

Report

IndustriALL Global Union Regional Conference

“Towards Sustainable Industrial and Energy Policy”

24 - 25 September 2015, Windhoek, Namibia

Day 1: Thursday, 24 September 2015

Opening Messages

Mr. Kenneth Mogane, Regional Officer (IndustriALL Global Union, Sub-Saharan Africa Region), and **Mr. Heiner Naumann**, Resident Representative of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Namibia, welcomed the participants to the conference by providing an introduction to the work of each organization and a rationale to the conference.

Introductory Session: Global Concepts Presentation

The IndustriALL discussion paper, “Towards Sustainable Industrial Policy” was presented by **Brian Kohler** using the standard PowerPoint developed for this purpose. However, the narrative accompanying the presentation and elaborating the slides emphasized very strongly:

- (1) the three dimensions of sustainability (social, environmental and economic);
- (2) climate change and the link to energy choices;
- (3) the concept and application of Just Transition.

The intent of this emphasis was to encourage the group to approach the subsequent sessions from the perspective of sustainability, and to avoid having the conversation descend towards a traditional trade-union discussion of industrial policy.

A traditional trade-union discussion of industrial policy tends to look at primarily economic development and social beneficiation in the form of job creation. Other social indicators tend to become subsumed in the economic arguments, and the environmental dimension of sustainability tends to be entirely ignored.

Sustainability or sustainable development is a concept that is simultaneously complex, subtle and radical. Therefore the correct framing of the discussion in the opening presentation and remarks of any conference on sustainability is crucial.

Brian noted that he came to learn, as well from all the participants and that the workshop was intended to be interactive. Sustainable industrial policy is a difficult subject, and the participants were challenged to exchange ideas and provide feedback to IndustriALL.

Highlights of Brian's opening comments:

What is sustainability? The usual definition of sustainability is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs”. Sustainability must therefore address a broad range of needs, and can be considered a rather radical concept. It is a vision of the future that is different to the “casino economy” of today. Everyone will be affected.

Industrial Policy is a plan to encourage desired patterns of industrial development and growth.

We need to merge this idea with the concept of sustainability. This is not always easy, but it is

necessary. We face a triple crisis: social, environmental, and economic.

We face a race to the bottom. The historical link between productivity and wages has been broken; global value chains are out of control, governments compete for foreign direct investment by cutting regulations and enabling low-cost production while receiving minimal or no taxes in return. One percent of the world's population controls 40-50 percent of global wealth. At the finish line in this race to the bottom, you will find situations like the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh. On the environmental dimension, we need look no further than global climate talks which are in failure mode. Entire species, the entire planet, is in trouble

Imagining a sustainable future is not hard. Besides the obvious, protection of the environment, a sustainable future would:

- Respect human rights (including labour rights) everywhere
- Guarantee greater equality by diminishing the huge global disparities in income and wealth
- Use technology for social benefits
- Improve labour standards

To get there, we will need a Just Transition. If we do not plan for a Just Transition, an unjust one is guaranteed. Changes should benefit both today's and tomorrow's workers, and not just a tiny wealthy elite. Just Transition is the key to progress: if workers do not believe that the transition will be a just one, they will oppose it with all their might. It is insufficient to say that lots of so-called "green jobs" might be created. We have to make sure that those new jobs are decent jobs that benefit everyone.)

It is important to recognize that the free market will not ensure a just transition. Only government intervention will solve it. Therefore, we need to strengthen governments and remind them of their responsibilities to their people. We need to explain to them what we want and why we want it

Creating a Just Transition requires sustainable industrial policies, strong social safety nets, and creative labour adjustment programs. All governments pursue industrial policies, even those that claim they are ideologically opposed to intervening in the market. The social, environmental and economic results a society gets are predicted by the policies it pursues. Even ignoring such interventions as the building of infrastructure or military spending, non-intervention (if such a thing existed) is itself a policy choice with predictable outcomes. We need to engage in debate, agree on goals, and set targets for getting to them.

Who is going to pay for the transition? The global response to the 2008 economic crisis shows that there is no shortage of money, it is only a question of priorities. If tens of trillions of dollars could be hastily found to bail out criminal banks, then finding a mere few hundred billions of dollars to save the planet should be easy. Another option would be to institute a financial transaction tax, a very small percentage tax on global financial transactions. An idea sometimes referred to as a "Tobin tax" or a "Robin Hood tax" would help to stabilize the economy by reducing harmful speculation, and at the same time raise billions of dollars that could be used for environmental mitigation, adaptation, and Just Transition programs. Finally, we should not talk about sustainability without talking a little bit about limits on corporate profits, or on excessive executive compensation packages. Simply limiting tax loopholes would go a long way.

