



**14<sup>TH</sup> WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS**  
**New Delhi (India), 25-28 March 2000**

**POLICIES**  
**and**  
**PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

**WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS**

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For K. Mahendra, history  
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K. Mahendra  
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## Foreword

The 14th World Congress of Trade Unions convened by the WFTU at New Delhi from 25th to 28th March 2000 was attended by 421 delegates from Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea, China, Syria and other Arab Countries, from Latin America and Asia and also from Britain, France, America, Japan, Australia and Russia. The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Krishan Kant, Vice President of the Republic of India and received messages of President of Syria and Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh. The Conference also received messages from the Secretary General of United Nations and General Secretary of ICFTU.

On 23rd March was held the International Trade Union Conference against the economic blockade of Cuba, Iraq, Libya and Iran and sanctions against Sudan, India and Pakistan.

The discussions revealed the stark reality about workers conditions in the period of globalization and neo-liberalism during the phase of Multinational Corporations. The power of the nation-states is reduced and power of the market has increased. USA is pushing forward as super power claiming it to be a unipolar world.

The policies of globalisation and neo-liberalism have led to strengthening the grip of finance capital.

The workers in the developed countries are facing unemployment and attack on social security. The workers in the developing countries are facing growing unemployment and poverty.

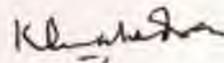
The workers in all parts of the world are struggling to defend their conditions of work and a just social order.

The need of the hour is unity of Trade unions and united actions both at the national and international level.

USA and its allies ignored the United Nations and resorted to bombing of Yugoslavia and tried to impose a rule of their choice.

We have published the declaration of the Conference against economic blockade and sanctions, the report of WFTU as adopted, the plan of action and important resolutions.

The publication will help to the better understanding of the economic situation and the tasks of the trade unions.



K.L. Mahendra  
General Secretary  
All India Trade Union Congress

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1.1. As we enter a new century and a new millennium, the working people and their trade unions all over the world are confronting a worsening world economic and social situation. Economic disparities as between the rich and poor countries as well as between rich and poor people within countries have vastly increased. The social consequences of the worsening economic crisis and financial turmoil undermine economic security, social standards and basic human rights.

1.2. Millions have lost jobs and millions more are threatened with total deprivation of their means of livelihood. One-third of the world labour force is either unemployed or under-employed. Mass poverty is increasing everywhere and became all the more widespread, 'as the financial crisis in East Asia and its world-wide repercussions resulted in cutting global output by an estimated 2000 billion dollars in 1998-2000. Sixty countries have been getting steadily poorer since 1980. More than one billion people are unable to meet even their most basic human needs. Over 800 million are under-nourished and hungry. Nearly 60 per cent of the population of developing countries, more than 2.5 billion people, have no access to basic sanitation and 30 per cent cannot get safe, drinkable water.

1.3. As the Human Development Report 1999 issued by the UNDP points out, inequality within and between nations has been rising drastically since the early 1980s. The income gap between the fifth of the world's people living in the richest countries and the fifth in the poorest was 74 to 1 in 1997, up from 60 to 1 in 1990 and 30 to 1 in 1960. By the late 1990s, the fifth of the world's people living in the highest income countries had 86 per cent of world GDP, 82 per cent of world export markets and 68 per cent of foreign direct investment while the bottom fifth had just 1 per cent in each case. The OECD countries, with 19 per cent of the global population, have 71 per cent of global trade in goods and services, 58 per cent of foreign direct investment and 91 per cent of all internet users. The world's 200 richest people more than doubled their net worth in the four years to 1998, to more than 1 trillion dollars.

1.4. The achievements of the scientific and technological revolution which have transformed production processes, transport and communication and information technology, have been hijacked by the rich and powerful oligarchies - the transnational corporations and their banking and financial cartels. World public opinion, the working people whose creative labour turned these achievements into a reality, the governments and parliaments find it increasingly difficult to control

these processes which are now totally under the grip of those who dominate the global financial markets.

The present phase of capitalism is marked by an unprecedented global concentration and centralisation of finance. Finance capital today is just not nation-state based. It has assumed an international dimension, beyond the control of any nation-state. Despite this new phenomenon of globalisation of finance, under the law of cyclical crisis of capitalism, following an expansion in the post second-world-war period, is undergoing a long slump which began with the end of 1960s. The current slump, like all others, is expressed through surplus capital unable to find sufficiently profitable outlets in the expansion of productive capacity. It has thus aimed at providing alternative outlets in the financial arena that are being implemented through the agencies like World Bank, IMF and WTO. As usual, such policies confine the world economy to a stagnant vicious circle, out of which they offer no escape.

1.5 Thus, in the last two decades, the neo-liberal policies which are based on policies of privatisation as the only viable economic solution have, on the contrary, led to the unprecedented concentration of wealth and power in a few hands, driving vast masses of the working people – in industry, agriculture and services – into a situation of increasing economic insecurity, poverty and deprivation. As the UN says, fewer than 400 rich persons have a total wealth equal to the annual income of half of the world population.

1.6. The global strategies of the transnational corporations and their banks and finance structures are now presented to the world's peoples as the new compulsions of "globalisation" especially in the background of the controversial GATT agreements. The "neo-liberal model" is thus sought to be enforced through the "opening up of markets" to transnational capital. The OECD has outlined this strategy in its draft Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI). Utilising their unchallenged economic and military superiority, the United States, their Wall Street financiers and the Pentagon and backed by their allies, are thus seeking to impose their "new world order" in what they designate as a "unipolar" world. The global system of economic and financial institutions which are dominated and controlled by them – and holding to ransom the developing countries burdened with an unpayable external debt and suffering from the steep decline in prices of their export commodities - is being used to influence and control the global economy, trade and finance, to the detriment of the national interests of countries and social interests of the working people, as the capitalist system cannot defend the socio-

economic and cultural interests of the working people. Thus at the end of the present millennium, the world finds itself in an unprecedented, intolerable and dangerous situation.

1.7. Furthermore, the attempts to create societies and a civilisation based solely on the short-term self-interest of particular individuals, groups or nations and ignoring the long-term consequences of such a development strategy on the environment, have resulted in the huge waste and exhaustion of natural resources, leading to an impending, global ecological disaster.

1.8. The social consequences of "casino capitalism" and the "bubble economy" nurtured by those who control the global financial markets are shocking in terms of their human cost, growing poverty and hunger, misery and deprivation. Their very existence shows, on the contrary, the immense increase in the volume and concentration of capital and therefore of financial means which could have been utilised to solve many urgent social needs.

1.9. The recent financial turmoil which began in Asia and has since spread to Russia and then to Brazil and other countries, just as the earlier Mexican turmoil, which is now recognised as in-built into the capitalist system and the very magnitude of the present crisis, have stressed the need to impose national and international control over the world markets in currency and finance and to end the rampant speculation and economic crimes which have been committed against nations and peoples.

1.10. The neo-liberal policies of privatisation and the liquidation of state and public control over strategic sectors of the economy and the elimination of all controls to check the relentless push of private monopolies to maximise profits, have undermined economic and social development, especially in the developing countries.

1.11. The policies imposed through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in favour of the transnational corporations and financial groups, have destabilised national economies, worsening the problems of unequal trade and economic relations and adding to the outflow of resources from developing countries, besides affecting the sovereignty of nations, causing job losses, problems of health and educational services, adversely affecting the rights of women, etc. The IMF and WTO totally ignore Commitment 8 of the Copenhagen Summit "that when structural adjustment programmes are agreed to they include social development goals, in particular eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment, and enhancing social integration."

1.12. These policies of neo-liberal globalisation which are enforced at the cost of human rights and social justice and have created immense human misery must be fought against and changed.

1.13. Military interventions by the dominant powers, artificially created wars and conflicts, the arbitrary blockades and sanctions which are imposed have become day-to-day realities, undermining and destroying existing international institutions, laws and world security.

1.14. Neo-liberal capitalist globalisation must be confronted and defeated. We must seriously fight in every country for the defence of economic, political and social gains and establish solidarity and powerful international alliances between peoples, trade unions, social and cultural forces, political forces and nations. In this sense, united struggles for the daily defence of demands and a strong international solidarity of workers and trade unions are crucial in this regard. The WFTU believes that to achieve this task, trade unions the world over, irrespective of ideological and organisational outlooks and affiliations, should unite and act together with all other democratic forces fighting against exploitation and imperialist aggression and are striving for peace, development, justice and social progress.

## II

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND SETBACKS IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY**

2.1. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has been a period of stupendous achievements and transformations on the way people work and live. The achievements have immensely enhanced the capacity to produce everything the people need and to assure a better life, social security and economic security for all, on the basis of the principles of social assistance and social insurance.

2.2. But these achievements have failed to involve a greater part of the world population to the benefits of technical progress.

2.3. According to estimates, 86 per cent of the world's wealth belongs to 22 per cent of the world population.

2.4. Inequality in the world has increased as the process of concentration and centralisation of capital has aggravated. The 225 richest capitalists in the world have a combined wealth of more than 1,000 billion dollars, equal to the annual income of 47 per cent of the world's poorest population – about 2.5 billion people.

2.5. The UN Human Development Report 1998 estimates that world consumption expenditures reached \$24 trillion in 1998, six times that of 1950, compared to a world population growth of 2.5 times during the

same period. In other words, this corresponds to what is produced for consumption, that is, produced and serviced by the working people. However, despite such enormous production, the less-developed countries are still falling behind in meeting people's needs. The average African household today consumes 20% less than it did 25 years ago. Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures—the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%.

2.6. The anti-people and anti-social way in which new technology was introduced – solely for the purpose of profit maximisation and to intensify exploitation and reinforce imperialist hegemony – involves huge social costs as well as environmental damage which can endanger future generations

2.7. In the new era of neo-liberal globalisation, all these contradictions have aggravated as seen in the economic crisis and financial turmoil enveloping several regions, which are becoming a grave threat to global peace and economic security.

2.8. The charter of demands and policy statements formulated by the trade unions in all countries have sharply pointed out the defects and distortions resulting from the neo-liberal policies aimed at limiting and eventually liquidating the role of the state and other public institutions in the economy. The unions insist on a positive role and intervention of the State and public sector of the economy which is essential for the relatively greater protection of people's interests and relatively greater economic and social security of all citizens. The massive protest actions in many countries and other trade union struggles have, on the other hand, focussed on policies which can assure a balanced and sustainable economic and social development.

