

## Trade Union Priorities for Action

UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD15-IPM) 2007

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Monday 26 February,  
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Let me begin by re-emphasizing what others from the UN regions said this morning, that industrial policy remains a main driver for achieving the objective we set out at this CSD.

National industrial planning for production priorities, investment, industrial governance and corporate accountability must all reinforce environmental protection and social cohesion, i.e. to enhance sustainable development and production/consumption linkages.

The CSD must speak up about how the 'industrial relations' between workers, their representatives and employer organizations should engage together in collective bargaining, partnership agreements, or legal structures related to their places of work, so as to develop better joint implementation measures for decisions taken here.

Workers must become engaged with their employers at the workplace level in reducing CO2 or other contaminants and in cleaning up the environment, generally. Effective training and education must serve to beef up their capacities.

The next 10 years will usher intensive restructuring of industry – which must be guided by 'just transition' and democratically determined policies to identify and address the distributional effects –especially for the most vulnerable, including women, youth and the working poor.

Employment losses must be taken into account and job promotion made to catalyze labour intensive work in energy conservation, redesign & construction, technology implementation, and transportation practice – all with the view to also eradicate poverty.

Entire buildings and infrastructures will be redesigned, newly created, dismantled or moved yet past errors must not be repeated. Chemical compounds in existing structures must be handled properly and others like asbestos or mercury, must be banned or eliminated completely, thus reinforcing the WSSD links between occupational and public health.

The Production and consumption linkages must also remain at the heart of the CSD work as does our treatment of cross-sectoral issues. HIV/AIDS will continue to lessen progress on climate change and poverty eradication- especially in Africa NOW but also in the future, within many other countries of the world. We call here on the G8 next June to establish a high level working group to yearly examine progress in tackling this disease.

Chair the international system has underperformed, sometimes very badly – in its task of exercising governance of globalization. Those failures extend well beyond the environmental field.

We believe they reflect an underlying constraint. Individually and collectively Governments have fallen under a spell of the prevailing belief that the best thing they can do is to make themselves small – to unleash the forces of the market, and then get out of the way.

This is reflected in the tendency to privatize utilities, just when what we need instead is to define new roles for the public service, especially for improving access by poor and vulnerable groups.

We are faced with a critical situation –such as climate change- which constitutes the biggest market failure in history, and which requires assertive state and inter-state action for new and considerable international regulation and constraints on the way markets work and on those who act in them.

In the absence of a significantly bold response to it, all subsequent issues could fall by default – to the disadvantage of us all.

Chair, climate change and our response to air pollution, as well to the need for industrial design must be placed in a context of sustainable development. Financial resources for social & environmentally friendly energy must support synergies in addressing barriers and promoting whatever actions are proposed by CSD2007.

Thank you, Chair