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UGT shines on May Day

The International Seminar Contemporary Unionism was a huge success recognized both by lecturers and by the large audience that attended the seminar and watched the event online. "The largest event ever held by UGT" in the words of the president of the trade union central, **Ricardo Patah**. UGT showed, through all that, that it wants to find new paths for the contemporary unionism.

Organized by UGT, through a partnership with CESIT/UNICAMP (Center of Trade Union Studies and Labour Economy of the State University of Campinas), this seminar gathered unionists and professors, both Brazilians and foreigners.

In the opening of the event, Patah emphasized the importance of the seminar. Its plurality of currents of thought that were gathered there should converge into proposals and actions in defense of the working class". That is what happened in the two days of the seminar and many facts can be highlighted.



To Manoel Dias, minister of labour and employment, this seminar organized by UGT and UNICAMP is essential, since once technology and innovation advance, workers cannot be damaged. Precarious work comes along with that and this type of discussion creates resistance and a new proposal for labour relationships is needed. "These events must be followed by knowledge, in order to capacitate and educate workers and being able to prevent the allegation that innovation is inevitable to make work precarious."

This seminar had six tables of debate: work in contemporary capitalism; work and inequalities; social movements; unionism in contemporary capitalism; tendencies of labour relationships and impacts on trade union organization; society, economy and work: the view of workers.

To Canindé Pegado, secretary general of UGT, it is necessary that trade unions change: "workers who are entering the job market tend to be worried about keeping their jobs and end up not getting involved with their unions, but they end up looking for their trade unions when their companies fire them to hire other professionals who, with the same position and a lower wage, perform the same functions as they did".

This shows that trade unions must change in order to attract, more and more, these young workers. Pegado argued that it lacks strictness and strength in the unity of representation and that, for example, trade union institutions are, gradually increasing their action in sectors such as the House of Representatives.

Pierre Salama, French, professor of the Paris 13 University and researcher of Latin-American economies, said, during his intervention in the seminar, that Brazil experiences a paradoxical situation in which the focus of financing economy and the privileges given to banks live together with low unemployment and wage increases in real terms. To Salama, this situation tends to end as the crisis deepens and he expects measures in this sense after the elections.

Guy Standing has a PhD from Cambridge University and is a professor at the London University. The ex-director of the International Labour Organization talked about the new class produced by neo-liberalism, post-proletariat. Standing makes use of a neologism, "precarizado" (precariat in English) to synthesize the double condition of proletariats and precarious work of this part of population. >>>>



>>> UGT shines on May Day

The lecturer Mike Fichter, economist and researcher of Global Labor University, emphasized that the current unionism no longer acts under an individual and exclusive way for a certain class. Nowadays, the fight happens worldwide and is strengthened in international trade union institutions and the action of these institutions is not only focused on wage increases or increase in labour rights. The organization of the working class fights for the well being and for the dignity of the population searching for keeping and increasing jobs, public transportation, health and education.

Mock Morris, from the United Automobile Workers (UAW) touched the audience with the reading of a thank you letter of Chip Wells, a Nissan worker, for the solidarity of UGT and his fight for being rehired. Norris highlighted that Chip Wells was rehired in his company hours after a solidarity protest was held by UGT in Rio.



Bob King, president of UAW, paid a tribute to UGT by handing in the picture of Chip Wells and Calvin Moore to Patah (in the picture), Calvin was also rehired by Nissan-USA.

A day to remember the victims of accidents at work

During the seminar, UGT picked a place to be destined to recall workers who were victims of accidents at work.

The date celebrated on April 28 is a moment of reflection and strengthening of the fight of trade union movements who developed several actions for the "end of deaths at work".

Executive Board of of UGT holds 20th plenary session

UGT held, in the morning of April 30, in Sao Paulo, the 20th plenary session of its Board of Executives. This event, which gathered trade union officers from several Brazilian States and representatives from 70 departments, was essential to debate the representability of UGT concerning challenges that are currently faced in the job market and in the trade union situation in Brazil.



This event was a continuation of the activities that UGT held to celebrate the Workers Day, May 1, to discuss and debate the paths of the trade union movement and the fight of the organized working class in the improvement of working and living conditions of the population.

While opening the session, Ricardo Patah, president of UGT, made an overview of the activities that this trade union central performed in 2014 and emphasized that this institution is increasing its actions in pro of social and labour advances.

Patah also recalled that in this year's elections it is essential for the fight of the working class and for the strengthening of the Brazilian democracy that more people who are committed to the population are elected.

