



GWU gets together with Lula to demand measures

The president of **GWU**, **Ricardo Patah** and the general secretary, **Canindé Pegado** and representatives of other union centrals from all over the country got together yesterday afternoon with the **president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva**. They showed over ten proposals that aim to avoid dismissals, even with the world economic crisis. Among the main requests of the unionists is the reduction of two percentage points out of the basic interest tax, Selic.

Besides the presidents of the union centrals, there were also at the meeting the Civil House minister, **Dilma Rousseff**; the minister of Planning, **Paulo Bernardo**; the Labor Minister, **Carlos Lupi**; the General-secretary minister for the presidency, **Luiz Dulci** and the Social Security minister, **José Pimentel**.

According to **Patah**, at the end of the meeting, the president Lula made a commitment to raise the minimum wage from R\$ 415 to R\$ 465 starting on February, 1.



He also added that **Lula** will ask the bankers for the reduction of bank spread (difference between the percentage that the bank pays to the investible clients and that the clients pays for the loan) and still try to discuss alternatives for the reduction of interest charged in the loans.

Patah also said that the main complication to the workers is the lack of credit, because "not all the public banks are giving away credit". He believes that the solution to the problem is the National Bank of Social and Economic Development (BNDES in Portuguese) open a line of credit to micro and large businessmen of the country.

Patah also criticized the position of businessmen towards the world economic crisis. According to him, there is a business opportunism to make the labor laws flexible. "With the argument of the crisis, they want to torn down the legislation", he stated.

To **Patah**, "it could be described as business blackmail. Undoubtely, this is a strong term, but it's real. It's not possible that due to the gravity of the crisis, the labor laws get torn".
(with *Gazeta Mercantil*, 20.01.2009)

Centrals request 4 days shifts and readjustmenf of the minimum wage

"Workers showed through the initiative of looking for the president with possible proposals that are in favor of a quick solution to the crisis, without appealing to generic vindications but instead coming with viable proposals capable of being put into effect in a medium period. These are ways out that suggest a recover in the Brazilian economy.



It's time the president, that knows he can count on the population and Brazilian workers, led a pact in favor of a solution to the crisis, calling together and leading all economic sectors and isolating businessmen and bankers that only think about their self-interest and forget about Brazil, our internal market and, mainly, the Brazilian people." (**David Zaia, state deputy (PPS-SP) and vice-president of GWU**)

GWU gets together with minister Lupi

General Workers Union delivers to the minister of Labor a document with suggestions to face the economic crisis



GWU delivered to the minister of labor, **Carlos Lupi**, in the morning of January, 13, a document containing suggestions to the government on how to face the economic crisis and guarantee job positions.

The document was elaborated by unionists and economists from the union central and starts with the principle that the government, businessmen, workers and the society shouldn't measure efforts in the sense of avoiding that the economic crisis that the world is going through affects in a painful way the working class and consequently the Brazilian economy.

The deliver of the document was made by **Ricardo Patah**, **president of GWU** and by the executive directorship of the central. The document is divided in two parts, one part has characteristics of emergency, whose objectives are defending labor laws, jobs and salary and the other part has structural characteristics, applied in medium and long term, to defend workers, the national economy, stability and sustainable development.

[Read the document in full.](#) (portuguese)

President of RLC receives the visit of leaders from GWU

Ricardo Patah, president of the General Workers Union, along with leaders from this institution delivered to the chief judge **Décio Sebastião Daidone**, president of the Regional Labor Court (RLC), in São Paulo, a document with the preoccupations of the institution towards the economic crisis that affects the world.



Patah was accompanied by **Canindé Pegado**, **General Secretary of GWU**, **Francisco Pereira**, aka **Chiquinho**, **Secretary of Union Organization** and **Marcos Afonso**, **Communication Secretary**. The president of **GWU** highlighted that, in this moment so tough on Brazilian workers and particularly the ones from São Paulo, the action from the institution as mediator of labor conflicts has a fundamental importance to the union movement.