At its founding congress, IndustriALL promised "a new global and social model that puts people first, based on democracy and global justice". We represent workers in resource extraction, processing, manufacturing, and all sorts of industries. We represent workers that are anxious about the transition to a sustainable future, as well as workers who are anxious for the transition to start. We have a lot of power, speaking for some 50 million workers, worldwide.

The goal for this meeting is to have a good discussion and debate, to articulate a union perspective for sustainable industrial policy in this region, for our important industrial sectors but particularly for the energy sector. We will use the outputs from this meeting, along with other similar ones, to

write union policies and to prepare to influence government policies. Much of these two days will be spent in small-group discussions, reporting back to the entire group, on a set of prepared questions.

Finally, I would like to say a word or two about climate change. There is no climate change debate: of 13,950 peer-reviewed climate articles (1991-2012): only 24 rejected human-made global warming. Other studies of the scientific literature have revealed similar results. Apart from a very few contrarians, almost every scientist in the world with credentials in the field agrees that we have caused ourselves a huge problem. The 2015 climate talks in Paris are a crucial moment, as it may be our last chance to strike a fair, ambitious, and binding emissions target to control climate change. If we fail in Paris, we will need to rely on technologies not yet proven to maintain a planet that is comfortably habitable.

The seminar consisted mainly of facilitated small-group discussion/brainstorming of concepts. What should trade unionists have to say on sustainability's social, economic and environmental dimensions? How should energy issues and climate constraints shape industrial policies?

Discussion Points

- 1. What issues are most important to you? What impacts will there be on workers from possible sustainability solutions?*
- 2. What are the biggest challenges to sustainability in different regions and different industrial sectors, and how can the particular challenges and concerns of different regions and industrial sectors be taken into account?*
- 3. How can we increase affiliates' capacity to promote the policy in their countries?*
- 4. How can we influence governments to ensure a workers perspective is considered, and which other actors must IndustriALL and its affiliates engage with? How can we get public recognition of the importance of industrial policy for workers?*
- 5. Energy issues*

There were in total 24 persons attending this event from Botswana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Switzerland. In addition there were two IndustriALL staff, and on FES staff person in full-time attendance, along with others who visited briefly at various points in the programme.

Plenary discussion after opening presentation:

Namibian unions do not yet have enough knowledge and skills for the debate on sustainable industrial and energy policy. There is a need to involve and educate members on the ground on those issues in order to be able to discuss on both national and regional level. One of the key challenges is that the current path is unsustainable; however, multinationals use their power to sustain their profits that result from the current practices. Capitalism is further regarded as a root cause for unsustainable energy policies.

Session One: Global Concepts Analysis

Small Group Discussions: "Which issues are most important to you (will impact workers the most) in developing IndustriALL Global Union's Sustainable Industrial Policy?" (Consider the three dimensions of sustainability: social, economic, environmental)

Group 1: Bohithethswe Letse, Botswana; Kenneth Mogane, South Africa; David Kaonga, Zambia; Mutale Chisanga, Zambia; Charity Harawa, Malawi

<u>Social Dimension</u>	<u>Environmental Dimension</u>	<u>Economic Dimension</u>
• Education and skills	• Ownership of resources	• Policies that drive for local

<p>development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement • Enhanced collaboration, engagement with other civil society groups; including the participation of labour in the formulation of business policies • Harmonize legislative and regulatory framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of appropriate strategies • Research of sustainable development issues and goals in each country • Need good environmental policies and regulations 	<p>content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common regional legislation • Making energy accessible to all • Access to energy, taking into account different energy sources, according to the respective country's needs • Encouraging some form of shared ownership (resources, production) in terms of productivity • Challenge: most resources are exported raw and come back processed; no secondary industry is developed and revenue does not remain in the country of origin • Development of common industrial policies through analysis of individual country situations
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Group 2: Firew Bekele, Ethiopia; Naeman Shivute, Namibia; Victor Oyoku, Nigeria; Brian Tjihero, Namibia; Ingind Kauta, Namibia; Sylvia Kamumjo, Namibia; Richard Matengu, Namibia

