



The Biannual Magazine of the  
International Metalworkers' Federation

No.2 / 2011

# METAL WORLD

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
**BUILDING UNION POWER FOR  
SECURE JOBS AND A SECURE FUTURE**

**SPOTLIGHT**  
**TOWARDS NEW GLOBAL UNIONISM**

**PROFILE**  
**MIRIAM CHIPUNZA**

**SOCIAL  
PROTECTION  
FOR PRECARIOUS  
WORKERS**



[www.imfmetal.org](http://www.imfmetal.org)



# STRONGER TOGETHER

## THE GS'S CORNER

**Jyrki Raina** / IMF General Secretary  
jraina@imfmetal.org  
www.facebook.com/jyrki.raina

IMF's Central Committee will gather at probably its last meeting ever on December 7 to 8, 2011 in Jakarta. If the Committee so decides, an extraordinary Congress will be convened to meet on June 18 to 20, 2012 in Copenhagen to found a new global union for the world's industrial workers.

More than two years have passed since the IMF Congress took place in Gothenburg. In this issue of the Metal World, we look back at actions taken in our various priority areas (pages 14-20).

During the global economic and financial crisis, attacks on trade union rights by governments and companies increased. The IMF developed a rapid response mechanism to react to violations in an efficient manner and to

mobilize support. Longer-term campaigns were developed for countries such as Mexico, Korea and Turkey.

Building trade union networks in transnational companies for exchange of information and joint action became a core area of IMF's industrial work. Networks have been increasingly used as tools for solidarity and for organizing unorganized workers.

IMF's union building projects have supported the creation of stronger and more united union structures around the world.

However, the growth of precarious work remains one of the biggest threats to decent working conditions and social protection for workers, as well as to the strength and influence of trade unions. On pages 8-13 we have a look at one aspect of precarious employment, the lack of social security.

In Indonesia, IMF affiliates FSPMI and Lomenik have played a leading role in a campaign to extend social security coverage to precarious workers. At the moment only permanent workers enjoy protection. The KAJIS coalition of unions and NGOs have organized massive demonstrations. Recently they won a court case which

ordered the state President and Parliament to implement the national social security law.

The IMF chose Jakarta, Indonesia as the venue for probably its last Central Committee meeting in December to show its support to the struggle of the Indonesian unions.

The Central Committee will consider a proposal to convene an extraordinary Congress to meet in June 2012 in Copenhagen, Denmark, to found a new unified global union for the world's industrial workers. On pages 21-23, I explain the strategic opportunities behind this bold move.

This is the last issue of Metal World. During the past years it has reported on metalworkers' struggles around the world and presented deeper analyses on topical issues.

But also the new global union will need printed publications. We will come back next year with a new look and a new name, but with the same basic philosophy. We are stronger together.

## METAL WORLD

Published two times a year in English, Russian and Japanese by the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF)

### IMF

54 bis, route des Acacias  
CH-1227 Geneva  
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 308 5050

Fax: +41 22 308 5055

Email: [info@imfmetal.org](mailto:info@imfmetal.org)

Website: [www.imfmetal.org](http://www.imfmetal.org)

Opinions expressed in this journal do not necessarily represent the views of the IMF.

President: Berthold Huber

General Secretary: Jyrki Raina  
[jraina@imfmetal.org](mailto:jraina@imfmetal.org)

Editor: Alex Ivanou  
[aivanou@imfmetal.org](mailto:aivanou@imfmetal.org)

News Editor: Rainer Santi  
[rsanti@imfmetal.org](mailto:rsanti@imfmetal.org)

Editorial Assistant: Cherrisse Fredricks  
[cfredricks@imfmetal.org](mailto:cfredricks@imfmetal.org)

Web publishing: Alex Ivanou  
[aivanou@imfmetal.org](mailto:aivanou@imfmetal.org)

Contributors to this issue:

Gianni Alioti, FIM  
Miriam Chipunza, NEWU  
Michael Faisst, IG Metall  
Anita Gardner, IMF  
Jenny Holdcroft, IMF  
Rob Johnston, IMF  
Helmut Lense, IMF  
Kan Matsuzaki, IMF  
Alessandra Mecozzi, FIM  
Suzana Miller, IMF  
Kristyne Peter, IMF  
Claudia Rahman, IG Metall  
Jyrki Raina, IMF

Cover photo: Maxie Ellia

Design: Nick Jackson  
[www.creativelynx.ch](http://www.creativelynx.ch)

Printed by: Drukkerij Lannoo  
[www.lannooprint.com](http://www.lannooprint.com)



# CONTENTS



IMF NEWS / Page 7

## THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES FOR WORKERS AT MARUTI-SUZUKI IN INDIA

Industrial unrest continues at Maruti-Suzuki Manesar IMT plant in India as Metal World goes to print.

FEATURE / Page 8

## SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR PRECARIOUS WORKERS

Precarious work brings about growing insecurity to the workers in the world; unions are fighting for social protection for those who are likely to be excluded from it.

