

**International trade union confederation/  
Asia pacific labour network (ITUC/APLN)**

**Beating the crisis, involving working people and realising  
decent work**

**Statement of the ITUC ASIA pacific labour network**

**To the 2010 apec economic leaders' meeting  
(Yokohama, Japan, 13-14 November 2010)**

**INTRODUCTION**

*A priority: tackling  
the financial and  
economic crisis*

**I. It is critical that the world's major economies maintain their actions to tackle the world economic crisis and avert renewed global recession. APEC Leaders must rise to the challenge and work on measures to strengthen demand and create quality employment in line with the ILO Global Jobs Pact. In order to create a sustainable economic model the Leaders need to support downsizing the financial sector and bring it back to its social role of serving the real economy.**

*Decent work and  
workers' rights as  
the basis of genuine  
social justice*

**II. The Leaders of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum will meet for the 18<sup>th</sup> APEC Leaders' Meeting in Yokohama on 13-14 November 2010 under the theme of "Change and Action". APEC Leaders must recognise that APEC needs to give the highest policy priority to achieving social justice through the creation of decent work for all, based on the full respect of fundamental workers' rights.**

*Green jobs, skills  
and technologies for  
sustainable  
development*

**III. It is imperative that the leaders of APEC actively engage in promoting an environmentally sustainable economic model through investment in new skills and practices, the creation of green jobs, and the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy creation as well as the advancement of other green technologies to address the causes of climate change.**

*Trade unions need  
consultative status in  
APEC*

**IV. The member states of APEC must provide political impetus and institutional space for the participation of democratic and representative trade union organisations from APEC member countries in the decision-making processes of APEC in a new body with consultative powers as a counterpart to the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC). The member economies should establish an APEC Labour Forum in order to hold an effective dialogue with representatives of the workers of the region.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ITUC ASIA PACIFIC LABOUR NETWORK

*Proposals  
of the ITUC  
Asia Pacific  
Labour  
Network  
(ITUC/APLN)*

1. The ITUC/APLN urges APEC Leaders to use the APEC forum to achieve economic recovery, promote decent work, establish effective rules for the global economy and strengthen labour market security, with full involvement of trade unions in APEC economies. As immediate points for action – and as steps in the best way to a stronger community, a more sustainable future – the ITUC/APLN calls on APEC Leaders to:

- 1) Take effective measures to respond to the global economic and financial crisis and re-regulate the financial system in order to serve the real economy;
- 2) Adopt concrete measures in order to promote labour participation in APEC and endorse the establishment of an APEC Labour Forum;
- 3) Strengthen the HRD agenda within the APEC process to resume the tradition of HRD Ministerial Meetings, and hold such meetings with full consultation of the social partners;
- 4) Put strong emphasis on the creation of decent and productive employment through developing comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines;
- 5) Promote fundamental workers' rights<sup>1</sup> in all regional, bilateral or multilateral trade agreements and economic integration processes;
- 6) Tackle climate change and global warming in an ambitious and comprehensive manner, including through the creation of green jobs;
- 7) Develop APEC guidelines to ensure the proper implementation of non-discriminatory policies in member economies;
- 8) Develop an APEC framework for a rights-based approach to migrant workers;
- 9) Develop an APEC framework to encourage social dialogue in multinational enterprises and revise the APEC Non-binding Investment Principles;
- 10) Develop an APEC framework on human resources development to integrate the unemployed and young people into employment and train the labour force for new skills and technologies.

---

<sup>1</sup> Fundamental workers' rights, also known as core labour standards, are internationally-agreed fundamental human rights for all workers, irrespective of countries' level of development, that are defined by the ILO conventions that cover freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining (ILO Conventions 87 and 98); the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (ILO Conventions 100 and 111); the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour (ILO Conventions 29 and 105); and the effective abolition of child labour, including its worst forms (ILO Conventions 138 and 182).

