



Global



UNIÃO GERAL DOS TRABALHADORES

Sindicalismo Cidadão, Ético e Inovador

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UGT breaking down barriers

UGT attended the UNI Americas Regional Conference, which ended on December 07, with the resolution of participants taking this fight to multinational companies to keep on breaking barriers for workers in the Americas.

The UNI Americas Regional Conference which lasted three days concluded with affiliates energized and determined to use the UNI network to continue having success in the struggle to unionize and build strong unions.

The conference gave more impetus to affiliates of UNI Americas to continue with the strategy of Breaking Barriers for workers' rights and the growth of trade unions.



They recognized that facing multinational companies implies in many challenges, but they said that unions in the Americas are gaining force and agreed to use the impact of UNI to achieve more victories in this region. The need to fight for equality and for respect to woman was a subjacent issue during the entire meeting, as well as the need to provide a higher number of safe jobs to thousands of unemployed young workers in the Americas and in Europe.

Adriana Rosenzvaig, regional secretary of UNI Americas - who was unanimously elected for another 4 year tenure - said: "Breaking barriers is not just a motto, it is a way of life. Each trade union officer attending this meeting, from Canada, up north, going through Mexico down to Chile, is part of this movement united for a simple goal: achieving for workers. That is what we are going to do and what we will continue to do".

Rubén Cortina was also unanimously elected for a 4 year tenure along with the new regional executive of UNI Americas.

He said: "The UNI Americas network is stronger than ever. We must use this historical moment, in which we have progressive governments in several countries of this region, to advance. We achieved many things, but there is still a lot of work to do before the next regional conference in 2016."

In Latin America trade unions grew 100% over the last years, we must continue this tendency, but we cannot forget our colleagues in the USA and Canada. In these countries, the medium class is being squeezed by corporations. We must show our support, we must be united in their fight as we did to Walmart workers in the USA. We must be patient and strategic and remain strong. I am committed to this great organization that UNI is."

To Ricardo Patah, national president of UGT, "union and solidarity between workers and their trade unions and federations from all over the world are essential to advance in the achievement of workers rights".

4th Women Conference of UNI Americas

Conference discusses diversity in leading positions

The 4th UNI Americas Women Conference, with the topic "Women breaking barriers", pointed out discrimination in the workplace and the labour violence as the main fight ideals of women in 2013. This conference, which began on December 02, prior to the regional conference, was attended by representatives from Brazil, Canada, Mexico, USA, Costa Rica, Panama, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Colombia, Venezuela, Uruguay, Belize and Bahamas and it is the largest one ever held by UNI America, attended by over 100 women representing the trade union movement.

On the first day of work, a document was approved and it will be the base for a core discussion of women within the trade union movement, which is the defense that in companies leading positions are occupied by 40% of men, 40% of women and 20% are destined to sexual diversity. This proposal was supported by UGTs committee and was described as a great advance of the international trade union movement by the unionist Cleonice Caetano, from the Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo and UGT. Cleonice recalled that in the trade area we may find the highest occurrence of sexual diversity among workers and that in Brazil UGT has defended this approved rate and now defends it at the UNI Conference.

Violence against women in the workplace, including physical violence, was classified by members of the Conference as one of the most serious cases, especially in South America countries. Statements of physical violence against workers caused participants to discuss the creation of a document to demand governments and even the police to take measures against aggressions and also against companies where such attitudes took place. **(Mauro Ramos from Montevideo, Uruguay)**

UGT and PIT-CNT Uruguay will work together

During a meeting that took place in Montevideo, Uruguay, on December 05, attended by Ricardo Patah, national president of UGT and Fernando Pereira, coordinator of the trade union central PIT-CNT, from Uruguay, it was defined that these two trade union centrals will perform a combined work regarding the action of multinational companies that act in these two countries.