UGT in the House of Representatives

In the House of Representatives, Patah defends labour agendas and 10% of the GDP destined to education

The use of 10% of the Brazilian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exclusively in education has joined the traditional agenda of unionists among the main requests of workers this week in which it is celebrated the Workers Day (May 01) in the House of Representatives.

Through a general commission that took place on May 06, at the Ulysses Guimarães Plenary, the deputy Vicente Candido (PT party-Sao Paulo State), president of the CCJ (Commission on Constitution and Justice), praised the fact that workers demands are not restricted to corporate issues. He recalled that the fight to destine 10% of the GDP to education was a demand that was highlighted in the May Day protests.

Ricardo Patah, president of UGT, agreed with the congressman. To him, income distribution, health and democracy in Brazil will only be solved via education. "I do not understand how this issue still raises debates. The function of education for inclusion is something so logical, that it is incomprehensible that this is not the main debate under the House of Representatives", he lamented.

The unionist added that, despite Brazil being the 6th economy of the world, it is in the 85th position of the Human Development Index (HDI) and it is almost the 100th country when it comes to income distribution. Patah emphasized that if the project that destines 10% of the GDP to education is approved, Brazil will be able to follow the path of Korea, which was less developed than Brazil 30 years ago and currently surpasses Brazil in many aspects", he quoted.

Vicente Candido, one of the congressmen who suggested this debate, also celebrated the index of full employment and the advances in the workers income and in the reduction of working hours for shift work. "We may celebrate, though many people still work more than 44 hours in order to complement their income", he said.

The congressman proposed that general commissions on labour issues are to become a tradition in the House of Representatives. "This week is a week of permanent assembly, calling out congressmen to discuss issues that affect the working class". He added that it is necessary to create a culture of receiving workers to discuss issues that concern them. In CCJ alone there are more than 150 proposals related to this issue that await for an analysis.

UGT discusses labour agenda in Brasilia

On May 08, UGT, represented by its secretary general and by its director of the Institutional Relations Department, respectively, Canindé Pegado and Miguel Salaberry Filho, along with other trade union centrals, attended a meeting with minister Ricardo Berzoini, at the Palácio do Planalto in Brasilia.

This meeting was also attended by the presidents of CCJ and of Social Welfare and Family, deputies Vicente Cândido and Amauri Teixeira, besides the participation of representatives from the Labour Commission, from the secretary general of the presidency, from Dieese and from DIAP as well as heads of the government at the Chamber of Deputies.



According to ministry Berzoini, there is an interest of the government to forge closer dialogues with trade union centrals and propose the building of a regular agenda with priorities to be established.

Berzoini made a commitment to organize a new meeting to be scheduled next week, in which the government will present an overview on labour demands and the impacts that it will create on the job market. On this opportunity, the agenda of priorities that will be presented by trade union centrals will be defined and organized.

UGT, CUT, CTB, CSB, Nova Central and CGTB, will elaborate a document in which they will define, as priorities in the fight of the working class, the reduction of working hours for shift work down to 40 weekly hours, the end of the social security factor, the National Education Plan, equality between men and women (Law Project 6653) and the policy of valuation of the minimum wage (rule 2016/19). (Fábio Ramalho – UGT press)





Formal jobs now!

On May 09, the commerce workers union of Sao Paulo, an institution affiliated with UGT, held a march for formal jobs at the 25 de março street.

In general, 18% to 20% of commerce workers work informally and the protest had the goal of clearing and reducing informality in this region that responds for an high index of informal workers.

The labor's card is a document that has the goal of minimizing turnover in the job market, it guarantees security for workers in case of any adversity and it guarantees benefits such as the Employee's Severance Guarantee Fund (FGTS), retirement, unemployment insurance, disease leave, accident leave, family salary, maternity leave, etc.



"We are involved in a national project developed by DIEESE, which has the the sole goal of tackling informality via dialogue. We've come here, accompanied by fiscal auditors, to talk to commerce workers and owners, in order to show that formalization only brings benefits, both for workers and employers. I warn commerce workers: their bosses have 48 hours to formalize them. It is under the law. We want formal work, as determined by the consolidation of labour laws", said José Gonzaga da Cruz, vice president of the commerce workers union of Sao Paulo.

On this occasion, auditors from the Labour Ministry supervised the stores in that region. "We want commerce workers to have worthy lives, they cannot be explored. We want dignified jobs, not precarious or slave ones. This is the role of the superintendence: supervise and make workers rights worth it. Not formalizing jobs is a crime against economy and against workers", said Luiz Antonio Medeiros, regional labour superintendent.