**Recommendation 1: Take effective measures to respond to the global economic and financial crisis and re-regulate the financial system in order to serve the real economy**

***Strengthen demand and growth before consolidating budgets***

2. The APEC Finance Ministers have underlined the important role that fiscal policies in the APEC region have played so far in avoiding an even deeper global recession. However the Ministers further noted that certain countries have to follow budget consolidation policies which should be accompanied by growth-enhancing reforms and measures to address long-term demographic challenges. This is the wrong approach: APEC economies should avoid exiting fiscal stimulus prematurely and should continue implementing measures that support growth and increase demand, so as to increase output and jobs, before considering fiscal consolidation.

***Re-regulate and downsize the financial sector and promote a financial transactions tax (FTT)***

3. APEC Leaders should support measures that will downsize the financial sector and return it to its legitimate function of serving the real economy. Instead of fiscal austerity policies and increased expenditure cuts APEC economies should exploit new sources of finance, such as the Financial Transactions Tax (FTT), and raise more revenue with progressive tax systems.

***Discourage layoffs and protect wages***

4. APEC Leaders must take measures to secure the livelihoods and the employment of workers in times of economic crisis. The ITUC/APLN contends that flexibilisation of the labour market is not a solution and stresses, along with the creation of decent, productive employment and green jobs, the paramount importance of protecting existing jobs and wage levels through job subsidy programmes, on the basis of the ILO Global Jobs Pact agreed by the International Labour Conference in June 2009.

***Support quality job creation***

5. At their 17<sup>th</sup> Economic Leaders Meeting, APEC Leaders decided to “*put job creation at the heart of [our] economic strategy*”. The ITUC/APLN supports this approach and underlines the crucial role of jobs in achieving economic recovery. Consequently, fiscal stimulus programmes should be better oriented towards quality job creation and new investments should be made in direct public works, including large-scale labour intensive investments for the development of “green” infrastructure with a view to creating employment quickly.

**Recommendation 2: Adopt concrete measures in order to promote labour participation in APEC and endorse the establishment of an APEC Labour Forum**

***Promote workers’ participation throughout the APEC process***

6. Since its creation in 1995, the ITUC/APLN has been striving to make workers’ views heard by APEC, through representations to governments at the national level, by consultations with the hosts of APEC Summits<sup>2</sup> and in contributions to the work of APEC on

---

<sup>2</sup> The APLN has discussed its recommendations, in the form of annual trade union statements, with the heads of States or Governments hosting annual APEC Leaders’ Meetings in every year since 1995, except in 2001 when the APLN met the Chinese Vice Premier, in 2003 when the Thai Prime Minister designated his Labour Minister to meet the APLN and in 2007 when the APLN met Kevin Rudd, who became Australian Prime Minister shortly afterwards.

Human Resource Development<sup>3</sup>. In 2008, the Peruvian hosts of APEC proposed broadening participation in the construction of the APEC community to other actors, including representatives of civil society and democratic and representative trade union organisations from APEC member countries, in its decision-making processes. Peru took a positive position with regard to consultative status for the Asia Pacific Labour Network as the legitimate voice of workers of the region. The absence of a formal trade union advisory mechanism not only contrasts with the privileged access benefiting business via the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), but also with sister fora such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) where unions have an official advisory status<sup>4</sup>. APEC Leaders must now agree to take concrete measures to further promote workers' participation throughout the APEC process.

***Set up a permanent consultative APEC Labour Forum***

7. The ITUC/APLN calls on Leaders to endorse the establishment of an APEC Labour Forum, in the form of an APEC formal consultative mechanism with trade unions comparable with the arrangements for access by ABAC, and based on the criteria agreed by APEC's trade union movement (see Annex to this statement), including the involvement of representative trade union centers of APEC Economies. Leaders should agree to instruct their Senior Officials to work in consultation with the ITUC/APLN to ensure the successful operation of the APEC Labour Forum.

***Enable trade union participation in APEC committees and working groups***

8. Furthermore, in addition to the HRD process discussed below, APEC Leaders should instruct their Senior Officials to promote the representation of trade unions on selected APEC committees, working groups and Ministerial meetings, and allocate resources to support such representation.