2.9. Towards the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, political struggles for human emancipation emerged along with the social movements led by the trade unions as well as the national liberation movements seeking the elimination of the colonial systems established by the imperialist countries. The systems of exploitation which prevailed, as imperialist powers built up their colonial empires, can be considered as the initial phase of "globalisation" (the creation of a world capitalist market). These global trends also had a sequel - the emergence of new social movements led by the trade unions as well as the national liberation movements to liquidate the system of colonialism and the growing urge for the establishment of a socialist system upholding social security and an adequate democratic control over all economic processes.

2.10. The Russian Revolution of 1917 stimulated the people's movements for social change, invigorated the trade union movement and gave a tremendous impetus to national liberation struggles in various countries and ushered in a new era in the history of humankind..

2.11. But these movements for human progress were disrupted by the mounting attacks by Big Capital and reactionary forces against the working people, by two world wars, a prolonged global economic crisis, an arms race and cold war. The development of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons, in the post-second-world war period, not only ate up huge resources which could have been used for people's needs but has threatened the very existence of our planet.

2.12. The world therefore needs the United Nations which was established after the victory over fascism and nazism, today more than ever before. The strict implementation of the UN charter is essential to stop the wars and conflicts and to build peace based on common security and international economic cooperation for human progress. For this purpose, the UN structures must be reformed and democratised, reflecting the true interests of all its member States and all peoples of the world.

2.13. The last five years have however seen a dangerous tendency on the part of the rich and powerful States to marginalise the United Nations. Even membership fees were withheld to politically influence UN policies. The decisions of the UN General Assembly concerning development strategy and the Programmes of Action adopted by the World Summits convened by the UN on social development, women's rights, protection of the environment, food security, habitat and human rights are not being seriously implemented or are sidelined or undermined.

2.14. Further, the USA and its allies are determined not only to marginalise the United Nations but also to reduce the same to a rubber stamp. Even the UN Security Council is being utilised to strangle many countries, politically and economically, with sanctions.

2.15. Peace-loving forces throughout the world have strongly denounced the massive bombing of Yugoslavia by the US-led NATO military alliance, in gross violation of international law and the United Nations Charter, destroying factories and other undertakings, killing and injuring hundreds of workers and depriving thousands of their means of livelihood. The US and Britain decided on their own to bomb a member country of the UN, Iraq, while the UN Security Council was in session and without consulting the Security Council. The United States had launched air raids and missile attacks on pharmaceutical factories in Libya and Sudan. Sanctions and

boycotts are imposed on countries without reference to the United Nations. Despite repeated resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly, the US Administration refuses to lift its blockade of Cuba. Israel, backed by the US and NATO, refuses to implement the resolutions of the UN Security Council for the total withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied Arab territories.

2.16. The UN campaign upholding Disarmament for Development is ignored. The capitalist military-industrial complexes continue to force governments to expand their military budgets.

2.17. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are being used by the rich and powerful States to impose economic policies which are harmful to social development and people's sovereignty. The so-called "adjustment measures" recommended by the IMF have caused a huge rise in unemployment, a serious decline in living standards and an aggravation of the economic and social crisis in many countries and in almost all of the developing countries.

2.18. Despite the tall talk about their concern for human rights and the struggle against poverty, the governments of most OECD countries have failed to implement their commitment to provide Official Development Assistance (ODA) at the rate of 0.70 per cent of their GNP - a commitment which was reiterated in Copenhagen and other UN Conferences. It has been estimated that if all donors had met the aid target, annual ODA would be \$100 billion above its current level. That amount, over 10 years, would be more than sufficient to ensure that everyone in developing countries had access to basic social services - including basic education, health care, family planning, adequate nutrition and safe water and sanitation.

#### **IMPOSED REFORMS IGNORE SOCIAL ASPECTS AND WORKERS' DEMANDS**

2.19. Reforms carried out in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe over the last decade have, as a rule, ignored the social aspects and workers' just demands and interests.

2.20. This has resulted in considerable drops in the basic social indices, such as the per capita GDP, and this latter index has thrown most of the countries many years back. A sizeable portion of the population have incomes below the subsistence minimum, which actually reduces them to absolute poverty. More often than not, wages, pensions and other benefits are not paid regularly. Massive unemployment has become a commonplace feature in the region. The workers respond with protest actions, quite bitter at times, organised by trade unions.

2.21. In most of the countries, the unions have been stripped of the rights they used to enjoy, such as the rights to legislative initiative, participation in enterprise management, health and safety control, administration of social insurance, etc. Consequently, people have no other choice but to work in unhealthy and hazardous conditions, without being able to take a proper rest or get medical treatment. The tripartite bodies in these countries are often perfunctory, and the collective agreements are not honoured despite present legislation. In defiance of the laws, the authorities and the employers interfere in the affairs of trade union organisations, and even resort to direct anti-union actions.

2.22. Trade unions of the region used to render generous support to their fraternal organisations in the working class movement. Now, it is they who need solidarity with their struggles in defence of workers' interests.

2.23. On the other hand, in China and Vietnam, innovative policies of reforming the system of central planning have achieved impressive results and high rates of economic growth. China has increased the GDP by around ten per cent every year and has become one of the leading economic powers in a continent which serious economic crisis. The independent, balanced and comprehensive development of multi-sectoral economies in Syria and other countries has also shown impressive results. A key aspect of all these reforms is the active involvement of the working people and trade unions in fostering democratic participation, democratic supervision and social regulation.

2.24. These positive experiences inspire trade unions in all other countries to press for people's participation in development through the democratisation of all decision-making as well as all structures of management and control, including corporate governance, and to project a democratic alternative to the anti-people structural reforms imposed by the International Monetary Fund. Ranged against the unions in this struggle for a democratic alternative is the unholy alliance of the IMF, World Bank, the TNCs, local oligarchies, the ruling aristocracy and technocrats. Evidently, radical democratic reforms will not be implemented without strong and united social struggles.

### **REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROUPINGS**

2.25. The global economic situation is now considerably influenced by the ongoing trends towards regional economic integration. Following the efforts of the West European countries to promote regional integration, similar efforts are being made in other regions. In the Americas, the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) has been established by the US, Canada and Mexico. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been in existence for quite some time. The South

Asian countries have established the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. In Latin America, there is the Latin American Economic System, the Andean Pact and the Mercosur. Attempts are being made by the Arab and African countries to establish the Arab Common Market as well as the African Common Market. Discussions are now going on concerning the establishment of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) seeking to expand the NAFTA to the whole continent. Trade unions in the region reject this proposal since they find it devoid of any social content and designed solely to advance the interests of the United States and its transnational corporations.

2.26. The regional integration among countries of the European Union has now led to the establishment of a common currency, although some of its members have still not decided to join the currency union.

2.27. There is an intensive debate in all the countries now experimenting with regional economic integration on the advantages and disadvantages of such integration, on the concrete aims and as to who are its real beneficiaries. Extreme concern has been expressed with regard to the protection of the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises and the farming sector as against the competition from the monopolies. Protection of national industry and sectors of the national economy which are vulnerable to competition from abroad has become a matter of deep concern, especially from the point of view of safeguarding jobs.

2.28. Trade unions in the US, Canada and Mexico are becoming increasingly critical of the NAFTA. While the protagonists of NAFTA claimed that there would be a net gain of at least 300,000 jobs in the USA, in reality, there has so far been a loss of 25,000 jobs and over a million workers were dislocated when corporations transferred production.

2.29. When the big monopolies and TNCs are dominating the economy and taking all the decisions themselves without involving the governments, parliaments, unions and the consumers, it is but natural that the economic integration processes are totally dominated by them and serve the interests of dominant imperialist interests. That is why all such experiments should be subjected to the democratic control of parliaments and supervised by control bodies which have adequate representation for the workers and trade unions, consumer protection and other social interest groups including small and middle agricultural producers.

### III

## **THE STRUGGLE FOR A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE, AGAINST NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALISATION AND FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

3.1. The ongoing drive towards neoliberal globalisation backed by the billionaire financiers from the Wall Street and other headquarters of global finance have now run into a serious crisis. The massive funds which are deployed by the big banks, TNCs and professional speculators, now out of control of any government or international institution, have destabilised many national currencies and national economies as, for instance, in Southeast Asia, Russia, Brazil and other countries. The speculative bubble, the fraudulent transactions and widespread corruption have undermined the banking system in many countries.

3.2. World public opinion is getting increasingly concerned at the growing anarchy and crisis in the world markets while the Transnational Corporations (TNCs) closely linked with global finance and banking capital are seeking to further reinforce their stranglehold over the key sectors of the world economy.

3.3. According to an UNCTAD study, in 1997, the value of international production attributed to the TNCs and their 450,000 foreign affiliates, was 3,500 billion dollars as measured by the accumulated stock of foreign direct investment (FDI), and 9,500 billion dollars as measured by global sales. Global exports by TNC affiliates are now some 2,000 billion dollars and their global assets are estimated at 13,000 billion dollars.

3.4. Neoliberal globalisation seeks to further entrench the stranglehold of the TNCs. This is spelt out in the OECD proposal for a Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) as well as the conditionalities imposed by the IMF and the World Bank, forcing countries to open up their economies to foreign capital, liquidate all measures to safeguard national interests and national industry and to impose privatisation of all businesses and services.

3.5. The new structures of world finance capital are posing a grave threat to global economic security and stability. While economic growth in the industrialised countries has grown only by 60 percent since 1980, the capital traded in the world's stock exchanges has increased nearly 1,400 per cent. The daily trade over the currency exchanges is more than 50 times the value of world trade in goods and services. The daily turnover in the currency exchanges exceeds 1,500 billion dollars and the capital at the control of the speculative elements is estimated at over 21,000 billion dollars. These are mostly speculative funds which

are not used for production and for the satisfaction of people's needs. They are actually misused to augment private fortunes and personal enrichment.