SPECIAL REPORT / Page 14

## BUILDING UNION POWER FOR SECURE JOBS AND A SECURE FUTURE

Summary of the IMF work in key priority areas since the World Congress in 2009.

SPOTLIGHT / Page 21

## TOWARDS NEW GLOBAL UNIONISM

IMF, ICEM and ITGLWF are building a new international federation uniting industrial workers of the world. Jyrki Raina, IMF General Secretary reflects on a new global union movement.



### International Metalworkers' Federation

The International Metalworkers' Federation represents the collective interests of 25 million metalworkers from more than 200 unions in 100 countries.

The IMF represents blue- and white-collar workers in industries such as steel, non-ferrous metals and ore mining, mechanical engineering, shipbuilding, automobile, aerospace, electrical and electronics.

The IMF aims to improve metalworkers' wages, working and living conditions and to ensure that metalworkers' rights are respected.

The head office is in Geneva, Switzerland, where worldwide activities are co-ordinated with a network of offices located in:

**AFRICA OFFICE**  
156 Gerard Seketo, Newtown  
Johannesburg 2001 SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: +27 11 492 0301  
Email: aro@imfmetal.org

**SOUTH ASIA OFFICE**  
Linz House, 159-A, Gutam Nagar  
New Delhi, 100 049 INDIA  
Tel: +91 11 2653 7125  
Email: sar@imfmetal.org

**SOUTH EAST ASIA OFFICE**  
No. 10-3 Jalan PPJS 8/4  
Dataran Mentari, Bandar Sunway  
46150 Petaling Jaya  
Selangor Darul Ehsan MALAYSIA  
Tel: +60 3 56 38 7904  
Email: seapro@imfmetal.org

**LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN**  
Avenida 18 de Julio N°1528  
Piso 12 unidad 1202  
Montevideo URUGUAY  
Tel: +59 82 408 0813  
Email: fitimalc@imfmetal.org

**CIS OFFICE**  
Room 211. Str. 2, d 13, Grokholsky per.,  
129010 Moscow RUSSIA  
Tel: +7 495 974 6111  
Email: cisro@imfmetal.org

# IMF NEWS



IN THE STREETS / Page 4

HEALTH AND SAFETY / Page 5

SOLIDARITY / Page 5

UNION BUILDING / Page 5

TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS / Page 6

IMF-ICEM-ITGLWF / Page 6

TRADE UNION RIGHTS / Page 6

PRECARIOUS WORK / Page 6

STRIKE / Page 7

## IN THE STREETS



**FIOM protest action in Rome against government austerity measures in Italy**

During the summer and fall of 2011, several governments struggling with huge deficits, launched **austerity programmes**. In the beginning of September the three Italian metalworkers' unions, Fiom, Fim, and Uilm held actions against the government's plans for cuts and retrenchments that disproportionately hit workers and pensioners, while protecting the wealthy, overpaid politicians and high-ranking state officials. Sit-ins, rallies and an eight hour general strike were organized. The unions urged the government to withdraw its pension measures, and to concentrate on combating tax evasion, on big fortunes and on the costs of the political system in order to remedy the lack of resources.

On September 1, approximately 100 independent democratic unions and groups took part in two mass-actions in **Mexico City**: the "national day of indignant Mexicans" and a rally outside the lower house of Congress. At the central square - the Zocalo - a counter-report to Mexican President Calderon's fifth annual report to the nation was read out to an estimated 40,000 people. The number of poor in Mexico has increased by ten million during this administration, real income is down by a third for the working and middle classes, unemployment is up three million, seven million youth are unemployed and there have been 50,000 deaths and disappearances as a result of the drug war since December 2006.



**Unions from around the world join local Swiss trade unions in mobilizing to defend trade union rights and decent work on the occasion of the World Day of Decent Work (WDDW) on October 7**

In **Poland**, The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) held its first mass mobilisation since a new team took over the 82-member confederation last spring. On September 17, a protest against austerity measures was organized in Wroclaw, Poland. Jobs and wages are not the enemy of the economy, but its engine, said the ETUC. Some 40,000 trade unionists, representing national labour centres across Europe, protested in the Polish city in the run-up to a meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN).

Starting in May 2011, tens of thousands of Spanish protesters camped in the square at Puerta del Sol in **Madrid**, Spain, defying a government ban. They called themselves the indignants, and demanded changes in the political and economic system. Marches were organized in several cities. On September 17, protesters came together in Paris, and new demonstrations were planned on October 8 in front of the European Parliament, with a global demonstration on October 15.

In the U.S. a United States Day of Rage was held on Wall Street, **New York**, on September 17, reference was made to protests against the Vietnam War in Chicago in 1969. These protests were inspired by earlier protests this year in Tunisia, Egypt, Spain and Israel. The United Steelworkers (USW) president Leo Gerard said "The Occupy Wall Street movement represents what most Americans believe: Enough is enough! It's time to hold those who caused our economic crisis accountable, to ensure they don't get away with it again."

