquake struck the remote western hill districts about 500 km from the capital Kathmandu, causing casualties in Jajarkot, the epicentre of the quake and affecting the neighbouring districts of West Rukum, Salyan, Rolpa, Dailekh, Dang, Jumla, and 13 other districts were affected by the earthquake;

FURTHER NOTES that the earthquake claimed lives of 157 people and left a total of 366 people injured. Around 27,000 houses were completely destroyed, while other houses made of stone and mud are now uninhabitable. Following the earthquake, more than 400 aftershocks have occurred, significantly impacting the local population;

RECOGNISES the vital role of the ITUC affiliates in Nepal, namely, All Nepal Trade Union Federation, General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions, and Nepal Trade Union Congress, in ensuring the safety and well-being of workers and survivors during the emergency situation. More than 100 volunteers were mobilised to help the earthquake survivors by:

• establishing camps in different villages by volunteers, as designated by local authorities;
• providing assistance in the treatment of the injured;
• retrieving food and other essentials from the houses destroyed by the earthquake and distributing them to the affected families;
• clearing debris and creating conditions suitable for the construction of temporary housing; and
• building temporary housing using available materials;

STANDS IN SOLIDARITY with the people affected by the earthquakes;

CALLS UPON the government of Nepal to prioritise increasing preparedness for and building resilience from earthquakes, and urges the government, the employers, and the international trade union movement to carry out a coordinated response to support those affected by the earthquake.
Resolution No. 16

Protecting workers’ rights in Sri Lanka amidst the severe economic crisis

The 5th ITUC-Asia Pacific Regional Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 November 2023

IS DEEPLY CONCERNED about the events that occurred Sri Lanka in 2021 and 2022, in particular:
  • the severe economic crisis, which resulted in the shortage of essential consumer goods, such as fuel, gas and medicines, prompting a popular uprising that led to the resignation of the incumbent President, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, from their positions;
  • the imposition of unbearable taxes on workers following the declaration that the government is bankrupt. This puts unjust burden on the working people, rather than on the rich who have been evading taxes over a long period of time; and
  • the enactment of a legislation in the parliament that imposes further taxes on hard earned funds of more than 4 million workers contributions’ to the provident funds, which, is already being taxed at 14 per cent;

OBSERVES that the government is attempting to bring in a single labour code, by repealing laws that have protected workers’ rights for nearly hundred years. The proposed new law includes regressive provisions, such as the hire-and-fire policy, allowing 12-hour work day without overtime, curtailment of the right to strike by making secret ballot compulsory, and granting the Commissioner of Labour powers to control trade union activities;

HIGHLIGHTS that the Supreme Court, in a recent historic judgement, upheld that the Former President, Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and several others are totally responsible for the present economic crisis;

URGES the government of Sri Lanka to take necessary steps to implement a progressive tax system that does not put unbearable burdens on the citizens, particularly the workers, and to refrain from using the fragile situation of the country to justify the introduction of anti-labour law reforms without proper consultation with trade unions.