3.6. Those who control these vast sums of money and use it, not for production, but for speculation on the stock exchanges and currency exchanges have assumed for themselves the right to become the standard setters and to set policies for the whole world, for the productive enterprises as well as national economies as a whole. The fixed assets of the 3,000 "investment companies", operating globally, have increased from 2,700 billion dollars in 1991 to what is currently estimated at over 7,500 billion dollars. These global operators with whom the transnational banks and companies act in concert are now outside the control of any national or international regulatory authority.

3.7. The havoc they have created in many regions in the recent months has reinforced the demand for adequate national and international control over speculative capital movements and for democratic control over the big corporations and banks.

3.8. The demand for international control and regulation of financial flows also questions the imposition of the dollar as a reserve currency without adequate reserves and necessary international control on its emission.

3.9. There is a demand for the setting up of an Economic Security Council by the United Nations to resolve the formidable problems which have arisen and have destabilised the financial and banking systems in several countries and regions. It is widely recognised that there should be a democratic alternative to the authoritarian manner in which the IMF and World Bank (which are dominated by the G7 countries) have misused their mandates.

3.10. The recent collapse of negotiations within the WTO shows the growing contradictions between the differing interests of its members and, in particular, the failure of this organisation to respond - not to monopoly profits but to people's interests and demands

3.11. Therefore, the fundamental principles enshrined in the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order adopted a quarter century ago by the UN General Assembly should now be reiterated in order to democratise international economic relations.

3.12. This should mean, in the first place, that the global economic relations are based on equality and mutual benefit, free from discrimination, sanctions and boycotts and that the victims of the "old international economic order" should be compensated for the continuous losses they have suffered. This should include compensation for the forced

outflow of resources from developing countries through unfair pricing, deteriorating terms of trade and the huge burdens of servicing the foreign debt. In this spirit, the outstanding foreign debt of developing countries should be written off immediately.

3.13. Demands have been raised that there should be an impartial commission to investigate into the crimes committed by speculative capital and into the role of the IMF and the World Bank. Losses suffered by the different countries should be compensated by the companies and financial corporations who were responsible for the havoc.

3.14. While opposing neo-liberal globalisation, developing countries cannot have any illusions about "aid" from the imperialists. Every country must make effective use of its own national resources and build a self-reliant national economy, demolish the old international order of subjugation and establish a New International Order based on sovereignty, equality, justice and fair play.

#### IV

### **THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT**

4.1. The period since the 13<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress (Damascus, 1994) witnessed important World Summits on major global issues – social development, human rights, women's rights, environment, habitat and food security - which were convened by the United Nations with the full support and participation of the trade unions and other social organisations. These Summits dealt with the major global issues and development strategies to deal with the widening inequalities between and within countries and the growing disparities between the affluent rich and the jobless, landless and dispossessed millions of poor people.

4.2. At these Summits, the international community undertook solemn commitments to review policies, identify the obstacles to progress and initiate measures to move forward. Human solidarity and cooperation are values which are reaffirmed all over the world. The initiatives of trade unions and broadbased movements of the working people can contribute in that direction. The trade union movement in every country should mobilise public opinion and urge governments to resist and fight against the policies of the World Trade Organisation.

4.3. The role of trade unions in advancing these processes was highly assessed. In his message on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the WFTU, the then UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, said:

"The World Federation of Trade Unions played an important role in the preparation of the World Summit for Social Development. . . The Declaration of the WFTU's 13<sup>th</sup> Congress called upon trade unions and other non-governmental organisations to heighten their efforts to mobilise world public opinion on the need for a true social dimension to all economic policies and development strategies. I fully share this view. The social aspects of development are increasingly critical, not only for the betterment of the human condition, but also for international peace and security."

4.4. The present challenges arise in the background of the realities concerning the relation of forces globally which is less favourable to people, workers, the trade union movement and affects all organisations. They pose major challenges of varied dimensions before the trade union movement, at all its levels. Trade union unity is at the centre of these challenges. The renewal of the international trade union movement, a demand put forward very strongly at the 13th World Trade Union Congress, is one of the conditions for its realisation. All trade union activities, all organisations in one or other form, are directly concerned. Efforts should be made to struggle against splitting activities, unilateral measures, sectarian policies and practices, exclusion of all kinds, and the atomisation of trade unions which is already occurring. Basing ourselves on the profound aspirations of workers in favour of unity, all trade union activities should be developed taking into account their national, regional, professional and global dimensions. Relations, contacts and actions have to be developed together, so that they can contribute to reinforce the trade union movement in general and to show the necessity for a strong, united, democratic and militant international trade unionism.

4.5. The preparatory activities for the world summits on global problems generated an upsurge of international activity from the grassroots up. This awakening to the need for greater and better organised participation of trade unions and NGOs present great opportunities and potentialities. It stimulates hopes and encouragement for international united action by the trade unions and their allies in the NGO community.

4.6. The trade unions and other social organisations insisted that the people's demands on the vital questions of Social Development, Human Rights, Women's Rights, Environment, Habitat and Food Security are heard and responded to in the Programmes of Action adopted at these Summits and concretely implemented. These developments can, in a way, be considered as results of the attempts at global bar-

gaining in which the trade unions and social organisations represented wide sections of world public opinion. Trade unions at all levels – national, regional and international – must draw appropriate lessons from these developments which represent the growing public awareness of the need to think and act at the international level. These processes manifested the increasing role of mass organisations of the working people as represented by the trade unions and other social organisations in reflecting the people's aspirations and struggles for a better life in the changing world situation.

4.7. These developments, in which the WFTU and the world trade union movement were active participants, stand in active opposition to the neoliberal globalisation advocated by the ideologues of the TNCs, as the struggle to build a new world of peace and security for all nations and a better life for all peoples enters a new period in a new century.

4.8. Based on objective assessments of the new possibilities, integrating the strong aspirations for trade union unity and the struggles which are growing, as well as the real difficulties which the trade union movement confronts, the WFTU, the TUIs and their affiliates should be able to better organise their international work, achieve better coordination and take advantage of the advances in communication technology, in order to win trade union demands at the international level.

4.9. The convergence of trade union demands and struggles all over the world is emphasised by the fact that working people in all countries are facing identical problems – the social consequences of US-led economic hegemony and its despotic, anti-people policies. These policies have caused serious damage not only to developing countries but also developed capitalist countries such as Japan and the workers and people of these countries are directing their struggle against the US-led economic hegemonism. At the same time, these struggles are also waged against the increased arrogance of the forces of hegemonism, as seen in their acts of interference by military means into the internal affairs of other countries under the guise of "humanitarian interventions" and in total disregard of the UN Charter and world public opinion.

4.10. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of ILO convention No.87 on Freedom of Association were solemnly observed all over the world in 1998. The WFTU representing the united international trade union movement at that time, initiated the move for the adoption of an ILO convention on Freedom of Association which is now seen as inseparable from the basic democratic liberties and human rights.

4.11. In many industrialised countries, the difficulties faced by trade unions and, in particular, the decline in their membership, which very often represent a very small percentage of workers and employees in the private sector, reflect the profound economic crisis and the attacks launched against trade union rights. The fundamental right to organise, the right of association, is not only not recognised, but also attacked by reactionary forces.

4.12. The situation in the less industrialised countries also shows a low percentage of workers organised in trade unions. Thus, the campaign to "organise the unorganised" has become a top priority for the trade union movement.

4.13. Brutal violations of trade union rights, including the assassination of a number of trade union leaders, continue to be reported from many countries. Many such violations as, for example, the notorious record of Colombia, have been strongly denounced at the ILO.

4.14. The trade unions should initiate their own actions and develop common activities with all other NGOs and democratic forces to denounce these violations of trade union rights and human rights and to secure the enactment of national laws and regulations providing for the compulsory recognition of trade unions by employers both in the private and public sectors.

#### **TRADE UNIONS, THE ILO AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSION**

4.15. Large sections of the trade union movement have deplored the fact that the Workers' Group at the ILO is not fully representative of the entire world trade union movement. It is virtually dominated by one organisation because nominations of worker delegates to the International Labour Conference by member States do not reflect the realities in the various countries. Affiliates of the WFTU are discriminated against while governments make such nominations. Few governments recognise the principle of rotation. It is necessary to insist that all such acts of discrimination are denounced and not allowed to continue. Member governments and the ILO Governing Body should evolve procedures to ensure that all international and regional trade union organisations are adequately represented in the Workers' Group at the ILO.

4.16. Serious differences in approach have appeared following the ICFTU's insistence for a "social clause" in trade agreements and its attempt to involve the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in the matter of the implementation of international labour standards. The WFTU and many other national and regional organisations have opposed the attempt to turn the WTO into another IMF seeking to dictate policy to developing countries. Eventually, the ILO Declaration on fundamental

principles and rights at work which was adopted by the 86<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference (June 1998) has stressed that "labour standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes, and that nothing in this Declaration and its follow-up shall be invoked or otherwise used for such purposes; in addition, the comparative advantage of any country should in no way be called into question by this Declaration and its follow-up." It is essential to defeat the attempts of those countries which want to misuse the ILO declaration and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for achieving their foreign policy goals. The world trade union movement must exercise vigilance against all such attempts.

4.17. Globalisation as advocated by the political forces representing the interests of transnational corporations and big business monopolies has not promoted an equitable and just international economic relations, balanced trade and economic growth on which millions of jobs depend. Established structures such as the transnational corporations continue to dominate world trade. Already a larger part of world trade takes place as internal transactions within the transnational corporations and outside the framework of national or international regulation – an aspect which should be seriously examined by the WTO.

4.18. World trade does not achieve its actual potential mainly because demand is inhibited by the falling purchasing power of the vast majority of the world population. As UN reports show, one-half of the world population has an income per capita of less than two dollars a day. The purchasing power of developing countries as a whole has been declining because of the low prices their peasant producers and small undertakings get from the transnational corporations. Moreover, the outflow of resources from the developing countries resulting from declining terms of trade and the high cost of debt service to the foreign banks show up in their declining import capacity. Most developed countries have not fulfilled their commitment to devote 0.70 per cent of their GDP as Official Development Assistance (ODA).

4.19. Moreover, the overall purchasing power of the working people, both in developed countries and developing countries is declining because of the decline in real wages. This is a major reason for the recession in several industrial sectors, which affects trade growth as well. Therefore, there should be a comprehensive review of these negative effects of the ongoing "globalisation" under the auspices of the transnational corporations and banks and, in particular, over the negative impact of trade liberalisation on employment and living standards of the working people in many sectors and the consequent deterioration in the world social situation.