**Recommendation 3: Strengthen the HRD agenda within the APEC process to resume the tradition of HRD Ministerial Meetings, and hold such meetings with full consultation of the social partners**

***Hold the next APEC HRD Ministers' Meeting with full, significant consultation of trade unions***

9. APEC has recognised the importance of human resource development (HRD) since its creation and has worked on the development of HRD in the region through the activities of its HRD Working Group and the discussions of the APEC HRD Ministers' Meetings<sup>5</sup>. However, while Trade Ministers meet on an

---

<sup>3</sup> Trade union inputs to HRDWG have included an informal presentation by the AFL-CIO President at the 3<sup>rd</sup> HRD Ministerial Meeting (Washington, 1999), an informal consultation with representatives of RENGO at the 21<sup>st</sup> HRDWG (Sapporo, 2000), an informal consultation with the RENGO President at the 4<sup>th</sup> HRD Ministerial Meeting (Kumamoto, 2001), and a presentation of the AFL-CIO International Committee's Chair at an APEC symposium preceding the 23<sup>rd</sup> HRDWG (Washington D.C., 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Eight APEC countries out of 21 are members of the OECD.

<sup>5</sup> APEC Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministers recognised at their meetings in Manila (1996), Seoul (1997), Washington DC (1999) and Kumamoto (2001) that social and labour policies would be achieved most effectively through the partnership of governments, labour and management, and repeatedly instructed the APEC HRD Working Group to develop concrete measures to promote such partnership.

annual basis to facilitate the process towards the Bogor goals of free and open trade and investment, the last meeting of HRD Ministers was in 2001. HRD policies must be central in public policies to ensure sustainable and equitable pro-poor growth. The ITUC/APLN therefore welcomes the decision to hold a further APEC HRD Ministers' Meeting in China in September 2010. APEC Leaders must recognise the importance of holding APEC HRD Ministerial Meetings on an annual basis and organise next year's HRD Ministerial with full, significant consultation with trade unions, building on the precedents set in Washington D.C. (1999) and Kumamoto (2001). This is especially important given the close links between the financial crisis and the unprecedented jobs crisis we face now.

***A new dimension in  
APEC members'  
economic integration***

10. There is a persistent business-driven effort to enlarge trade and investment in APEC, focusing on market-opening measures and giving lower priority to goals such as full and productive employment as well as social protection. In 2009, the Singaporean hosts drew special attention to the issue, making it one of the Leaders' Summit priorities. This imbalance must be redressed. APEC has been evolving from an organisation solely concerned with commerce into one which seeks to create regional consensus on issues varied from political and security domains to education, social security and public health. APEC members must incorporate a socially acceptable dimension into their economic integration. APEC Leaders must agree to address the question of growth, investment, and decent employment creation, with the involvement of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and social partners in the region. Furthermore, the ITUC/APLN is concerned at the growing interlinkages between APEC and the "Doing Business" secretariat of the World Bank, as considered at APEC's Economic Committee. We insist that the "Employing Workers Indicator" (EWI) in the Doing Business report, now disavowed even by the World Bank itself, must not be used in any investment study conducted by APEC.

***Effective social safety  
nets with universal  
coverage***

11. Much has been discussed about social safety nets as part of a work programme at the APEC level but little has been put into practice in individual economies. There are still hundreds of millions of people, indeed a majority in developing member economies, who have fallen out of safety nets in the region. Leaders must instruct the Labour and Social Safety Net Network (LSSN) meeting under the auspices of the Human Resources Development Working Group and other relevant fora within the APEC process to work jointly, with full participation of trade unions, on guidelines for achieving effective social safety nets responding to real needs for workers, such as adequate unemployment insurance schemes, old age and retirement benefits, provision of worker-friendly employment services/guidance and vocational training and retraining, and the implementation of employment creation measures, with an effective review process to ensure the implementation of these guidelines in individual economies.