<p><u><i>Social Dimension</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment of members through education and capacity training • Empowerment of communities and grass-roots • Introduction of policies that regulate the exploitation of goods and employees; lobby, urge governments to introduce good regulations and policies in favour of employees (social policies that are long lasting and that help employees) and the environment • Labour must be partners in the creation of sustainable industrial policies for continuing wealth creation: wealth that must be shared • Big challenge in the region: outsourcing of contract employees, not just in private industry but increasingly in the 	<p><u><i>Environmental Dimension</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploitation of the environment • Need to reduce emissions; encourage introduction of solar systems instead of using gas and coal 	<p><u><i>Economic Dimension</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to address all those challenges, IndustriALL, governments, employers and employees must work jointly on new strategies. IndustriALL can bring its affiliates together in unity and strength
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<p>public sector. Casualisation creates precarious work, and example of “man's inhumanity to man”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge; current policies are destructive: workers are exploited; don't receive proper social care, don't benefit from profits, are not well treated by employers, are stressed – unions are attacked • Need for long term development and strategies instead of short term profits • Networking: exchange of experiences and problems • Use of benchmarking to analyse existing policies; also use benchmarking in collective bargaining • Capacity building through broader knowledge, education and training and retraining, skills development • Need to cooperate with other actors to increase IndustriALL's leverage; e.g. FES, NGOs, government, ILO, WTO, EU, AU, politicians (in order to get own ideas and policies approved), government agencies 		
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Group 3: Vuyo Bikittsha, South Africa; Aroun Woodrajh, South Africa; Mbulaheni Mbodi, South Africa; Helen Dlatile, South Africa; Mfanawelisonfelo Dlamini South Africa; Ndlela Radebe, Swaziland

<p><u><i>Social Dimension</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social protection, access to good education, respect for social resources, respect for human rights, creation of decent work • Good governance and democracy are needed but are undermined by greed and corruption • Government must play an interventionist role • Oppose weakening and privatisation of workplace health and safety policies 	<p><u><i>Environmental Dimension</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the environment free from any pollution and land degradation • Research for the development of new technologies for sustainable development • Some countries do only have one source of energy (e.g. coal) and that the production of sustainable and environmentally friendly energy is very difficult. The respective country contexts must thus be taken into account 	<p><u><i>Economic Dimension</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good economic policies (sustainable industrial policy) is a challenging are requiring research, sharing of resources and experiences, and a focus on tackling economic fundamentals • Get a common understanding of current circumstances and develop appropriate policies and implementation plans • Investigation of the role that organised labour plays currently in different countries
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment standards reduce exploitation • Intensification of capacity building and strengthening of relations / collaboration in the region • Development of new skills • Transfer of skills; multinationals must transfer their knowledge to their workers - implementation of skills exchange programs • Enhancement of labour participation in policy formulation • Analysis of current policies, building linkages between the existing policies • Identify common struggles and challenges (using networking and collaboration with other stakeholders) and build strong industrial solidarity campaigns • Bilateral relations and collaboration amongst stakeholders • Development of action plan e.g. South Africa Energy Network • Need to reach out to other actors: government (all levels), business especially employers' organizations and multinational corporations), environmental organizations, power producers, civil society, communities, social movements, traditional and faith based organisations, workers' organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a crucial need to develop innovations that deal with pollution issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redistribution of wealth • Funding and compensation • Mobilisation of resources for capacity building for all stakeholders • Need diversification of the energy supply; in this regard, prices of renewable energy are very important
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Additional General Comments on Session One:

A South African participant pointed out that natural resources management are the key to sustainable industrial policy. The issue of beneficiation is very important as most natural resources are exported; if there is control over assets and beneficiation, revenues from e.g. fossil fuels can be spent on the development of renewable energies. Benefits from the exploitation of natural resources must flow to the country owning the resource. Unions need a network for the exchange of experiences and the comparison of situations in different countries and regions (concerning both wages and energy issues). The South African Energy Network (SAEN) is a good example for a network through which unions could increase their impact and made their concerns heard.

For a participant from Nigeria, networking is not a challenge, rather the selfishness and corruption of political leaders. Participants agree that networking is a powerful instrument, although it is not the solution to everything.

Participants emphasise the need to develop common campaigns and capacity development programs in order to learn from each other and to strengthen solidarity. Present policies are inadequate and provide neither a safe and healthy workplace nor a safe and healthy environment in the broader sense. A South African participant states that the enhancement of capacities must go hand in hand with advocacy and exchange of experiences; so that we are seen as “partners in progress”. We are here for the long term, therefore we must look after the environment not simply look at short-term profits.