4.20. Such a comprehensive review should cover all the trade agreements negotiated and to assess the gains and losses in order to provide necessary relief to those negatively affected by these agreements.

4.21. While the solemn commitments undertaken by member States of the United Nations at the World Summit for Social Development which was held in Copenhagen five years ago are not acted upon, tremendous economic and political pressures are applied on countries to liquidate the social safety net and hand over the vital public services to the private sector and foreign capital. The central point of the Copenhagen Programme of Action that all economic decisions should be aimed at the eradication of poverty and unemployment and should have a social dimension is thus totally ignored.

4.22. It has to be re-emphasised that the basic issues outlined in the international development strategies and the UN General Assembly Declaration and Programme of Action for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) and the Action Programmes of World Summits on the major global problems aimed at the elimination of poverty, unemployment and other social ills, must become the very basis of world development in the new century. As the UNDP report for 1999 has stated: "Markets are neither the first nor the last world in human development. Many activities and goods that are critical to human development are provided outside the market." All economic activity must work for people – not just for profits.

#### **THE ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGE**

4.23. While communication technology has brought the working people of all countries closer to each other, the big challenge facing the trade unions to build the most effective regional, industrial and international structures is still to be adequately responded. In this context, It has to be recognised that despite its global presence and the efforts so far made to build realistic organisational structures and methods of work, the WFTU is not able to gather all its reserves in order to defend workers' interests because of the lack of a secure financial basis for its effective work. Therefore, immediate attention has to be paid to the question of mobilising the considerable resources of our affiliates and to overcome the problem of insufficient involvement of affiliates and friends in the reorganisation and upgrading of solidarity actions to a level necessitated by the present challenges faced by the trade union movement.

4.24. While the neo-liberal globalisation under the hegemony of the TNCs proceeds rapidly, the trade union movement still lacks the necessary organisational, human and material capacity to intervene effec-

tively in the new situation. The dynamic growth of trade union united actions at the national level and the significant role played by WFTU-affiliated organisations in this process must be adequately reflected in existing international structures and activities.

4.25. In order to build this basis, the following initiatives are recommended:

- a) To urge unions at all levels to include in their regular budgets every year, a provision for the payment of affiliation fees to the WFTU and TUIs.
- b) To urge trade union organisations to collect special funds through SOLIDARITY STAMPS to be sold to trade union members and the general public as well.
- c) To invite trade unions to set apart one per cent of their membership collections for international activities and such collections could be paid into a Special Fund, out of which all expenses in connection with international activities could be covered, including the payment of affiliation fees.

4.26. Judged from the experiences in all countries, the efforts to promote unity and united action among trade unions, irrespective of affiliation or orientation, are making progress. In many countries, joint committees have been set up by trade union centres to promote inter-trade union cooperation and to support specific struggles for demands.

4.27. It is increasingly realised that strong trade union organisations are necessary not only to defend workers' rights and interests but also to actively participate, along with other NGOs, in the struggle for promoting economic growth and social progress in all countries. The fact that a Trade Union Forum was organised jointly by all international, regional and national trade union centres in the framework of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 and a declaration was unanimously adopted, shows how such positive trends could be widely promoted.

4.28. However, the desired progress in united action at the world level could not be achieved mainly because of certain unilateral, sectarian attitudes which continue to prevail and which appear as a response to the employers' attitude in a situation of worsening capitalist crisis, to the struggles which develop demanding basic changes. Evaluating all the real difficulties that exist, efforts to overcome such opposition to united action must be taken at all levels.

4.29. To succeed in this regard, it is essential to recognise the realities. Trade unions operate in different backgrounds – different

national conditions in terms of social systems and levels of development, different ideologies and outlooks as well as different international affiliation. Inter-union relations therefore should develop on the basis of independence, equality, mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs of each other and in a spirit of dialogue and mutual cooperation as well as common interests and goals. The WFTU which wants to contribute to workers' actions for social progress, will devote all its efforts in this broad movement to bring together all trade unions.

## V

### PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

#### **1. DEFENCE OF JOBS, WAGES AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

- For a fair wage, for wage increases to safeguard purchasing power and offset rise in living costs
- Against dismantling of contributory, old age pension schemes and for a universal system of social security
- Coordination of trade union activity against negative social consequences of TNC-led globalisation, financial speculation and neo-liberal policies which result in job losses and reduction in purchasing power
- against liberalisation of labour laws and for effective protective legislation on job security, social security, recognition of trade unions and unfettered collective bargaining rights.
- Coordination of trade union actions against arbitrary restructuring, privatisation and other structural adjustment policies resulting in job losses and decline in living standards.
- International coordination of trade union activity in carrying forward:
  - International Campaign for the Eradication of Poverty
  - International Campaign for the Elimination of Child Labour
  - International Campaign against Illiteracy
  - International Campaign for the Protection of the Environment
  - International Campaign for Food Security, the Peasants' Charter including land reforms and rural development, for fair wages and living standards of agricultural labour
  - International Campaign for Jobs to the Jobless.

#### **2. CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS**

##### **including**

- Reduction in working hours without reduction in pay;

- Provision for training to upgrade skills and for retraining where necessary
- during working hours
- Improving safety at work and protection of the environment
- Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and protection of the rights of working women;
- Improve legislation for the protection of working youth;
- Elimination of all forms of discrimination against immigrant labour.
- Protection of workers in crisis-affected industries and closed factories.

**3. FOR UNFETTERED TRADE UNION RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND FOR STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONS AND ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

- for legal protection of trade union rights through national legislation;
- for democratic liberties and human rights;
- for strengthening the institutions and role of civil society, encouraging people's participation in development;
- for recognition of trade unions by employers and governments;
- elimination of all laws preventing the formation of unions and preventing collective bargaining;
- public inquiries into all violations of trade union rights, the repression on trade unionists and assassination of trade union leaders

**4. FOR A POLICY OF FULL EMPLOYMENT AND FOR DEMOCRATIC, PEOPLE-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

- to adopt and implement a policy of Full Employment;
- to implement effective measures to eliminate poverty and destitution, hunger and malnutrition;
- to propose positive solutions to the global economic and social crisis;
- to reaffirm the sovereignty of nations on the vital issues of economic and social development;
- to strengthen the role of public and social institutions;
- to bring about comprehensive reform of the global financial system, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, enforce strict regulations on globally-operating banks;
- to ensure the implementation of the UN decision for the estab-

- lishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO); and
- For democratic control over all industrial, financial and other economic enterprises and companies in private and public sectors;
- Amendments to Laws on Corporate Governance to provide for annual reports of companies pertaining to the recognition of trade unions, collective bargaining agreements, implementation of international labour standards and regulations for the protection of the environment;
- To set up institutions for Social Audit, with authority to look into the social consequences of all economic decisions by Corporations and Government and submit reports to Parliaments and other elected bodies.

**5. SUPPORT TO U.N. CAMPAIGN: "DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT"**

- Reduction of military budgets and transfer of the savings to finance social development;
- For the total elimination of all nuclear and other mass destruction weapons;
- The dissolution of all military blocs and alliances and the establishment of systems of collective security in all regions and all over the world.

**6. FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF COPENHAGEN COMMITMENTS AND PROGRAMMES OF ACTION OF ALL WORLD SUMMITS**

- To observe 12 March 2000 – the fifth anniversary of WSSD – as International Day of Action for Jobs and implementation of World Summit decisions.
- To coordinate actions at regional and sectoral levels, with the cooperation of TUIs
- To strengthen cooperation with other NGOs in the struggle for the implementation of decisions of World Summits.

**7. FOR THE ADOPTION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND BANKS BY THE UNITED NATIONS**

- Internationally coordinated efforts to control speculative capital movements;
- Impose a tax on speculative capital movements
- Management of Branches of TNCs to be supervised by Boards including representatives of public bodies, trade unions and consumers.

## **8. FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS**

- Joint actions at national and industrial levels;
- Joint actions at the level of the ILO
- Elimination of all forms of discrimination and fair representation of all trends within the world trade union movement in the ILO Workers' Group;
- For the elaboration of new international labour standards for the protection of workers' rights
- For trade union rights in Export Processing Zones, Free Trade Zones and similar special zones; protection of the rights of working women who constitute majority of people employed in these zones.

## **9. SOLIDARITY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR RIGHTS OF PEOPLES AND NATIONS**

- For the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from Syrian Golan, South Lebanon, Palestine and all other occupied Arab territories and the implementation of UN Resolutions 242, 338, 425, 194 and 181; for building a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle-East;
- For the attainment of the national rights of the workers and people of Palestine, including their right of return, self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on national Palestinian soil with Jerusalem as its capital;
- For the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea;
- For the lifting of sanctions and boycotts against Cuba, Libya, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, India, Pakistan and other countries;
- For the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Northern Cyprus and for a just solution of the Cyprus problem which will benefit both communities in Cyprus, namely the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots;
- For the elimination of all tensions and conflicts in Asia, Africa, Europe and America, the resolution of all disputes by peaceful means, and the promotion of good-neighbourly relations;
- For the security of peoples and nations, for an end to all acts of aggression, military conflicts between countries, for the release of hostages, for the right of refugees to return to their home countries;
- For an end to all forms of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and attacks against national, religious and ethnic minorities;
- For the rights of civilians in occupied territories;

## **10. ACTIONS FOR TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT**

### **a) ORGANISING THE UNORGANISED, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

- To help new membership enrolment in trade unions;
- To help organisation of workers in trade unions in enterprises where there is no trade union;
- To help organise the Informal Sector, part-time workers, home-workers and the self-employed persons.
- To develop programmes for trade union education and development of trade union educational centres, organisation of educational seminars, and for updating methods of work

### **b) DEFENCE OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

- Legal and material assistance for trade unions and workers struggling for their basic rights and against anti-trade union repression.

### **c) COORDINATION OF TRADE UNION ACTIVITY AT INDUSTRIAL AND PROFESSIONAL LEVEL**

- Support for effective activity of Trade Unions Internationals (TUIs) in the different sectors.