**Recommendation 4: Put strong emphasis on the creation of decent and productive employment through developing comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines**

*Over 50 million are working in EPZs in the APEC region without effective labour protections*

12. More than 60 million workers are now employed in Export Processing Zones (EPZs) around the world, and some 52 million are working in the APEC region<sup>6</sup>. Trade union organisation is either prohibited or made practically impossible and the great majority of workers in EPZs are denied by law or in practice the exercise of ordinary workers' rights. As a result, many EPZs essentially attract footloose investment and have a different class of enterprises that builds their success on the exploitation of a cheap and compliant workforce. Women are the most frequent victims of exploitative, dangerous and sometimes brutal practices, as they constitute about 80% of the total workforce in EPZs. There are excessive efforts in many APEC economies to lower regulations, taxes, environmental protection and labour standards to attract investment. This tendency only aggravates the precariousness of jobs and makes the preparation and adoption of APEC Decent Work Guidelines more important than ever before.

*Effective policies to promote decent work, investment and trade in EPZs*

13. In this direction, APEC must start an initiative for effective policies to promote decent work, investment and trade in EPZs. Such an initiative should address issues of labour standards with a specific focus on rights and working conditions of female workers, linkages to the domestic economy, a development framework of foreign direct investment (FDI) and the ways that enterprises can contribute to economic and social progress through investment and technological upgrading. Involvement of social partners is essential to the success of such an initiative.

*Develop comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines*

14. APEC should develop and implement comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines comprising active measures to create quality and productive employment for all, encourage social dialogue, emphasise respect for fundamental workers' rights and strengthen safety nets and other social protection in labour and social policies.

**Recommendation 5: Promote fundamental workers' rights in all regional, bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and economic integration processes**

*Fundamental workers' rights - the basis of creating a rule-based framework for globalisation*

15. APEC remains engaged in a process designed to lead towards the Bogor goals of free and open trade and investment. And with a continuing standstill in WTO negotiations, APEC Leaders have encouraged Senior Officials to increasingly seek complementary alternatives to multilateral trade liberalisation, including regional and bilateral trade and investment agreements, to reach this goal. However a strong social dimension embracing the issue of decent work and respect of fundamental workers' rights is essential to achieve stable and inclusive regional

---

<sup>6</sup> ILO database on export processing zones, ILO, April 2007, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/themes/epz/epz-db.pdf>

economic integration. All APEC governments, as well as employers and trade unions, must reaffirm their pledge to respect, realise and promote fundamental workers' rights made in the adoption of the *ILO Declaration concerning Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998)* and reiterated in the *ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation (2008)* and the *ILO Global Jobs Pact (2009)*.

***Include fundamental workers' rights in the APEC agenda***

16. Furthermore, many fundamental Conventions of the ILO still remain to be ratified and, even if ratified, to be fully applied in APEC economies. APEC leaders should agree to include the promotion of the ratification and application of fundamental workers' rights in the APEC agenda as part of an expanded agenda on labour and social issues.

***Support the inclusion of labour and social issues in the WTO***

17. A significant contribution which the Leaders' Meeting could make to reinforce the long-term sustainability of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) would be to support taking employment issues into account in future trade negotiations, and thus strengthen the analysis of the impact of trade on employment and sustainable development within the WTO. The breakdown of the Doha Round of WTO negotiations shows that the benefits of trade liberalisation increasingly appear vague and that multilateral trade negotiations are at risk of being abandoned because they cause more job destruction than job creation. APEC Leaders should recognise the need for the WTO to begin a dialogue in this area and recommend that the WTO set up a committee on trade and employment that could seek to analyse and anticipate the impact of trade liberalisation on the level and quality of employment, and make recommendations to the WTO General Council accordingly.

***Include provisions on the protection of labour rights in all RTAs/FTAs***

18. Regional Trade Arrangements and Free Trade Agreements (RTAs/FTAs) must contribute to promoting sustainable development and improving living standards and working conditions of workers in all countries participating in them. RTAs/FTAs should not only contain obligations with regard to national labour laws but also to internationally recognised core labour standards, as well as a mechanism to institutionalise the participation of the social partners in the process of surveillance and promotion of these standards. Therefore, the *Draft Model Labour Measures for RTAs/FTAs chapters*<sup>7</sup> need to include strong commitments to pursuing labour protection consistent with internationally recognised labour principles and rights, meaning that every APEC member's laws and regulations must be in line with the relevant ILO Conventions. In the region there already exist some FTAs that contain such clauses<sup>8</sup>. APEC Leaders should ensure the inclusion of labour clauses and reference to core labour standards in future trade and investment agreements, so that these agreements serve sustainable development and decent work.