The president of RLC showed sensibility towards the matters highlighted by **GWU** and reminded that the action of the court is based on the application by the law, but also with a look to the social matter that at this moment reaches a fundamental importance.

Proposals of GWU against the crisis hit the attention of the media



The deliver of proposals from GWU to fight the economic crisis had a great repercussion all over the media ([click link for videos](#)). Several means of communication recorded the meeting of **GWU** leaders, with the minister of labor, **Carlos Lupi**, on this Tuesday morning in Brasilia, where the president of the central, **Ricardo Patah**, delivered to the minister a document with suggestions of alternatives to face the crisis.

ILO highlights job policies in Brazil

ILO (International Labor Organization) highlighted in Chile, on January 15, the level of convergence in the politics adopted by the main economies in Latin America, to protect jobs before the world economic crisis.

The ministers of labor from Brazil, **Carlos Lupi**, from Chile, **Claudia Serrano**, from México, **Francisco Javier Salazar**, and from Argentina, **Carlos Tomada**, had a meeting with the director of ILO, **Juan Somavia**, that highlighted that the measures adopted by the four countries are "efficient to face the crisis".



The meeting happened at the presidential palace La Moneda, in the presence of the Chilean president, **Michelle Bachelet**, that showed the policies adopted by her government to face unemployment, that comes near to 7% in Chile. "These four countries share the same ethics: it's about protecting jobs and, in order to do so, the role of the State is irreplaceable", she said.

"The fact that, today, we have gathered the ministers of the main economies of the region to debate their plans of stimulus is fundamental at the time of facing the crisis that bring us the ghost of unemployment", stated Somavia.

In Brazil, the government of **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** already released a plan that foresees extinguishing taxes and helping out companies, as well as the support in buying cars, whose industry is a lot significant in this country. Its government also created a fund of US\$ 5,9 billion to soften the effects of the crisis.

On the other hand, the Argentinean president, Cristina Kirchner, released a plan of US\$ 21 billion aiming to public works, and another plan of an amount of US\$ 3,8 billion, to move forward an incentive plan, to investment, to work and to production. (*France Presse, 01/16/2009*)

Brazil makes a donation to ILO

Brazil is the first donator from the South Hemisphere to make a contribution to the ILO Regular Budget Supplementary Account

Resources will be used in promoting decent work in Latin America

The government of the Federative Republic of Brazil will make a contribution of 300 thousand dollars to the Regular Budget Supplementary Account of the **International Labor Organization (ILO)** and, by doing so, will be the first donating country from the South Hemisphere to do such input.

ILO asked the member countries that, as far as possible, make volunteer contributions to the regular budget supplementary account (RBSA, in English) to promote decent work, according to what was established in the Paris Declaration and in Accra Action Program.

"The decision of Brazil opens a path to a strong cooperation South-South that supports decent work and makes easier the exchange of experiences between countries that face similar situations" said the general-director of ILO, Juan Somavia.

The Minister of External Relationships, **Celso Amorim**, pointed out that "Brazil is satisfied to contribute with the RBSA funds, as part of a global effort to support the Decent Work Agenda, reassured in the Declaration on Social Justice and an Equitable Globalization approved in 2008, as a mark of cooperation South-South and the need to strengthen solidarity between nations". (*ILO News*)

Minister Lupi divulged data on unemployment

The **minister** pointed out that all through last year Brazil generated 1.452.204 new formal jobs, the third best result since 1996. The two best results achieved were the ones in 2007, with 1,617 million new formal jobs; and 2004, with 1,523 million of new job positions. The country ended 2008 with an amount of 30,418 million of formal workers. Even with the positive balance consolidated there is some bad news, with over 13 thousand dismissals from the industry of wood and furniture; 8,7 dismissals in the industry of shoes and there are 2,9 thousand positions gone in the industry of latex, tobacco and leather.

In December the rhythm of dismissals was generalized. The rendering industry dismissed 273 thousand workers (highlight to the 109 thousand dismissals in the food and beverage industries). There were also cuts in the period in farming (134 thousand dismissals) and service (117 thousand dismissals) sectors, while civil construction fired over 82 thousand workers. To **Lupi**, civil construction was hit by lack of credit either to surviving corporations as consumers.