### **d) RESEARCH AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Research activities on economic and social issues;
- Further development of information activities, journals, books and information systems and trade union links based on the Internet;
- Infrastructure development – acquisition of adequate office premises for the WFTU headquarters, regional offices and TUIs.

### **e) TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY, UNITED ACTION AND UNITY AT ALL LEVELS OF THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:**

- To promote international trade union cooperation and trade union unity in all countries, at the level of trade branches and in the regions in order to confront neoliberal globalisation through globalised united struggles and solidarity of workers and trade unions;
- To work for joint actions of all international and regional trade union organisations at the level of the United Nations, the ILO and other UN agencies, and in the framework of the Conference of NGOs;
- To further strengthen the united front of progressive forces and their international solidarity for peace, people's well-being and social progress;
- To further strengthen global dialogue and cooperation among international and regional trade union centres and to work towards world trade union unity.

● **MILLENNIUM DECLARATION**

We, the 421 participants at the 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress which met in New Delhi, India, from 25 to 28 March 2000, representing 407 million trade unionists from all continents – *the first World Congress of trade unions in the new millennium* - affirm our faith in unity and united action of trade unions and their international solidarity in the struggle of the working people against all forms of exploitation and oppression, the imperialist policies of blockades and sanctions and for a better life, equity, justice, peace and social progress based on full respect of trade union rights, democratic liberties and all human rights.

At the beginning of the new century and millennium, every human being and humankind as a whole, face tremendous challenges. The world is facing an uncertain future.

The broad similarity of problems and experiences of participants from all over the world, as reflected in their reports made to the Congress, underline the need for concerted efforts to promote effective international co-ordination of trade union struggles at the national, regional and international level against the anti-labour and anti-social policies of the dominant imperialist groups, transnational big business and big finance, against the worsening global social situation and especially, the growing hunger and malnutrition, unemployment, under-employment and poverty all over the world.

Our international movement believes in international economic co-operation based on national sovereignty, economic independence, an end to military occupation and aggression, bombings and missile attacks, and the strict adherence to the UN Charter, upholding true equality of all nations and equal benefits for all trading partners. We support all efforts to build this co-operation in order to accelerate the much-needed social progress, ensuring stable and secure jobs for all, fair wages and working conditions and people's participation in decision-making concerning national, regional and global development policies.

Our common experience in the last decade and earlier is that the on-going neo-liberal globalisation that has been launched by the home States of the Transnational Corporations (TNCs), and pushed through the so-called structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and the rulings of the World Trade Organisation are, in the main, directed against the interests of the working people. These external interventions into national economies amount to a gross interference in internal affairs of nation states. The social consequences of these policies include the massive loss of jobs, cut in purchasing power of wages, cutbacks in social assistance, health care and education. It has widened the yawning gap in incomes and living

standards as between countries and within countries as well, leading to the supremacy of egoistic interests of some over the interests of others. These policies also undermine economic independence and national sovereignty.

Human knowledge and experience have built the network of comprehensive, mutual ties, connecting and binding people and societies to a qualitatively new phenomena which did not exist before.

The neo-liberal policies of liberalisation and privatisation have only benefited global Big Business and Big Finance, by transferring national assets to private capital and the TNCs.

The TNCs have hijacked the fruits of emerging technological achievements – the products of creative labour – and have misused them to maximise profits and obtain global market control. These policies of the TNCs, the participants at the Congress believe, have resulted in mass pauperisation, marginalisation and social exclusion of the vast majority of the people. These policies have led to the destruction of millions of jobs and job opportunities.

The rich have become richer, and the poor, poorer, because of the policies of neo-liberal globalisation at a time when the technological advances, if freed from the profit-motive and used to meet people's needs, could satisfy the current and future needs of the entire humanity.

The policies of neo-liberal globalisation, combined with the imposition of IMF policies, have been accompanied by an intensification of the attacks on trade union rights and human rights. The people's right to live is at stake.

In this context, the trade unions and all working people have to decide their course of action, learning from the past and assessing the situation, to defend their interests as against the nefarious designs of imperialist and neo-colonial structures.

The call of the hour is to accept the challenge and give a befitting reply to the imperialist-capitalist power centres. This can only be done by unleashing a relentless and united struggle of the working people and their democratic allies, especially the progressive intelligentsia, against the neo-liberal ideological offensive. To successfully accomplish this task, it is all the more necessary to sharpen the class awareness of the workers and protect the movement from hostile forces and ideologies. Instilling confidence on their own capabilities, the working people and trade unions can successfully confront the problems and challenges. This is what all previous World Trade Union Congresses have strongly affirmed.

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress being held at the dawn of the new millennium, firmly believes that the working people the world over,

would resolutely respond to the call to maximise their solidarity – at the national, regional and international levels, promote their independent platforms and demands for a self-reliant and sustained economic development. Rejecting the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and neo-liberal globalisation and the policies of the IMF-World Bank-WTO trio, the trade unions can lead the way to establish a real pro-people alternative – to ensure that this new millennium is theirs, not of the TNCs, Big Finance and imperialist powers.

The working people who constitute the vast majority is determined to devote all efforts, together with all peoples, women and men, to build a better life and a better future.

**United We March.  
United, We Win.**

### ● **ON TRADE UNION COOPERATION, SOLIDARITY AND UNITY IN ACTION**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress, meeting in New Delhi, India from 25 to 28 March 2000;

**Aware** of the increasing concentration of capital at the national, regional and international levels, the negative effects of neoliberal globalisation and the enhanced global coordination and strategies of transnational corporations and financial institutions;

**Taking note** of the present stage of trade union developments, intentions and opinions;

**Taking into account** the existence of various trade union organisations at all levels;

**Respecting** independence and sovereignty of every trade union organisation, the varied traditions and conditions in which they exist and function;

**Considering** that the sole important criteria of any trade union is its work for defence of interests of its members and all employees, in their struggle against exploitation and for improvement in their living standards;

INVITES all existing trade union organisations at the factory, enterprise, corporation, industry, national, regional and international levels:

1. To strive to achieve coordinated policy and action in order to defend the common interests of all working people.

2. To strengthen solidarity and support to each other both in policy and action;
3. To strive to achieve local and global trade union cooperation and unity to meet the challenges of neoliberal globalisation and to defend workers' interests and trade union rights;
4. To utilise different forms of such cooperation ranging from unity in action as well as possibilities for organic unity;
5. To uphold the principles and longstanding traditions of trade union cooperation: sovereignty and independence of each trade union organisation, full equality, and non-interference in internal affairs of each other. This cooperation should be on a just and fair basis, solely in defence of workers' rights and interests;

CALLS UPON all international trade union organisations - the WFTU, ICFTU, WCL - along with regional organisations - OATUU, ICATU, CPUSTAL, ETUC, GCTU - to establish appropriate coordination among themselves in order to promote international and regional trade union cooperation, solidarity and unity.

REQUESTS the ILO, its Director General and Workers' Group, to support and help create conditions for such cooperation which will correspond fully with, and could serve as a contribution to promote, its aims and objectives.

● **FORGE STRONGER GLOBAL SOLIDARITY IN ACTION FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FOR DEMANDS OF WORKING WOMEN**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress (New Delhi, 25-28 March 2000) declares that stronger global solidarity is needed to end the discrimination, exploitation and violence against women by enforcing the Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Women held under UN auspices five years ago.

The blatant discrimination against women that was built into the feudal and capitalist regimes should not survive in the new century and the new millennium. It is scandalous that women who constitute half of the world's population (and responsible for the entire population) and who put in two-thirds of the hours of work, earn only 10 per cent of the world's income and own less than one per cent of the world's wealth. Women are increasingly segregated to unstable and low-paid jobs and as a result, 70 per cent of all those below the poverty line are women.

The determined actions taken by the women's organisations, trade unions and all democratic forces have achieved progress in many countries in the campaign to eliminate the discriminatory laws and practices. The demand for reserving one-third of elected posts for women in legislative bodies has been accepted in some countries. In many sectors, there is increasing participation of women in organising and leading the trade unions.

These gains and achievements are now threatened by the neoliberal policies of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation and the continuing anti-social structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund.

The Congress calls upon the **Special Session of the UN General Assembly which has been convened from 5 to 9 June 2000**, to avert all attempts of vested interests to delay the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as well as all commitments and action programmes adopted at the global conferences convened by the UN in 1990s. All member States should be urged to establish implementation machinery for this purpose with the participation of women's organisations and trade unions representing working women.

The Congress calls upon the trade unions:

- to intensify the campaign for the strict implementation of ILO Convention 100 on equal remuneration and other international standards concerning the employment rights of working women;
- to ensure that the International Labour Conference this year adopts a comprehensive convention on maternity protection and rejects all attempts to restrict the rights of working women in this regard;
- to support the GLOBAL MARCH OF WOMEN AGAINST POVERTY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN to the UN headquarters in New York;
- to observe 26 April 2000 as Working Women's Rights Day;
- to observe a Week of Action (4 to 11 June 2000) for mobilising public opinion on the demands of working women and for the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action.

### ● **YOUNG WORKERS ARE THE BIGGEST ASSETS OF ALL COUNTRIES**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress, meeting in New Delhi, India, from 25 to 28 March 2000,

**Considering** that half of the world population are young people of less than 20 years,

**Concerned** that the capitalist crisis, in all countries, has greater consequences for the young generation;

**Noting** that thirty per cent of young people in many countries are unable to find jobs after their studies and millions of them can find only temporary or part-time jobs with low wages;

**Aware** that all these cause immense dissatisfaction and frustration among young people and young workers;

1. Expresses its full support to the young people and their aspirations to develop their capacities and fully utilise their abilities for the development of their countries and for human progress;
2. Calls upon governments to formulate and implement employment policy for young workers in accordance with the commitments undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development to ensure full employment;
3. Requests governments to implement educational policies to make education at all levels accessible to young people;
4. Insists that governments and employers create conditions for professional training for young workers during working hours;
5. Invites trade unions to devote greater efforts to involve young people in all their activities and to promote united actions for the achievement of demands concerning education, training, decent work and their rights at work and in society.