Session 2: Participants’ Experiences - Group Work

Small group discussions: evaluation and discussions of the status of sustainability/unsustainability on the basis of actual situations in workplaces and in their surrounding communities, regions, or nations. What are the major challenges and concerns of different regions? What are the major challenges for in the different industrial sectors?

Group 1: Vuyo Bikittsha, South Africa; Aroun Woodrajh, South Africa; Mbulaheni Mbodi, South Africa; Helen Dlatile, South Africa; Mfanawelisonflo Dlamini, South Africa; Ndlela Radebe, Swaziland

<p><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge/controversy: nuclear energy 	<p><u>Environmental Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Africa drives towards energy efficiency and green buildings; techniques such as building placement and window sizing to control sunlight penetration • In certain cities, have areas where cars are not allowed – encourages the use of trains, buses, and other mass transit options, emissions decrease • Introduction of solar panels e.g. on rooftops • Energy saving light bulbs • Commitment to dealing with renewable energy and sustainable development • Ethanol blend fuels • Solar farms • Re-forestation 	<p><u>Economic Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall sustainable development policy approach is needed (sustainable industrial policy)
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Group 2: Firew Bekele, Ethiopia; Naeman Shivute, Namibia; Victor Oyoku, Nigeria; Brian Tjihero, Namibia; Ingind Kauta, Namibia; Sylvia Kamumjo, Namibia; Richard Matengu, Namibia

<p><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of individual generators is still common; they are kept in cases of unreliability of the 	<p><u>Environmental Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydro-electricity, solar, wind energy, and other new forms of safe “green” energy are either 	<p><u>Economic Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable cities are economically viable
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grid; and energy shortage but they are dangerous to human health and the environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many cars • Nuclear energy controversial 	presently available or under development making a reduction of carbon emissions possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural gas terminals for cars • Need to reduce dependence on coal 	
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Group 3: Bohithethswe Letse, Botswana; Kenneth Mogane, South Africa; David Kaonga, Zambia; Mutale Chisanga, Zambia; Charity Harawa, Malawi

<u><i>Social Dimension</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downsizing of workforce, especially in the mining sector • Solar/renewable energy is expensive and only accessible for the elites • Hydroelectricity suffers from droughts; if water levels are low then power generation potential is low 	<u><i>Environmental Dimension</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botswana: use of limestone to reduce emission • Malawi: tree-planting, mainly around the dams • So far, the production of solar energy products is growing but only on a small scale basis and very expensive • Looming water shortages 	<u><i>Economic Dimension</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High reliance on coal e.g. Botswana • In Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, if water levels are low, the creation of energy is difficult • Move from gas to charcoal to natural gas and imported liquid fuels e.g. Tanzania may have short-term economic logic but long-term social and environmental costs
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Additional General Comments on Session Two:

A South African participant commented on “The Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Program” as an example of a very successful project; however, so far there is only small scale production and the project is in the hands of the private sector – with significant use of outsourcing. A challenge in South Africa is the high government spending of trillions of South Africa rand on nuclear energy without public consultations. Also debatable is the long-standing coal gasification and liquid fuels from coal programmes. Another participant noted that in Zimbabwe there is a newly established organisation that works towards the use of green energy (Zimbabwe Energy Council)

Session 3: Solutions – Options and Tools – Plenary discussion

Group discussion: What are some of the energy issues, and possible solutions, that trade unions (locally, nationally and internationally) should consider?

Note: this discussion was not broken down into smaller groups.

<u><i>Social Dimension</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job creation at the centre of policies: decent jobs according to ILO standards (social package, social dialogue) instead of casualised jobs • Corporate social responsibility and accountability of companies on an obligatory basis 	<u><i>Environmental Dimension</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental protection • Shift to safer renewable energy sources • Use of appropriate technology • Rapid response to climate change: mitigation, adaptation, disaster response 	<u><i>Economic Dimension</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trigger innovation for green technologies: there must be structures, institutions and incentives for innovation, research, and development • Energy and key resources should be subject to social ownership or at least control by whatever means (there are more
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public participation and stakeholder consultation • Working class ownership of the economy (cooperatives, parastatals, communities, women) • Empowerment of women • Social security • Job security, job enhancement, job enrichment • Industrial harmony and democracy • Social dialogue • Proper attention for youth, women and workers with disabilities • Education and training; strengthening self-consciousness of the young generations • Transparency and responsibility of public officials • Sustainable, people-centred policies for a sustainable society 		<p>than one model)</p>
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Session four: A Plan of Action - Plenary Discussion

Small group discussion: “How can we increase the capacity of our affiliates to promote sustainable industrial policy, policy with a worker's perspective, in their countries?”