Union discards more dismissals in commerce until March

With the decline on temporary hiring and reduction of permanent hiring, dismissals will no be so necessary

The president of the **Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo, Ricardo Patah**, discarded dismissals to a large extent in the commerce of São Paulo, due to the effects of the crisis, at least until March. According to him, formal ratifications of labor contract's rescission with over a year dropped by 40% in the first two weeks of January if compared to the same period last year. Patah justified the decline of rescissions to the movement of clearance sales that heated up the retail sales in January. Besides, most dismissals happened to the temporary workers, that are not counted in this statistics. Rodrigo Petry, from Agência Estado.

Secretary from GWU takes over presidency of INSPIR



The **secretary of Health and Safety at Work of GWU, Cleonice Caetano de Souza**, that is also director of the Juridical Department of the Commerce Workers Union of São Paulo, was elected president of the **Interunion Institute for Equality of Racial Opportunities (INSPIR in Portuguese)**.

Cléo, her nickname in the political and union sphere intends to give more dynamism to the institution. "**INSPIR** is very well known outside Brazil, but is not very divulged in here" says the candidate that has a special program of goals to be developed.

Cleonice elaborated a strategic planning that foresees actions towards the combat to racial discrimination. She also intends to release a course towards juridical areas of unions aiming to give support related to matters and demands of racial discrimination. It also foresees the accomplishment of a seminar, at international level, to discuss matters of discrimination in the labor world. "We are quite excited about the receptivity we have received", explains the president Cléo. She emphasizes that INSPIR has as its main objective to contribute with the diagnostic, improvement, development and adoption of public and private policies on promoting racial and gender equality, especially in labor relationships.

GWU asks for peace in the Gaza Stripe

GWU asked for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza in a declaration published last January, 15. The cease-fire was effective this week.

Once again the Middle East is stage of events that prove that the military way is not the right path to find the solution to any regional or international conflict, as the Israeli-Palestinian matter clearly shows.

People and peace-loving forces demand the end of suffering of Palestinian and Israeli people in the massacre that became the relationship between these people. While the Palestinian population is asphyxiated economically, politically and militarily, the Israeli population is retaliated by attacks of muslim fundamentalists groups. Fundamentalists extremism from both parts do not corroborate to peace.

GWU claims for the end of the bombardments with an immediate cease-fire from both sides, the immediate regularization of humanitarian help, withdraw of Israeli troops that invaded the Gaza Stripe, and clamor the strengths of Palestinian, Arabian and Israeli "field of piece" to recover the negotiations and dialogue, with the aid of international initiatives as wide as possible, for a fair and lasting peace to the people of the region. It's urgent to substitute the diplomacy of strength for a strong diplomacy.

São Paulo, January, 15, 2009

General Workers Union

World Social Forum should host 120 thousand people in Belém

Brazil is again stage of the largest meeting of the civil society and social movements of the world. Starting on January, 27, Belém, capital of the state of Pará, will host the 9th edition of the **World Social Forum** and should gather 120 thousand participants, according to estimates by the organization of the event. The investments in the city to the meeting should reach over R\$ 100 million.

This event will count on the partnership of **GWU** that, in the opinion of its president, Ricardo Patah, will constitute in a mark to the history of Brazil. "Belém, main entrance to the Amazon, region that represents the balance of the environment in the world, but it is also a victim of devastation, speculation and pillages from its fauna and flora, opens its arms to receive the democratic debate of ideas that have a non confessional, non governmental and non party feature, in a extremely delicate moment to the economy of the world, to society and workers as a whole". defines Patah.

Ricardo Patah emphasizes that **GWU** will participate with a delegation of 350 unionists, besides having a stand that is being set up at the place, wit the objective of divulging its activities. "Decent Work", "Human Rights" and "Sexual Violence", are some of the issues that the Central will take to discussion at the meeting.



"The General Workers Union 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." *Ricardo Patah – UGT's President*

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