## ● ON INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress, meeting in New Delhi, India, from 25 to 28 March 2000,

**Considers** the existence and functioning of the ILO as an important factor for the world of labour and for overall economic and social development in the world, especially at the time of globalisation;

**Appreciates** its role both in standard-setting, technical cooperation and defence of trade union rights;

**Calls upon** all governments to speedily ratify all ILO conventions and recommendations, especially of the 7 core conventions;

**Appreciates** the efforts made by the International Labour Office in order to support trade union organisations and their activities;

**Supports** the call of ILO Director General to strengthen the consensus within the ILO, thus strengthening the ILO itself;

**Expressing** concern at the repeated support given to the concept of globalisation and neo-liberalism in the ILO forums;

**Reaffirming** that the monitoring of international labour standards should remain exclusively with the ILO and not the WTO, and rejecting all attempts to use these standards as tools for protectionism or for pressuring developing countries;

**Invites** all trade union organisations for more close and equal co-operation within the ILO and in promoting its aims;

**Requests** the International Labour Office and the Workers' Group at the ILO to increase efforts in contributing and advancing such cooperation.

## ● ON TRADE UNION EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

1. The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress calls upon all trade union organisations to further strengthen and update trade union education and professional training, taking into account the rapid changes taking place in the labour world and to raise their political and class consciousness.

2. The further development of trade union activities is intimately linked with updated educational programmes which can provide theoretical and practical knowledge to trade union members and activists on such key issues as:

- the current economic and social situation in relation to countries, trade sectors, regions and the internal and external factors influencing it and, in particular, the impact of policies of neo-liberal globalisation;
- basic trade union rights, national labour laws and international labour standards;
- possibilities for building unity and solidarity at the industrial, national and international levels.

3. It is necessary to relate demands and struggles to the observance of relevant international standards established by the ILO conventions.

4. In this context, the Congress urges national and regional trade union organisations as well as the Trade Unions Internationals to further strengthen their cooperation with the ILO's Bureau for Workers' Activities.

5. The Congress expresses its appreciation to the ILO's Bureau for Workers Activities for the assistance it gives to the WFTU and its affiliates and regional offices as well as the Trade Unions Internationals and looks forward to such continued cooperation and support.

6. The 14<sup>th</sup> Congress commends the important work done by the WFTU and TUI affiliates in the field of education, training and re-training, skill development and continuous education, in the con-

text of the technological changes which have been introduced. However, it is a matter of deep concern that trade union demands concerning the right to training and retraining in the case of introduction of technological changes, are not accepted and implemented by a number of employers.

7. It is therefore necessary to further strengthen trade union action to secure:

- the right to training and re-qualification and to provide this training during working hours;
- the right of trade unions to be consulted on all matters of training, re-training and continuous education;
- all training programmes should be implemented with the participation of trade union representatives.

### ● TOWARDS UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT-COPENHAGEN +5

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress, meeting in New Delhi, India, from 25 to 28 March 2000,

**Fully conscious** of the fact that today globalisation and neo-liberalism give great possibilities to Big Business and finance capital to maximise profits through exploitation of workers and totally ignoring workers' demands and social needs;

Knowing that the imposition of neo-liberal policies hampers the role of the State in promotion of economic growth and social development;

Stressing that the imposition of policies of privatisation has further aggravated the economic and social situation in many countries;

Reiterating that this affects all countries, all enterprises – big and small, public and private – as well as all industrial sectors and services;

Conscious that these attempts are made to transfer all the burdens and consequences of the crisis on the shoulders of workers and people;

Alerted that a big offensive has been launched in almost all countries against workers and their trade unions, seeking to limit their rights and activities by all means possible;

Denouncing the fact that the policies of redeployment, privatisation, mergers, concentration and centralisation of economic power and decision-making are used to put pressure on workers and trade unions and to force them to accept these policies;

Recognising that the imposition of neo-liberal policies constitute the biggest obstacle to the implementation of the Copenhagen commits and programme of action;

Deploing the fact that during the last five years, a majority of governments did not give the necessary priority to the implementation of Copenhagen commitments and programme of action;

URGES that the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Copenhagen+5 should take new initiatives for social development, especially in the field of eradication of poverty and achieving full employment;

INVITES trade unions in all countries to observe a Day of Action in the month of May 2000, to demand effective action by the Special Session of the UN General Assembly to secure the immediate implementation of the Ten Commitments and the Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development – and, in particular, for the implementation of a policy for full employment.

### ● **CANCEL EXTERNAL DEBT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLES**

1. There is world-wide recognition that the problem of external debt is another big burden which stifle Third World countries, constituting one of the main reasons for the increase in unemployment, poverty and hampering the development of peoples. All thinking people, the most important organisations and institutions of the world, including even the Vatican, have declared vigorously that the continuation of the servicing of the external debt by the people of the affected countries is unjust from a moral, political and technical point of view. The debt is now unpayable. The more the debt service is paid, the more the overall debt increases. Thus the debt service has not only become a permanent financial burden for those countries, but it has actually turned out to be the worst plunder of the century.

2. The IMF, WB and other dominant global financial institutions have obliged these countries to repay the debts through the implementation of neo-liberal structural adjustment policies, promising them not to put them on the black list. The consequences of this policy affect the people of these countries, especially the workers. These financial institutions do not respect any laws and regulations. They are not interested at all by the fact that poverty, illness, hunger, unemployment are growing everyday. They ignore totally the sufferings of people. The only thing, which interests them, is control over natural resources, oil, minerals, etc., in the name of the “free market”.

3. The following examples are pathetic: Africa has an external debt over 350 billions dollars, and only the payment of interest on this debt amounts to 31% of their export earnings - 65% of their GNP - while this continent needs now more than 250 billion dollars to combat illnesses, particularly AIDS. In the case of Latin America, during the last decade, 800 billion dollars were paid as debt service representing the greatest

sacrifices for the population, but the external debt has soared to 700 billion dollars. Of the 500 million inhabitants of this region, 220 million are below the poverty line and another 100 million persons live in poor conditions, and there are similar situations in other regions as well. To continue to repay this debt is illegal and unjust, because these peoples have paid already more than the originally contracted debt.

#### **The XIV WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS DECIDES**

- a) In the name of law and justice, the Congress demands the cancellation of the external debt of developing countries, in order to permit the development of the people concerned while contributing to the struggle against growing poverty, promote the creation of jobs, meet such most basic needs such as health care, education, housing and other basic services. The payments, which have been extorted, have been made at the cost of people's basic needs and essential services, causing the most inhuman sacrifices to population. The onerous terms of debt service payments have extremely negative social consequences.
- b) to continue the campaigns for mobilisation for the cancellation of the external debt of developing countries and to call upon the United Nations to convene a WORLD SUMMIT with the participation of the trade union movement, with no exclusion, and all social organisations, to examine the serious repercussions of the repayment of the external debt which affects millions of people, and decide on its cancellation and to ensure that these resources are re-allocated and dedicated to the creation of jobs, to combat poverty and contribute to the development of peoples.

#### **● ON VIOLATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress strongly condemns the widespread violations of human rights and trade union rights, in gross violation of the ILO conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of which was observed two years ago. The situation has rapidly worsened in the wake of the imposition of neo-liberal policies, especially in the developing countries. The gains achieved by the trade union movement over decades, in the field of freedom of association and collective bargaining, are sought to be liquidated. The Big Business groups usurping economic power and governments supporting them are the ones responsible for those violations.

The history of the struggle led by the trade union movement for the conquest and respect of these rights is marked by great suffering and sacrifices. Trade union leaders and activists have become the target of all kinds of attacks: persecutions, imprisonment, tortures, assassina-

tions and disappearances, in a majority of countries and regions of the world. The main victims are progressive trade unionists. In today's situation a great number of trade unionists are leaving their countries and turned into refugees due to persecutions they are submitted to.

Protesting against this situation, many complaints have been filed before the ILO and other UN bodies concerned with human rights violations. Resolutions have been adopted demanding full respect of those basic trade union rights and human rights. However, the situation is getting worse in several countries. These include anti-trade union repression, assassination of trade union activists, "disappearances" of workers and trade union activists, the cancellation of positive labour legislation, attacks on job security and introduction of insecure employment practices in the name of "flexibility", etc. In some countries, trade unions are even banned, in some other regions even the right to payment of wages in time is denied. Migrant workers are the victims of the worst exploitation. They are submitted to humiliations and they are denied the most elementary rights, which they are supposed to enjoy as all other workers.

Despite the repeated complaints and campaigns against repression, assassinations, tortures and disappearance of thousands of trade unionists and social activists, in various countries and regions as it is the case in Argentina, Chile, Central America and recently in Columbia, the perpetrators of these atrocities remain unpunished. The trade union movement should not permit or forget what is its duty: to struggle for the prosecution and punishment of those responsible for the crimes being committed against the trade unions and trade unionists.

Therefore, the XIV World Trade Union Congress decides:

- 1 To intensify the united struggle of the trade union movement in all countries, regions and at the international level together with all social organisations committed in the struggle against violation of trade union and human rights through mobilisation and mass actions till we regain all trade union rights and secure the respect of international conventions.
- 2 To reinforce educational campaigns in order to promote a culture for the full respect of trade union and human rights as fundamental values, and to mobilise all social forces to act in solidarity with our struggle.
- 3 To report and file complaints on all violations of trade union and human rights before international organs and forums demanding that international labour standards and trade union rights are strictly implemented.
- 4 To pursue the fight till all those responsible for tortures, assassinations and disappearances of trade unionists and social

activists in different countries, as it is the case in Latin America and other regions, are brought before justice and punished.

- 5 To reiterate our demand that the United Nations Commission on Human Rights should appoint special representatives in countries where trade union and human rights are violated, as it is the case in Columbia.

## ● TRADE UNIONS AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

1. It is becoming increasingly evident that the current efforts of global big business and financial groups and home states of the transnational corporations to establish new regional and sub-regional institutions for economic integration form part and parcel of the grand strategy of neo-liberal globalisation to impose hegemony and economic domination. These policies have therefore aroused justified opposition of the working people. The demonstrations at the Seattle Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organisation as well as at Davos and Bangkok in the recent period revealed the people's wrath against these policies.

2. Since the re-imposition of capitalism in eastern Europe and former Soviet Union and the projection of a "unipolar" world by the G-7 countries led by the United States, greater pressure is exerted on the developing countries to force them to open up their economies to foreign capital and transnational corporations. At the same time, while they justify these pressures in the name of "globalisation", the dominant economic groupings led by them continue with their protectionist policies.