---

<sup>7</sup> Called for in Busan in 2005, and discussed at the last HRD Working Group in June 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Such agreements incorporating labour clauses include NAFTA; the Canada-Peru free trade agreement; and the various free trade agreements negotiated by New Zealand.

*Assessing the impact of the FTAAP on development and decent work*

19. The ITUC/APLN urges the APEC Leaders to ensure that any measures to render the existing FTAs more business-friendly must not further worsen the conditions or wages of employees and must ensure that provisions on the protection of labour rights are incorporated. Bilateral investment treaties (BITs) need to incorporate clauses that require governments not to lower labour standards in order to attract foreign investors. Moreover, APEC must include assessment of the impact of the Free Trade Area of Asia and the Pacific (FTAAP) on employment, the level of development and the creation of decent work instead of solely the impact on trade, as the assessment currently stands.

**Recommendation 6: Tackle climate change and global warming in an ambitious and comprehensive manner, including through the creation of green jobs**

*Contribute to the conclusion of an ambitious and comprehensive agreement in the UNFCCC*

20. In light of the disappointing outcomes of the Conference of Parties 15 (COP15) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), progress on tackling global warming and climate change has been worryingly inadequate. The need for action is now more urgent than most of us can imagine. A significant contribution that APEC Economies could make to mitigate climate change would be to support an ambitious and comprehensive agreement at the earliest possible juncture, including significant progress at the UN COP16 Climate Change Conference in Cancun.

*Develop policies for energy efficiency and renewable energy*

21. The APEC must work toward long-term energy plans within a sustainable development framework that achieves energy security and environmental protection, and that are compatible with full and decent employment. Policies must ensure secure, clean, environmentally friendly and affordable energy, based on the development of renewable energy sources. And policies must, through effective and enforceable agreements, ensure investment in new capacity and in infrastructure.

*Ambitious, just transition needed more than ever, with creation of green jobs and investment in human resources*

22. The APEC should also increase its efforts to promote green jobs within its sphere of actions. However, the transition to a low carbon economy and the development of respective technologies and employment opportunities risks creating a labour market of two speeds. Soon, if not already, the skills and qualifications of employees of the older generation will become obsolete and these employees will face increasingly great difficulties to remain employed. In order to ensure that there will be a just transition to a green economy, and with a view to facilitating the adaptation of the labour force to the changing post-crisis labour market, ITUC/APLN urges the Leaders to develop policies that expand quality education and training programmes for workers and unemployed persons to operate effectively in green jobs. Policies must also be based on multilateral approaches, consultation of the social partners and joint investments by key national and regional actors.

*Promote workplace action*

23. The APEC has already undertaken research on the



*for energy efficiency,  
recycling and waste  
management with  
consultation with labour*

recycling-based economy (RBE) in order to identify opportunities, challenges, and capacity building needs and share best practices. The Leaders should build on successful experiences and endorse energy efficiency, recycling and waste management projects at the workplace level, as well as the sectoral and local levels. At the workplace, such measures should be developed jointly between employers and trade unions with a view to ensuring that such measures and policies are applied effectively. Similarly at the level of individual economies, resource efficiency and technological innovation should be promoted in a way that supports employment after dialogue with the social partners.

**Recommendation 7: Develop APEC guidelines to ensure the proper implementation of non-discriminatory policies in member economies**

*Gender inequality is  
evident throughout the  
APEC region*

24. Gender inequality is evident throughout the APEC region in access to resources, educational opportunities, political power, and leadership positions. At the current time, the application of fiscal austerity programmes has a negative impact on the status of women at work and in society because they adversely affect levels and conditions of employment in sectors in which women are highly represented, and they reduce the provision of public services on which women are disproportionately dependent, particularly because of their unequal assumption of family responsibilities.