Group 1: Charity Harawa, Malawi; Peles Jonathan-Hageze, Tanzania; Bohithetswe Letswe, Botswana; George Ampweya, Namibia; Paris Mashego, South Africa; Around Woodrajh, South Africa; Mbulaheni Mbodi, South Africa; David Kaonga, Zambia

<p><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation matters • Challenges: bureaucracy, delayed and/or denied justice, greed • Precarious, outsourced workers are difficult to reach and organize into unions: must give a voice to the voiceless • Crucial: timing of policies • Capacity building for regions and countries according to need, including the provision of adequate resources • Extensive visits of unions for contact, research, and benchmarking • Education and training 	<p><u>Environmental Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and development 	<p><u>Economic Dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy sovereignty • Within industries, sharing of profits and involvement of workers
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for a Just Transition: social justice, human rights, decent work, economic distribution • Focus on social justice, human and labour rights, decent work, economic redistribution especially within the new renewable sectors whenever consolidation takes place • Country-specific policies for a Just Transition and the creation of sustainable jobs • Dialogue with government on public ownership; food security; redistribution 		
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Group 2: Nicodemus Chipakapaka, Tanzania; Vuyo Bikittsha, South Africa; Mutale Chisanga, Zambia; Ndlela Radebe, South Africa; Helen Diatile, South Africa; Mfanawelisontflo Dlamini, Swaziland; Martink Chikuni, Zimbabwe; Firew Bekele, Ethiopia

<u>Social Dimension</u>	<u>Environmental Dimension</u>	<u>Economic Dimension</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to cover job losses to ensure implement creation policies • Need of collective and democratic planning by workers; sectoral governing councils should be dominated by the working class • Strong, militant working class struggle to solve climate catastrophe and energy crisis • Prioritise women's struggles and interests as well as poor communities and informal workers in the shaping of a Just Transition • Guarantee food security through provision of quality food and ensure availability, affordability and accessibility • Participation in civil society conferences/programs to influence the society to give attention to sustainable developmental issues • Just Transition to low carbon economy under the control of the working class • Take a stance that is anti-war as war contributes to carbon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a climate change framework looking at both short and long term • Embark on mass education on climate change for our members and communities • Work towards cleaner, sustainable energy • Provision of cleaner water • Revisit transport policies to address vehicle congestion which causes carbon emission; need to provide accessible environmentally friendly public transport • Campaign against deforestation and for reforestation after undergoing research on appropriate trees to be planted • Abandon greenhouse farming as it damages the environment – need to revert back to mechanised farming • Reforestation programs for communities very important e.g. Zambia: government has advised and assisted communities to plant trees in order to tackle climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable employment preservation and creation policies • Need to spare funds for research and industrial development • Rejection of market based false solutions to climate change and the energy crisis • Ensure availability, accessibility and affordability of energy • Need to be anti-capitalist in order to perform all activities to do with climate change and sustainable development (with resistance of capitalists, Just Transition is not possible)

<p>and climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade unions and civil society in e.g. South Africa are anti-nuclear despite that the government has moved ahead and signed agreements with other countries in a move to introduce five more plants • Have binding and urgent international agreements on emission control which are monitored by the international working class • Adoption to clean energy generation and localisation of skills and equipment to create employment 		
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Conclusion: Participants' Additional Comments

Several recurring themes emerged from the discussions.

One, was that the involvement of trade unions and communities is crucial, not only by means of consultation but also in the early stages of the implementation.

Another was the need to engage with the government. Many of the solutions upon which a sustainable future can be built, are only available if governments recall their duty to work for the best interests of the people they represent.

A third theme was the need for the democratization of energy, both in the structure of its supply and its use. For many participants, the concept of energy sovereignty is also important.

Finally, there must be a plan, call it Sustainable Industrial Policy, and Just Transition, if you will. These must look at both the short-term and the long-term. While addressing immediate needs, it is crucial to consider the long-term future.

Participants felt that these discussions should be brought forward to other IndustriALL affiliates in all sectors and regions, and that discussions such as this one can be fundamental for the continuation of IndustriALL's work in sustainability, sustainable industrial policy, and Just Transition.

Report prepared by:

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With thanks to the extensive notes taken by Hannah Schmelzer during the meeting.