3. With the establishment of a common currency, the Euro, the integration within the European Union has reached a new stage, although some of the member countries are still outside the common currency zone. The expansion of the European Union with the pending requests of countries for full membership, pose questions of safeguarding the specific interests of new member countries which are at different levels of development.

4. High-level meetings have been held to launch the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In this region, the so-called "Asian tigers" (Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia) have recently seen their economies devastated by the hordes of speculators, destroying their economies, causing the worst financial turmoil, factory closures, mass dismissals and loss of livelihood for millions. The bankrupted companies have been bought up by the TNCs from US and Europe. The aggravation of the social crisis in the Asian region had international repercussions and has posed before the international community the need to safeguard national economies from the onslaught of international financial speculators and impose appropriate controls over capital movements.

5. This process of integration is progressing in a quicker or slower way in other regions, as in addition to Asia, in Middle East and Latin America. In the great majority of these processes, priority is given to commercial interests ignoring social aspects. What is all the more serious is the fact that in the decision-making processes, only governments are taking part, excluding institutions of civil society, among them trade unions. In the case of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), there are persistent protests from the workers and social organisations, particularly in Mexico, because of the unemployment it caused. The unions consider that the NAFTA has benefited only the US-based transnationals. In the case of the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), this is rejected by Latin American and Caribbean trade union movements as being anti-democratic and exclusive, serving only the hegemonist objectives and interests of the United States.

Therefore, the XIV World Trade Union Congress affirms:

- a) The trade unions are fighting for an integration of peoples for sustained development of all countries, and this is re-stated as an answer to the policy of the United States to reinforce economic blockades. The trade unions do not accept integration processes, which only serve the interests of dominant economic powers and their transnationals with the aim to convert the different regions into free trade zones.
- b) to intensify coordinated and united struggle of trade union movement together with all organisations of the civil society for a political, socio-economic, democratic integration contributing to peoples' development in every region and sub-region where such process of integration is going on. This should include: trade union rights, protection of environment, upholding the rights of indigenous peoples, of agricultural workers - agrarian reforms, guarantees for the protection of local agriculture, and national industries. It should be an integration that respects cultural aspects, race and identity of peoples, without any distinction, which would give to nations the possibility to obtain equal benefits. Nations and peoples should have the right and the capacity to defend their vital interests, as against the voracity of economic powers that are introducing neo-liberal globalisation. And there should be full respect of national and international law.
- c) to support the struggle of trade unions which are opposing the Free Trade Agreements (NAFTA), because their consequences have a negative impact on employment, on social and environmental conditions. As far as FTAA is concerned, Caribbean and Latin American trade unions are also fighting

against it, because it would mean an expansion of NAFTA as a disintegrating element incompatible with the interests of peoples of the region, anti-democratic and affecting environment in general, a proposal which would convert this region into a free trade zone of the United States.

- d) to strengthen the struggle of trade union movement together with organisations of the civil society in order to promote mobilisation and national, regional and international initiatives to enlarge the debate on integration which should be acceptable to workers and peoples. To participate in all international forums convened on this theme where the opinions of trade unions could be introduced.

### ● **MIGRANT LABOUR - WORST VICTIMS OF NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALISATION**

While capital mobility is demanded as a right under neo-liberal globalisation, the rights of people working outside their national borders are now threatened as never before. There is not only downright discrimination in conditions of employment but even their basic human rights are being denied by ruthless employers – and even some governments. There is now over 40 million listed as immigrant workers and their number is increasing every day and they include an increasing number of working women.

Although international labour standards laid down by the ILO were adopted decades ago, seeking some measure of protection for immigrant labour, immigrant workers are denied their right to equality of treatment and non-discrimination. There are increasing instances of these workers not having even a “legal” existence. They are employed without a contract, they have no job security or income security and they are victims of the operators of the “parallel economy”. They are, in effect, subjected to virtual slave labour conditions. In addition, in many countries, they have become victims of racism and xenophobia.

The Congress strongly condemns the discrimination and inhuman treatment of immigrant labour and calls for national and international action to guarantee their trade union rights and human rights. Congress urges trade unions in all countries to fight for the equality of treatment of immigrant labour, help organise them in trade unions and rebuff the racist and xenophobic attacks against them.

### ● **PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IS A MAJOR TASK FOR HUMANITY**

Protection of the environment is a major task for humanity. The trade union movement is fully committed to this task and joins with all

other people's organisations and others concerned in demanding priority attention to safeguarding the working and living environment.

The trade union movement has repeatedly denounced the non-implementation of environment standards and the inaction that has worsened the pollution of air, water and all sources of life.

The non-implementation of laws and regulations concerning occupational safety result in soaring loss of lives and long-term damage to health of workers, particularly in such sectors as construction, transport, chemicals and other manufacturing industries and services.

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress calls upon trade unions in all countries to further strengthen their united actions and struggles for the strict implementation of laws and regulations concerning the protection of the environment. Congress calls upon all member States of the United Nations to respect and implement the agreements reached at the Environment Summit in Rio de Janeiro six years ago.

The Congress supports the proposal for upgrading the work of the United Nations Environment Programme and for the establishment of an International Organisation for the Protection of the Environment.

The Congress endorses the call to observe 5 June as World Environment Day and calls upon trade unions in all countries to mobilise world public opinion for the strict implementation of environmental safeguards and enforce the principle that "polluters must pay for the environmental damage they cause."

● **PROTECTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM FROM THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE WORLD BANK AND TNCs, SAFEGUARDING RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF RETIRED WORKERS AND OTHER PENSIONERS**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress meeting in New Delhi from 25 to 28 March 2000,

**Declaring** that the right to pensions and other social security benefits was won after many long years of determined trade union struggles all over the world and cannot be withdrawn or tampered with;

**Considering** that neo-liberal policies that seek to degrade pensions and social security payments affect retired workers the most;

**Considering** the efforts to dismantle the hard-won social security benefits in old age on the plea of "averting old age crisis";

**Appeals** to all trade union organisations to support the demand for legal provisions to ensure that:

Pensions are fixed and revised in conformity with the movement of wage rates and linked to consumer price indices;

- All taxes on pensions are withdrawn;
- Pensions are paid regularly every month and all arrears settled immediately;
- Health care is provided free to all retired persons.
- Pension funds are not privatised.
- Contributory Pension/Provident Fund Schemes should not be scrapped and replaced by self-financing old age pension schemes.

The Congress urges all retired workers and pensioners to reinforce their links with the trade union movement in order to strengthen the struggle in defence of their rights and interests.

### ● **ON MANIFESTO 2000 FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE**

In 1997, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace (IYCP) and the period 2001-2010 as the International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the children of the world.

UNESCO in cooperation with its partner NGOs, including the FISE, has prepared and popularised the Manifesto 2000 to celebrate IYCP and asked for a mass signature campaign on it, highlighting six pledges by the signatories: (1) Respect all life; (2) Reject violence; (3) Listen to understand; (4) Preserve the planet; (5) Share with others; and (6) Re-discover Solidarity.

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress extends support to this initiative and urges upon its affiliated organisations to actively participate in popularising the Manifesto 2000, collecting mass signature on it and organise appropriate initiatives to reach peoples in different countries, particularly the young ones, so that in the new millennium, the culture of war and violence is replaced by a culture of peace and non-violence, intolerance and condemnation of opposition are replaced by tolerance and dialogue, pursuit of selfish aggrandisement is replaced by generous sharing with relatively weak and deprived, and the planet is left for the future generation as a more hospitable place for our future generations to live and thrive upon.

### ● **WORKING PEOPLE IN UNORGANISED AND INFORMAL SECTOR**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress notes:

- that majority of the working people in many countries are in the unorganised sector. Due to structural change and application

of high technology in the organised sector and due to the free trade policy of WTO, many more are made jobless and all of them are thrown into the unorganised and informal sector.

that in the unorganised and informal sector, there is no guarantee of regular employment throughout the year, no provision for medical care and education, and no security measure against accident and old age.

The Congress urges upon all national governments to create regular employment for the unorganised sector workers, to make provision for free medical care and educational facilities, state insurance against accident and old age pension to all in the unorganised sector.

● **RESOLUTION ON LIFTING OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND BLOCKADES AFFECTING WORKERS AND PEOPLE OF CUBA, LIBYA, IRAQ, SUDAN, DPRK, CHINA, INDIA, IRAN, YUGOSLAVIA AND SERBIA**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress (New Delhi, India, 25-28 March 2000):

- Reiterates its most vehement opposition and condemnation of policies of imposing economic, political and diplomatic sanctions, blockades, boycott, ban on flights and air traffic, political and economic pressures along with military threats against workers and people of countries: Cuba, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, DPRK, China, India, Iran, Yugoslavia, Serbia and others;
- Appeals for immediate action by UN Security Council and UN member states to lift unfair blockades and cancellation of all kinds of economic, political and diplomatic sanctions which have been imposed in furtherance of the strategy for world domination of the United States and its allies;
- Declares that these unfair policies and procedures go against the UN Charter and international law and even against the principles of international trade law and the Charter of the World Trade Organisation;
- Draws, on behalf of the world trade union movement, the urgent attention of the international community to the severe social, health, educational consequences and the extreme suffering caused to the working people and the civilian population in all these countries because of the imposition of the unjust blockades and economic sanctions by UN Security Council at the insistence of the US Administration and the British Government or by US arbitrary sanctions;

- Reconfirms its total solidarity with workers and people of all those countries which are suffering from economic sanctions as well as the working people of neighbouring countries who have suffered from serious setbacks to economic and social development in the concerned countries, region and the world;
- Denounces the double standards that are applied by those who, day in and day out, proclaim their concern for human rights while totally ignoring the human consequences of these unfair and inhuman blockades and economic sanctions;
- Appeals to world public opinion, political forces, trade unions and social organisations to support the struggle of workers, people and governments of the countries concerned for solving all pending problems and disputes through legal and peaceful means and in a spirit of peace and friendship among peoples, upholding the principles of international law and decisions of international judicial bodies concerned, respecting the sovereignty of nation states and building collectively peace and international security.

