

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION/  
ASIA PACIFIC LABOUR NETWORK (ITUC/APLN)**

**ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY, DEVELOPMENT AND  
GROWTH THROUGH DECENT WORK**

**STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION  
CONFEDERATION/ ASIA PACIFIC LABOUR NETWORK  
(ITUC/APLN)**

**TO THE 2009 APEC ECONOMIC LEADERS' MEETING  
(Singapore, 14-15 November 2009)**

**INTRODUCTION**

*A priority: tackling  
the financial and  
economic crisis*

- It is critical that APEC take action to tackle the world economic crisis and to prevent global recession. APEC Leaders must rise to the challenge and work on additional and coordinated counter-cyclical measures in line with the ILO Global Jobs Pact to address the risks of the job crisis and get back on the track with the creation of decent work and a high growth, sustainable development path.

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

- The leaders of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum will meet for the 17<sup>th</sup> APEC Leaders' Meeting in Singapore on 14-15 November 2009 under the theme of "Sustaining Growth, Connecting the Region". 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*

- 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 advancement of green technologies that will address the causes of climate change.

*Trade unions need  
consultative status in  
APEC*

- APEC member states 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 ABAC. The member states should establish an APEC Labour Forum in order to hold an effective dialogue with the representatives of the workers of the region.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ITUC ASIA PACIFIC LABOUR NETWORK

*The ITUC/APLN proposes:*

1. The ITUC/APLN urges APEC Leaders to use the APEC forum to 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 restructure the financial system in a way that enables it to contribute to sustainable economic growth and social progress;
  - 2) Adopt concrete measures to promote labour participation in APEC and endorse the establishment of an APEC Labour Forum;
  - 3) Strengthen the Human Resource Development (HRD) agenda within the APEC process, resume the tradition of regular HRD Ministerial Meetings, and hold the next such meeting, scheduled to take place in China in 2010, with full consultation of the social partners;
  - 4) Put a strong emphasis on the creation of decent and productive employment through developing comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines, which would further assist in the prevention of sweatshop manufacturing production and exploitation in EPZs, where the majority of workers are women;
  - 5) Promote fundamental workers' rights in any regional, bilateral or multilateral trade agreement and economic integration process;
  - 6) Tackle climate change and global warming in a comprehensive manner, including by paying attention to its employment and workplace aspects, promoting the creation of green jobs and investing in new skills in order to ensure high productivity of green jobs, and supporting an ambitious agreement at the UN COP15 climate change Conference in December 2009;
  - 7) Develop APEC guidelines to ensure the proper implementation of non-discriminatory policies with regard to gender and other forms of discrimination;
  - 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.

**Recommendation 1: Take effective measures to respond to the global economic and financial crisis and restructure the financial system in a way that enables it to contribute to sustainable economic growth and social progress.**

***Commitment to re-regulation and to expand fiscal stimulus packages***

2. Recent APEC Senior Officials Meetings (SOMs) have underlined the importance of taking appropriate fiscal, monetary and social resilience measures to help businesses and individuals recover from the economic crisis. The SOMs have noted the positive spillover effects of individual APEC economies' measures on fiscal, monetary, and credit facilitation and called on the APEC Secretariat to establish a Good Practices proliferation mechanism. APEC states must adopt a more interventionist approach and decide upon concrete measures to expand fiscal stimulus packages and adopt adequate regulatory oversight for credit rating agencies that operate or are based in APEC countries, in full support of the proposals adopted at the Pittsburgh G20 Summit on 24-25 September 2009.

***Discouragement of layoffs and protection of wages***

3. 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.

***Protection of socially disenfranchised persons and creation of decent jobs***

4. Women, youth and migrants are among the workers hit hardest by the crisis. APEC countries must build up their social services to protect vulnerable groups such as women, youth, workers in informal economic activities and the unemployed, especially long-term unemployed, by providing unemployment insurance and wages to ensure at least their basic standard of living. APEC Leaders must create new employment positions as the best way to fight against the jobs crisis with measures and policies explained in the ILO Global Jobs Pact.

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

***Promoting workers' participation throughout the APEC process***

5. Since its creation in 1995, the 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>1</sup> and in contributions to the work of APEC on Human Resource Development<sup>2</sup>. In 2008, the Peruvian hosts of

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<sup>1</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.

<sup>2</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).

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>3</sup> APEC Leaders must now agree to take concrete measures to further promote workers' participation throughout the APEC process..

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

6. 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 centres 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.

***Trade union participation in the HRD Working Group***

7. APEC Leaders should further 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. In particular, as recognised by APEC Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministers,<sup>4</sup> trade union representatives need to be involved in the APEC HRD Working Group to develop adequate HRD strategies.

**Recommendation 3: Strengthen the HRD agenda within the APEC process to resume the tradition of HRD Ministerial Meetings, and hold the next such meeting, scheduled to take place in China in 2010, with full consultation of the social partners**

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

8. 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. However, while Trade Ministers meet on an 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

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<sup>3</sup> Seven APEC countries out of 21 are members of the OECD.