*APEC guidelines to  
ensure the proper and  
effective  
implementation of non-  
discriminatory policies*

25. We acknowledge initiatives taken by APEC to address gender equality through discussions of APEC Woman Ministerial Meetings and the establishment of the Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN). However, these initiatives have confined their actions to promoting gender integration across various APEC fora. APEC Leaders must agree to further advance the initiatives so as to develop APEC guidelines for adequate measures and monitoring mechanisms to ensure the proper implementation of non-discriminatory policies in member economies. Such mechanisms should also be extended to vulnerable groups facing discrimination on grounds other than gender.

**Recommendation 8: Develop an APEC framework for a rights-based approach to migrant workers**

*An APEC framework for a rights-based approach to labour migration*

26. Migration represents both challenges and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific. While migration can benefit workers in both sending and receiving economies, far too often it is a last resort for people who are unable to find work at home and therefore are left open to exploitation in foreign lands, in sectors ranging from construction to domestic work. For the opportunities to prevail, APEC Leaders must agree to develop a framework for migration which takes account of national labour market needs, with reference to the Conclusions on a Fair Deal for Migrant Workers that were adopted at the 92<sup>nd</sup> International Labour Conference in 2004 and the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration adopted in 2005, with full application of national labour laws and working conditions without discrimination. Such a framework should be drawn from available information on policy and best practices in economies in international migration, existing proposals to enhance the economic benefits of migration and relevant international standards, including the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families<sup>9</sup> and the ILO Conventions Nos. 97<sup>10</sup> and 143<sup>11</sup>. The ITUC/APLN considers that APEC Leaders should pay attention to the poor ratification rate of these international standards in APEC economies. APEC member economies should work out a timetable for their ratification. APEC governments should further promote balanced industrial development and decent work so that any migration is undertaken voluntarily and not as an obligation to escape misery or repression.

**Recommendation 9: Develop an APEC framework to encourage social dialogue in multinational enterprises and revise the APEC Non-binding Investment Principles**

*Social dialogue is the most effective means to ensure that MNEs contribute to economic and social development*

27. Multinational enterprises (MNEs) are key actors of the global economy that can bring about more and better jobs in host countries, but some MNE activities can also lead to increased exploitation and worsen social conditions. This happens when they only look at short-term profits and when they neglect their social and labour responsibilities. In addition to legislative frameworks, social dialogue which is part of the social responsibilities of business is the most effective means to ensure that MNEs contribute to economic and social development and are accountable to all stakeholders. This is, however, often ignored in a 'race to the bottom' with regards to social standards and working conditions.

---

<sup>9</sup> Ratified by 43 countries, including Chile, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru and Philippines in the APEC region.

<sup>10</sup> Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), ratified by 49 countries, including New Zealand, Malaysia and the Philippines in the APEC region.

<sup>11</sup> Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), ratified by 23 countries, including only Philippines in the APEC region.

***APEC framework to promote sound industrial relations and collective bargaining***

28. APEC Leaders must agree to develop an APEC-level framework to promote sound industrial relations and respect of the right to collective bargaining in MNEs. This would complement and reinforce the increasingly common practice of negotiating International Framework Agreements (IFAs)<sup>12</sup> between Global Union Federations and multinational enterprises, many from APEC economies. APEC's Industry Dialogues, currently established in the automotive and chemical industries, could organise joint meetings between business and trade union representatives to facilitate social dialogue on this issue.

***APEC Non-Binding Investment Principles must be revised***

29. APEC Leaders must agree to revise the *APEC Non-Binding Investment Principles* so as to incorporate the importance of respect for fundamental workers' rights and employment objectives, with reference to the *ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy* and the *OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*. A formal APEC mechanism must be established to promote and monitor the observance of social responsibilities by multinational enterprises, through the effective use of the National Contact Points under the OECD Guidelines (presently existing in the following APEC countries: Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru and the US).