PIT-CNT is the only trade union central in Uruguay. This institution has a striking presence both in the trade union activities in this countries and in the Southern Cone. Fernando Pereira said that many multinational companies, especially in the trade area, act in Uruguay and also in Brazil, for this reason an exchange of information between PIT-CNT and UGT in this area is very important.



During the meeting with Ricardo Patah, the unionist described that over the last five years the level of unionization in Uruguay increased from 10% to 35%, caused by a higher trade union freedom achieved in the government of the president José Mujica who, over the last years, issued 30 laws directly related to the achievement of workers benefits.

To Ricardo Patah, the globalization of companies forces the trade union movement to search for an approach and to try to seek for a combined action in points of common interest of workers. According to the unionist, this is the case of UGT and PIT-CNT, which represent, respectively, in Brazil and Uruguay, workers that act in multinational companies with activities in both countries. (Mauro Ramos)

Human Rights Day

UGT protests against union repression in Panama



On the day that Human Rights are celebrated, UGT held a protest through a combined action with ITUC-TUCA in front of the consulate of Panama in Sao Paulo. This act was organized due to the police persecution and repression to trade union officers and social movements that has been happening in that country.

The government of Panama has not answered to demands, despite insistent appeals to social dialogue, and continues to reprehend people with police strength and that has caused the death of 4 workers and over 100 wounded. Such fact was reported to the Public Defenders Office and to the Human Rights Everywhere (HREV).

During the protest, Laerte Teixeira, UGT's national vice-president, and officers of ITUC-TUCA were received by Angela Fria, consulate secretary, to whom they expressed a position contrary to the repression that the Panamanian government has imposed to workers. "We do not accept the persecution that has been done to unionists. It is necessary that the government of Panama restore dialogue with workers that should be treated with respect", Laerte Teixeira ended.

The unionists Avelino Garcia and Josimar Andrade de Assis were also representing UGT in the protest.

Trade Union Meeting European Union - Latin America

Unionists from Latin America and Europe united their voices against austerity policies. This took place at the 6th Trade Union Meeting ALC- European Union, which UGT participated along with over 80 unionists from both sides of the Atlantic.

"The euro-latin american movement considers necessary to deprive of neoliberal orientations that so far ruled in Europe and in many Latin American country", the final statement of this meeting warns.

TUCA Workgroup of hemispheric integration

Prior to the Trade Union Meeting Latin America - European Union, the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) held the meeting of its Workgroup Of Hemispheric Integration in Santiago, Chile, November the 30th, 2012.

The GTIH meeting was coordinated by Rafael Freire, TUCA secretary for Economic and Sustainable Development Issues.

Monica Mata Roma, UGTs secretary for International Affairs, represented UGT in both meetings. Monica emphasized "the importance of such meetings to establish the strategy of sustainable development for our region in the next years".

6th March of Immigrants

Decent Work and Universal Citizenship

UGT and other institutions that fight for immigrant's rights in Brazil participated in the 6th March of Immigrants, that was marked by the motto of "Decent Work and Universal Citizenship" this year. This act took place on December 02, and the protestors went through the streets of downtown Sao Paulo, walking from the Republica Square to the Se Square.



On this occasion, Josimar Andrade de Assis, from the Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo, institution affiliated with UGT, said that both institutions participated in the protest and give all the support to hold such act, because they sympathize with the requests of immigrants.

"We, from the Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo and UGT, are sensible to the immigrants requests, because we are committed to the Brazilian society and to all people that live and contribute to the construction of our country".

Josimar also recalled that, in the chain of production of traded products, especially in sawing shops, there is still a lot of foreigners living in regimes similar to slavery, and that the Commerce Workers Union and UGT have supervised and reported these illegal and inhuman practices. Marina Novaes, lawyer of the Center of Support to Immigrants CAMI/SPM said that, at the same time in which she recognizes the achievements, such as the request for a migratory amnesty held in the 2008 march which turned into law in the following year, the fight continues because currently non governmental organizations end up doing a work that should be a public policy, performed by governments.