To Josimar Andrade, director of the union, "whoever is an informal worker does not have access to civic rights, is not treated as a human being, but still, as a machine. Our goal is ending up, once and for all, informality, through orientation to workers over their rights. We are also leading a salary campaign and we want to include a clause in conventions that guarantee formalization", said Josimar.

Meeting of the Walmart Brazil Network of Workers

On May 07, a new meeting of Walmart Brazil Network of Workers took place. This meeting was held in the head office of SENTRACOS in Sao Paulo and was attended by representatives from UGT, CUT, Força Sindical and of the National Commerce Confederation (CNTC), which attended this event for the first time and was warmly received.



The colleagues José Luis Oberto, president of UNI Americas Commerce, Benjamin Parton, director of UNI regional campaigns and Trina Tocco, coordinator of campaigns of Walmart, also attended this meeting.

They were saluted by Luiz Hamilton, host of the event and vice-president of UNI Americas Commerce.

While speaking out, José Luis Oberto emphasized the importance of this network and of the work he has been doing in Brazil in order to unite the fight for the rights and for the interests of workers against the largest retail company of the world.

The most important issues discussed in the meeting were the evaluation of the development of the plan of work for 2014, the elaboration of the business plan for the next six months and planning the meeting of the Global Alliance, to be held in Sao Paulo on August 26 and 27.

After the evaluations, discussions and definitions, the colleague Trina Tocco, coordinator of campaigns of Walmart made a presentation on data provided by Walmart worldwide and the actions taken by UNI in several campaigns yearly held, especially concerning the participation and solidarity shown in each case by the network UNI Walmart Brazil.



Walmart Brasil es obligada a volver a contratar a la trabajadora



Commerce workers of Sao Paulo approve demands

On May 12, the Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo, an institution affiliated with UGT, held a General Assembly of Salary Campaign 2014/2015, in front of its head office, in downtown Sao Paulo.

Since May 05, this trade union institution has taken to the streets and giving ballot papers to commerce workers so that they could vote for the clauses that will be part of the agenda of demands.

Unanimously commerce workers approved, as their main item: the INPC adjustment + 5% in real terms, normative wage floor of the class in R\$ 1.200, guarantee to commission agents of wage floor added by 20%, food stamps, group life insurance, medical insurance, extinction of compensatory time off and valuation of work on Sundays and holidays.



"The team of our union went, from store to store, to get to know what commerce workers want and what they need. We collected over 11 thousand votes. We are going to negotiate with the employers sectors and we will fight for all the rights of workers", said Ricardo Patah, president of the Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo, while approving the agenda that was voted by workers.

3rd Health March mobilizes 30 cities

On May 10, the Health March of the State of Sao Paulo, which took place simultaneously in 30 cities of the State, was widely mobilized.



Organized by the federation of health of the State of Sao Paulo, an institution presided by Edison Laércio de Oliveira and affiliated with UGT, this event is in its third edition and is a way of touching the population and businessmen of health regarding the importance of professionals of this sector to society.

According to Edison, more mobilization of workers and of population is necessary so that health is improved. "It is necessary to achieve an active participation of the population and mobilization of the class. It will not get us anywhere if we only complain. In order to change, it is necessary to fight", he warned.

This march took place in the following cities: Americana, Amparo, Araraquara, Araras, Atibaia, Bragança Paulista, Campinas Dracena, Espírito Santo do Pinhal, São João da Boa Vista, Marília, Garça, Itapira, Itu, Indaiatuba, Jundiá, Limeira, Mogi Guaçu and Tupã. The mobilization also occurred in the base of the following cities: Santos, Franca, São José dos Campos, Araçatuba, São José do Rio Preto, Jau, Bauru, Sorocaba, Piracicaba, Rio Claro and Presidente Prudente.

Márcia Oliveira launches book

The head office of the National Secretariat of Commerce and Service Workers (Sentracos), in Sao Paulo, hosted the launching of the book "Participation in Profits and Results: its mandatory figure", written by Márcia Oliveira Silva.

To Luís Carlos Motta, president of the Federation of Employees in Commerce of Sao Paulo (Fecomercários), this is a work that reinforces the action of trade unions to convince employers that this participation (PLR) is good to everyone, since workers feel valued and the companies gain with a better quality of service.

Marcos Afonso, director of the juridical department of the union, recalled that Márcia started working in the PLR department, which was very small back in 2001, but currently develops an important work for the commerce workers class of Sao Paulo.

"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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