**Recommendation 10: Develop an APEC framework on human resources development to integrate the unemployed and young people into the job market and train the labour force for new skills and technologies**

***Developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and competences in APEC***

30. APEC's Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) has been active in developing the "21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Competences For All", an effort to define necessary qualities of the future worker and integrate them into education in order to start preparing the labour force. The ITUC/APLN welcomes APEC's work on enhancing human capital and calls for further resources to be invested in this effort.

***Invest urgently in training schemes and employment services to prevent long-term unemployment***

31. After the onset of the financial and employment crises it is particularly urgent to take active measures to integrate unemployed people into the job market, with special attention given to preventing unemployment from becoming long-term. A particularly important effort is required to enable women and young people to overcome the specific obstacles they face in the labour market. Measures should include:

- Early identification of needs of the unemployed and provision of services such as guidance, job search assistance and personalised action plans;
- Accessible training and retraining programmes for all people to enhance their employability and chances of integration,

---

<sup>12</sup> As of mid-2009, 84 Framework Agreements had been concluded between Global Union Federations and individual enterprises.

with a special focus on creating new skills for the efficient operation of green jobs;

- Improved labour market institutions, particularly employment services;
- Specific action programmes to enable women to participate in the labour market on a greater scale and to achieve equal treatment and wages;
- Targeted youth training and skills enhancement programmes to overcome unemployment and low-wage employment among young people;
- Regular evaluation and review of the effectiveness and efficiency of labour market programmes.

## CONCLUSIONS

*Strengthening the social dimension of APEC and achieving a genuine partnership with workers and their trade unions*

32. In practice business promotion remains predominant in the APEC process. APEC Leaders must correct the distortion and redirect APEC so as to achieve the overarching and interrelated objectives of equitable and sustainable growth and narrow the gap between and within member economies. This can be done only through strengthening the social dimension of APEC and achieving a genuine partnership with workers and their trade unions in the region. The ITUC/Asia Pacific Labour Network (ITUC/APLN) is ready to make a commitment to that end.

*Achieving recovery from the economic crisis*

33. APEC needs to play a key role in concrete measures to achieve recovery, to reduce the social impact of the unprecedented triple economic, employment and climate crises and promote the creation of decent work and green jobs as a response. Therefore APEC Leaders must work together to devise strong, effective and coordinated economic recovery programmes within the framework of a decent work agenda based on the ILO Global Jobs Pact.

## **Establishment of APEC Labour Forum**

### **Background**

1. Trade unions, representing the workers of the APEC region, are able to bring a uniquely valuable perspective to the wide-ranging examination of policies needed to support workers in a period of rapid change. APEC trade unions therefore seek to establish a formal relationship with APEC. Such involvement should be initiated at the APEC Leaders' level, comparable with the arrangements for access by the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)\*, as well as throughout the APEC process.

### **Composition**

2. The APEC Labour Forum would consist of the representative national trade union centres of the APEC economies.
3. All the representing national centres could meet in a general assembly at least once a year, possibly prior to the APEC Leaders' Meeting to discuss APEC issues of common interest.

### **Mandate**

4. The Forum's mandate would be as follows:
  - To work together with governments and employers on the promotion of APEC outcomes which can achieve stronger economic growth and higher living standards;
  - To contribute to the development of appropriate policies from APEC on matters such as human resource development, industry development, education and social welfare;
  - To convey the views and needs of workers in APEC economies in their dialogue with governments on APEC issues;
  - To encourage tripartite dialogue at national and APEC levels on issues of concern to the region.
5. Activities of the Forum would include:
  - To advise APEC Leaders and other officials on issues of interest to workers;
  - To present workers' positions in APEC Leaders Meetings, Ministerial Meetings, Senior Official Meetings and committees/working groups relevant to workers' interests;
  - To keep the Forum members informed of progress in APEC; and
  - To maintain a continuing exchange of information and views on the various themes and subjects covered by APEC, with the Secretariats of APEC and ABAC.

\* ABAC members are appointed by their respective Leaders (Prime Minister or President). The APEC Labour Forum would not use the same model for its composition.