

The 8th ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Conference
Organising to Build Strong Transport Unions in the Asia/Pacific Region
14-17 May 2013, Hong Kong

**Agenda item 15: Theme Document for the Congress in 2014:
From Global Crisis to Global Justice – Transport Workers Fighting Back.**

1. The 2014 Congress will be shorter than previous Congresses, and this will inevitably mean shorter Section Conferences during the Congress. This in turn has implications for how we organise and use the Section and Regional Conferences in the inter-Congress period.
2. It is proposed that the Section, Regional, Women's and Young Workers' Conferences should have a more structured input to the development of the Congress Theme Document which is put to the Congress by the Executive Board.
3. The April 2012 Executive Board approved the attached outline for the Congress Theme document for the Congress in 2014. The General Secretary now has the task of filling out this outline to produce a full 2014-2018 strategy document ready for approval by the Executive Board in April 2014 and for discussion at the 2014 ITF Congress.
4. In preparing this document the aim will be to incorporate motions (or conclusions) coming from the conferences of the Sections; Regions; Women and Young Workers being held before April 2014. These will be put together as a coherent set of motions within the framework of the Congress theme.
5. The Draft Congress Theme Document will then be presented for amendment and approval at the ITF Executive Board in April 2014. A final Executive Board approved Theme Document will go for discussion at the ITF Congress in August 2014.
6. Any motions which do not fit within the framework of the Congress theme document will be submitted separately. In this way we aim to avoid duplication and enable a more focussed discussion at Congress.
7. The Executive Board will also consider any motions that are within the framework of the Congress theme but which conflict with other positions put forward. The Board will either resolve these conflicts or determine which motions are accepted/not accepted as part of the main Executive Board Theme Document and similarly which motions are attached as proposed amendments to the document.
8. The APRC is invited to consider the attached outline paper about the Congress theme, and to contribute to its final content. This may include the Section considering or enlarging on some of the following points:

- The need to link with the Global Unions and the wider global social justice movement to promote alternative global economic strategies.
 - Maintaining and improving our capacity to deliver an effective and rapid solidarity response to immediate urgent situations such as serious disputes or violations of union rights.
 - Holding to long term strategic objectives, utilising the strategic position of freight logistics in the global economy - maintaining our work building union networks across industry modes in key global logistics companies, along global supply chains, and at key hubs and corridors.
 - The need to develop and expand a global campaign linking transport and the public interest including the need for socially and environmentally sustainable public transport.
 - The potential for a long term campaign focussed on high growth anti-union states such as Dubai and Qatar, working with Global Unions and human rights organisations.
 - Ensuring strong buy-in and participation from affiliates in ITF activities. Ensuring ITF activities and programmes also reflect the issues of importance for women transport workers and young workers and remove barriers to the participation of women workers and young workers in ITF activities and decision making.
 - Improving mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating of our activities and strategic projects in order to improve our effectiveness and our accountability to affiliates.
 - Other issues of the Section relating to the theme: From Global Crisis to Global Social Justice - Transport Workers Fighting Back
9. The APRC is invited to put forward Section Conference Conclusions or Motions to be included in the Congress Theme Document. These will be forwarded by the Regional Secretary to the Office of the General Secretary for incorporation in the final document presented to the Executive Board in 2014. Despite this long time line we should like to request that we receive this input by 1 July, 2013.
10. It should be noted that this process does not displace the normal process of submitting motions to Congress which is the right of all affiliates as set out in the ITF Constitution.

An Outline for the Congress Theme Document in 2014

From Global Crisis to Global Justice – Transport workers fighting back

The Globalisation Crisis

1. Globalisation and deregulation have resulted in a massive transfer of wealth and power from the poor to the rich, and led to a catastrophic global economic breakdown. The response of global capital has been to launch austerity assaults against workers, to deregulate even further, to shrink the public sector, to replace stable jobs with precarious employment, to reduce social and employment rights and to attack unions. This section of the theme document will highlight the catastrophic effects of competitive globalisation, analyse its impact on transport workers and identify a number of key trends and threats to union organisation.

Fighting back

2. Transport unions have been at the forefront of fighting back in strikes from Italy to India. Global unions have put forward alternative jobs-based economic strategies. Yet in some cases national union actions often lack a global perspective or any clear strategy for how to address a crisis rooted in globalisation; while the Global Unions appear peripheral to major national union fight-backs. This Section of the theme document will propose ways of building a dynamic Global Union response which works with national unions as part of a sustained fight back. It will set out strategies to link the specific struggle of transport workers to a wider Global Unions strategy.

Getting results

3. To achieve our ambitious goals the ITF must operate efficiently and more cost effectively. This requires setting priorities; identifying targets; and monitoring and evaluating our results. This Section will explain the strong need for ongoing close evaluation of our work to ensure real outcomes for affiliates.

Strategic alliances for public services and sustainable transport

4. The ITF has sought to systematically support an international union campaign to build strategic alliances with civil society organisations, to defend public services, and promote sustainable transport at the local, regional and global level. This section of the congress theme document will evaluate the progress of the Quality Public Services Campaign and propose a strategy for strengthening and taking this campaign forward. It will review the challenge of climate change for transport unions and the mechanisms for addressing these issues within the ITF.

International Solidarity

5. The ITF has a proud record in developing rapid-response solidarity actions to support affiliates in crucial disputes or facing serious violations of union rights. This is achieved by maintaining strong industrial solidarities, by keeping the ITF close to the realities of our affiliates in its regions, and by providing practical effective solidarity assistance. This Section of the document will produce concrete proposals to improve our capacity to deliver rapid response solidarity actions. This must include utilising the ever evolving technology of social networking to open up ever more opportunities for mobilising solidarity.

Strategic Campaigns for Workers Rights

6. There are an increasing number of new players in competitive global markets whose starting point is to allow no unions. The emirate states market themselves aggressively, sponsoring high profile sporting events, including the FIFA World Cup in 2022. In civil aviation Emirates Etihad and QATAR Airways are undermining conditions throughout the industry. Dubai Ports World is one of the top four global network terminal operators. Dubai is now one of the world's most concentrated logistics centres. This section of the congress theme document will highlight the problem of states that ban unions and propose a coordinated long term Global Unions campaign to challenge the non union zone these states have created, and link this to the aviation, ports and logistics strategy of the ITF.

Global Organising

7. Transport workers occupy a strategic position in the global economy. The ITF will continue to implement long term and cross sectional strategic programmes. These programmes have the specific aim of increasing union leverage through global and regional union coordination and working in a highly targeted way. This includes corporate campaigns focussed on major global and regional logistics companies; projects focussed on global and regional hubs and important transport corridors; and campaigns targeting strategic global supply chains from cargo hold to assembly line. It involves building international union networks to gain strategic leverage along these vital supply chains. This Section of the document will evaluate progress in current projects, identify the potential future leverage to be gained by for ITF affiliates, and make specific proposals for a major stepping up of this strategic work.

An activist mobilising ITF

8. The ITF is an activist global union with a strong buy-in from unions and their union activists. More young transport workers need to be inspired by and to energise ITF actions. More women workers need to be included in shaping ITF strategies. We must bring ever more unions and members into ITF membership and activities. Our affiliate meetings must be driven by a clear purpose rather than a regular date in the calendar. "Arab Springs", the Occupy Movement and other political actions have challenged power structures and inspired the world. Our challenge is how we can build union power and mobilise union solidarity in the global drive to move from global financial crisis to global justice. This Section will propose initiatives for how we can engage even more active buy-in and involvement from our unions in our strategic campaigns.