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress supports and endorses fully the Final Declaration adopted by the International Trade Union Solidarity Conference against Blockades and Sanctions held in New Delhi on 23 March 2000 and calls upon trade unions in all countries to actively participate in the Action Programmes proposed by the Solidarity Conference.

### **VOTE OF THANKS**

#### **TO THE NATIONAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE IN INDIA**

The 14<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress expresses its profound thanks to the National Preparatory Committee for the excellent organisation of all facilities for holding the Congress, for the warm hospitality and fraternal help provided to all participants during their stay in New Delhi for the Congress.

The Congress expresses its admiration for the wide publicity given to the Congress all over India, and for the financial contributions that were made by millions of people to cover expenses of the Congress.

The Congress conveys its fraternal greetings of International Solidarity to all constituents of the National Preparatory Committee.

The Congress expresses its thanks to the President of the Republic of India, the Vice President, the Prime Minister and Labour Minister for their warm messages to the Congress.

The Congress wishes the trade union members and all the people of India, all success in their efforts to build a better life and for the economic and social development of the country.

**International Trade Union Solidarity  
Conference against Blockades and Sanctions  
New Delhi, 23 March 2000**

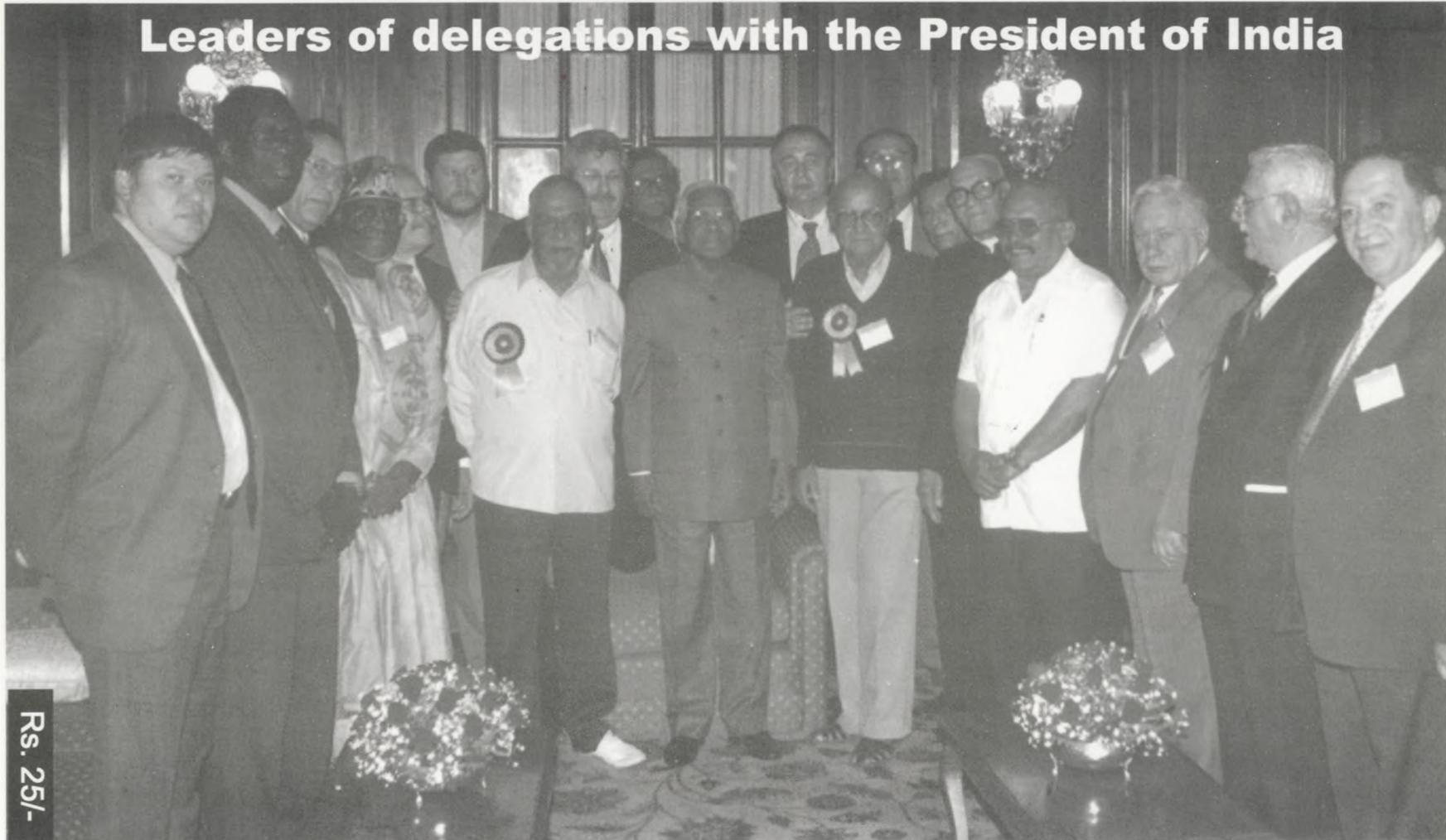
**DECLARATION**

1. The International Trade Union Solidarity Conference convened by the World Federation of Trade Unions in New Delhi (India), in the framework of the 14th World Trade Union Congress, strongly condemns the arbitrary blockades, unfair economic sanctions and pressures, trade boycotts and embargoes imposed by the imperialist powers headed by the USA, in gross violation of international law and the UN charter and expresses its grave concern at the severe economic, social and political consequences of these illegal actions.
2. Currently, millions of people, especially the workers and other low income groups are severely affected by these blockades, sanctions and boycotts, which deprive the people of food, medicines and other essential supplies and causing serious threats to the health and life of all people and especially children and older persons.
3. Cuba has been subjected to such ghastly acts of discrimination and economic war for the last 40 years, on the part of the United States government and despite the repeated resolutions of the UN General Assembly calling for an end to the blockade. The blockade has cost the island nation losses amounting to 121 billion US dollars.
4. The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was subjected to arbitrary sanctions and unfair embargo and boycott since 1992 and the people were deprived of several basic necessities which had to be imported. The damage suffered over eight years is estimated at over 40 billion dollars in addition to the loss of life and huge material damage caused by the barbaric US military aggression earlier.
5. In the case of Iraq, the near-total blockade of almost a decade has killed at least 1.25 million people, under-nourishment and mal-nutrition to millions more and inflicted extreme suffering on the whole country and its people. US, British and Turkish military aircraft continue their bombing raids causing major civilian casualties.

6. Continuing to be severely affected by sanctions and boycotts are Yugoslavia and Serbia where the economic war through boycotts and sanctions compounds the severe damage inflicted by NATO bombing.
7. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been a victim of US boycotts and sanctions for more than 50 years, and faces military pressures and provocation threatening peace and security in the region.
8. Arbitrary sanctions are also applied against countries like India, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan and other countries and Sudan was subjected to a US cruise missile attack, destroying its biggest factory producing much-needed medicines for citizens.
9. The Arab population in occupied territories in Palestine, Syrian Golan and South Lebanon suffer from various forms of economic discrimination, confiscation of Arab land for building Israeli settlements, and interruption of supplies of essential articles. The arbitrary measures imposed by the Israeli military forces create obstacles to peace and economic progress while the continuous aggressive action, in gross violation of international law, wilfully destroys Lebanese infrastructure.
10. Laws such as the Helms-Burton Act, Trading with the Enemy Act, etc., have been enacted by the US Congress claiming extra-territorial jurisdiction, in order to give an institutional framework to the unlawful policies of boycotts, sanctions and blockades. The Conference calls for all-out opposition to all these imperialist policies and condemns the US military presence in the Gulf and other areas in the world. The Conference calls for an immediate end to this military presence.
11. The Conference calls for peaceful resolution of all disputes between neighbouring countries, putting an end to all border disputes.
12. The Conference strongly deplores the hostile propaganda, trade discrimination and the pressures which are exerted against China, seeking to interfere in its internal affairs.
13. The Conference expresses its grave concern at the growing pressures, blackmail and threats against the government and people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, where the process of rescuing and establishing national sovereignty and constructing a participative democracy with social justice has begun.

14. Having heard the representatives of participating organisations, the Conference condemns the blockades, sanctions, economic pressures and boycotts as economic aggression, attempts at genocide and political blackmail against member countries of the United Nations, and in particular against Cuba, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, DPRK and other countries.
15. The Conference therefore demands the immediate lifting of all these sanctions and boycotts and the payment of compensation to all those who suffered because of these illegal and arbitrary measures.
16. The Conference demands that all member countries of the United Nations should uphold the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which stipulates that all peoples have the same right to determine their political orientation and to freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources, in order to advance towards economic, social and cultural development.
17. The Conference calls upon trade unions and other like-minded civil society organisations to intensify their activities in international forums to effectively mobilise world public opinion to secure the immediate lifting of all blockades and sanctions. The conference appeals to them to further strengthen their efforts to provide material help to the people of the countries affected by sanctions, blockades and boycotts, in order to provide food, medicines and other essential articles needed by the population.
18. The Conference recommends to all participating organisations and trade unions in all countries to submit this Declaration to the US embassies in their countries and to consider the observance of a Day or Week of Action in furtherance of the campaign for the lifting of all sanctions and blockades.

## Leaders of delegations with the President of India



Rs. 25/-

L to R : Mr. Fantis (Cyprus), Mr. Diop (Senegal), Mr. Hassan Zamam (Algeria-Secy. Gen. ICATU), Hassan Somonu (Nigeria, Secy. Gen. OATUU) Mr. Jose Manuel Meneses (Panama - Vice - President, WFTU), Mr. Ortiz (Chile-Secy. Latin American Trade Unions), Mr. Indrajit Gupta. President WFTU, Mr. Neto (Brazil), Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, Vice-President, AITUC, President of India K.R. Narayanan, Mr. Zharikov.(Russia/Gen. Secretary WFTU), Mr. K.L.Mahendra, General Secretary AITUC, Mr.Gil (DPRK), Mr. Pacho (Peru) Dy.Gen. Secy. WFTU, Mr. D. Ganguli (India) Secy.WFTU, Mr. Pedro Ross (Cuba), Mr. Davidov (Russia) Mr. Nasser (Syria), Mr. Miro (Syria) Secretary WFTU.