<sup>4</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.

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).

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

9. 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 are drawing 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 in June 2009. We insist that the "Employing Workers Indicator" (EWI) in the Doing Business report, and 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***

10. 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 a strong emphasis on the creation of decent and productive employment through developing comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines, which would further assist in the prevention of sweatshop manufacturing production and exploitation in EPZs, where the majority of workers are women**

*Developing comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines*

11. Decent work must be at the centre of APEC. The primary responsibility lies with public policies and should not be left to the individual alone. APEC should develop and implement comprehensive APEC Decent Work Guidelines comprising active measures to integrate unemployed people into employment, 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;
- 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..

*Over 60 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>5</sup> There are real and excessive efforts in many APEC economies to lower regulations, taxes, environmental protection and labour standards to attract investment. 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.

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<sup>5</sup> ILO database on export processing zones, ILO, April 2009, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/themes/epz/epz-db.pdf>

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

13. APEC must start an initiative for effective policies to promote decent work, investment, and trade instead of exploitation 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.

**Recommendation 5: Promote fundamental workers' rights<sup>6</sup> in any regional, bilateral or multilateral trade agreement and economic integration process “at the border”, “behind the border” and “across the border”**

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

14. APEC is more than halfway through the 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 increasingly to seek complementary alternatives to multilateral trade liberalisation, including regional and bilateral trade 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 regional economic integration. All APEC governments, as well as employers and trade unions, must reaffirm their pledge made through the adoption of the *ILO Declaration concerning Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998)* to respect, realise and promote fundamental workers' rights.

*Including fundamental workers' rights in the APEC agenda*

15. 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.

*APEC countries should support inclusion of labour and social issues in the WTO*

16. 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

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<sup>6</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).

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 back to the WTO General Council accordingly.

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

17. 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. This year the Singapore Presidency set as a priority the reduction of trade and investment barriers “at the border”. As stated by the Presidency, this includes making the rules of origin of existing free trade agreements more business-friendly and deepening the analysis on the impact of an FTAAP. Another aim is to render the start up and operation of new businesses easier, faster and cheaper by simplifying rules “behind the border” and also to build up the infrastructure “across the border” so to reduce costs and times of trade and transactions.

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

18. The ITUC/APLN urges the APEC Leaders to ensure that any measures to make 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. Moreover, APEC must include assessment of the impact of the Free Trade Area of Asia and the Pacific (FTAAP) on the level of development and the creation of decent work. 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. APEC Leaders should ensure the inclusion of labour clauses and reference to core labour standards in future trade agreements as well, so that these agreements serve to advance sustainable development and decent work.

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



**Recommendation 6: Tackle climate change and global warming in an ambitious and comprehensive manner, including by paying attention to its employment and workplace aspects, promoting the creation of green jobs and investing in new skills in order to ensure high productivity of green jobs, and supporting an ambitious agreement at the UN COP15 climate change Conference in December 2009**

*Ambitious, just transition needed more than ever, with creation of green jobs and promotion of effective social dialogue in workplaces*

19. 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. 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. APEC must increase its efforts to promote green jobs within its sphere of actions. Policies must ensure secure, clean, environmentally friendly and affordable energy, based on the promotion of renewable energy. Policies must create investment in human capital and promote new skills for workers to sufficiently and more effectively operate in green workplaces. Policies must also be based on multilateral approaches and joint investments by key national and regional actors. And policies must, through effective and enforceable agreements, ensure investment in new capacity and in infrastructure. At the workplace level, measures for energy efficiency and energy-saving should be developed jointly between employers and trade unions. At the level of individual economies, resource efficiency and technological innovation should be promoted in a way that supports employment and a process of consultation 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*

20. Gender inequality is evident throughout the APEC region in access to resources, educational opportunities, political power, and leadership positions. In particular, structural reform programmes, most often including measure of privatisation and austerity in public spending, have a negative impact on the status of women at work and in society since they adversely affect levels and conditions of employment in sectors in which women are highly represented, as well as reducing 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*

21. 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 ensuring 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*

22. 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. 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>8</sup> and ILO Conventions Nos. 97<sup>7</sup> and 143<sup>8</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 furthermore promote balanced industrial development and decent work so that any migration is undertaken voluntarily and not as an obligation to escape misery or repression.

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<sup>8</sup> Ratified by 25 countries, including Chile, Mexico, Peru and Philippines in the APEC region (Indonesia has signed the Convention but has not yet ratified it).

<sup>7</sup> Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), ratified by 49 countries, including New Zealand and Philippines in the APEC region.

<sup>8</sup> Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), ratified by 23 countries, but none in the APEC region.

**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*

23. 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.

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

24. 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>9</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*

25. 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 and the US).

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<sup>9</sup> As of mid-2009, 84 Framework Agreements had been concluded between Global Union Federations and individual enterprises.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

26. In practice business promotion is 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*

27. APEC needs to play a key role in concrete measures to achieve recovery, to reduce the social impact of this unprecedented financial, jobs 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.

## **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.