Among the immigrants requests, there is the right to vote and the request for a new immigrant law, one that is more just, solidary, equalitarian and contextualized with the South American conjuncture. This march also asks for less bureaucratization of procedures of granting visas, especially for inhabitants of Mercosur States - which already has a residency agreement over ten years, but bumps into the Federal Policy bureaucracy, especially in Sao Paulo. This act also fights for decent working conditions and access to universal rights (health, education...) (*Giselle Corrêa, UGT's newsroom*)

Launching of the National Walmart Network in Sao Paulo

UGT, along with other Brazilian trade unions (CUT and Força Sindical) that are also represented in Walmart, Brazil, created and launched the National Walmart Network in Sao Paulo.

Commerce workers trade unions from the Northeast, South and Midwest attended the event. The goals of the network are: facing policies of precarious work in Walmart, strengthening organizations of workers at a local and national level, sympathy with trade unions of UNI Global Alliance Walmart, working jointly to face the main problems of workers in Brazil and producing and spreading experiences of workers organizations.

Santander promises to CONTEC to stop dismissals

The Confederation of Workers in Credit Companies - CONTEC, affiliated with UGT, had a meeting with the Santander board of directors to discuss mass dismissals that this bank made last week. This bank confirms the dismissal of almost a thousand workers.

CONTEC representatives requested the end of dismissals and reaffirmed that it lacked sensibility to the bank, since dismissals took place on Christmas, spreading terror and insecurity in the workplace. COE/CONTEC also stated that it will spare no efforts in promoting actions in the juridical, political and union areas to revert these dismissals.

Santander, in its turn, argued that these dismissals took place due to adjustments in their network and that these departments had already gone through this process. Bank representatives already said that no more dismissals will occur and that those who were fired will receive an additional compensation that might reach 12 salaries, depending on the time workers were in the bank.

"The bank tries to soften the damage that it did to the lives of those who were fired by paying this additional compensation. But this is not enough. What employees need is being respected by Santander, since they are the ones in charge of the excellent results that this banks presents in Brazil", stated Sílvio Sene, member of COE/CONTEC and director of the Union of Bank Workers of Franca.

The next meeting was scheduled for January 17th, 2013, and if new dismissals occur in their workplace or any other kind of threat or embarrassment, immediately report that to your trade union. *(Rogério Marques - Union of Bank Workers of Franca)*

16 days of activism for the end of violence against women

The National Forum of Female Workers of Trade Union Centrals, created by UGT's Department of Women and other four Brazilian trade union centrals, held on December 10 the seminar "CPMI (Joint Parliamentary Inquiry Commission) to face violence against women and its results" in the auditorium of the Trade Union of Engineers, in Sao Paulo.

This seminar was attended not only by trade union representatives and representatives of social movements, but also by the future vice-mayor, Nádia Campeão and by Keiko Ota, Federal Deputy of PSB/SP.

Josi de Camargo Souza, assistant secretary of trade union qualification, was representing the president of UGT Ricardo Patah, and she said, in the opening of the event, that issues in pro of women are major matters in all UGT's discussions, which wants to mainstream all issues related to women, defending equalitarian fights among men and women of Brazil.

Nádia Campeão stated that the next government should create 3 new departments: Municipal Department of Women, of Racial Equality and a General Controller's Department, which should begin on the first day of the tenure of Haddad, new mayor. She also guaranteed that the new government will prioritize the construction of municipal daycare centers.

Cassia Bufelli, secretary of UGT's Women Department, said that "we need to join this fight day by day, and fight for public policies, as well as for our emancipation and our fair and equalitarian participation", she ends. *(Giselle Correa, da Pree UGT)*



"The União Geral dos Trabalhadores reaffirms its historic commitments to the working class, while seeking to expand its methods of action, with ethics, courage and the certainty that Brazil can be better and more just. " Ricard Patah – UGT's President

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