## HEALTH AND SAFETY



Photo: FIW

Italian unions CGIL, CISL and UIL through their national centres put forward a joint statement to the court hearing against Eternit group owners

On July 4 at the 51st court hearing in Turin, Stephan Schmidheiny, a 64 year old Swiss billionaire and Louis de Cartier de Marchienne, an 89 year old Belgian baron, owners of the Eternit group, the asbestos-cement company with plants in Europe, Africa and South America, were charged for wilfully and maliciously causing an ecological disaster that resulted in numerous **deaths from asbestos**. The Turin trial is the first time an asbestos related criminal lawsuit is considered in Europe.



A new report launched by ArcelorMittal, the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF), the United Steelworkers (USW), and the IMF reviews the work undertaken since the agreement on the creation of **ArcelorMittal Health and Safety Committee** was reached in 2008. According to the report called "Together for Safety, Global Scope, Local Impact" the number of fatalities has declined since 2008, but still remains high in the company.

## SOLIDARITY

The International Labour Organization's Committee on Freedom of Association debated the issue of Protection Contracts in **Mexico** and the IMF's complaints on Union Autonomy, Protection Contracts and Precarious Work. The Committee asked the Mexican government to talk with employers and unions, in order to examine how the application of trade union protection contracts, or "exclusion clauses", which have been declared unconstitutional by the Mexican Supreme Court, undermine workers' rights to form or join a union of their

choice. The Mexican government was also asked to address questions regarding trade union representation, collective bargaining and allegations regarding the lack of impartiality on the part of the conciliation and arbitration boards (JCAs) and also the excessive length of its proceedings.

Also raised by the ILO was the **Korean** government's failure to implement necessary measures to protect the rights of precarious workers. The ongoing complaint, no. 2602, submitted by the Korean Metal Workers' Union (KMWU), the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and the IMF, highlighted the plight of workers in Korea who are subcontracted to work at major multinational auto and electronics companies but are denied legal protections under federal labour law due to their contract status. The complaint also argues against the criminalization of industrial action through penal code 314, or "obstruction of business".



Photo: IMF

Press conference in Korean National Assembly

Dramatic developments took place in **Korea** at the Hanjin Heavy Industries shipyard and at Yuseong Piston Ring. Private security forces and riot police forced protesters out of the shipyard and the police issued arrest warrants for union leaders. On June 24, IMF Assistant General Secretary Fernando Lopes joined the delegation of trade unions and progressive political parties on a visit to the National Assembly of Korea where at a press conference increasing workers' rights abuses in Korea were reported.

On June 29, mass rallies took place in Seoul and Busan to protest against attacks on workers. The IMF called on all its affiliates to send letters of protest to the

President of Korea demanding that riot police be pulled back, that the employer start collective bargaining in good faith in order to withdraw unilateral mass dismissals at Hanjin, that the lockout of Yuseong Piston Ring workers be lifted, that union members be reinstated to their original positions, and that the persecution of Yuseong Piston Ring and Hanjin Heavy Industries union officials, union members and their sympathizers be stopped. On August 18, a parliamentary hearing on the Hanjin mass dismissals was organized. This was the first time in 14 years that the Korean National Assembly called a chairman of one of the Korean Chaebols - the powerful single-family-owned conglomerate - before a parliamentary committee to explain their actions.

## UNION BUILDING

Renault Samsung workers in **Korea** joined the KMWU and formed the Renault Samsung Motors Local, with more than 100 workers affiliating. The Local was officially established and launched at a general meeting on August 21 at the KMWU Pusan Yangsan Branch. The company totals 5,650 employees, and has a production capacity of 300,000 vehicles per year. Workers at all of Korea's auto assembly companies - Hyundai, Kia, GM, Ssangyong, Tata, Daewoo and Renault Samsung - are now affiliated to KMWU-KCTU. KMWU will now inform Renault Samsung Motors about the establishment of the local union and request a meeting to start negotiations on a collective agreement. The IMF has an international framework agreement with Renault since 2004, covering more than 130,000 employees worldwide.

After months of struggle at La Platosa mine in **Mexico**, organized by Section 309 of SNTMMSRM, affiliate of both IMF and ICEM, a four day strike started on August 15 ended with victory. On August 18, management of **Excellon** de Mexico S.A, a subsidiary of the Canadian owned mining company Excellon Resources, signed an agreement about union recognition and a commitment to sign a



new collective labour contract. In addition to recognition the company agreed to pay out 100 per cent of lost wages to those who participated in the four day strike. One of the biggest obstacles workers faced when fighting for their rights was the existence of two yellow unions, which back in 2005 signed protection contracts with the management to block access of authentic unions to the mine. Each of these contracts were concluded with only 10 and 20 workers respectively.

## TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS



Unions in **IBM**, affiliated to the IMF, the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and UNI Global Union agreed to create a Global Union Alliance in the Company. At a meeting on May 6 at UNI's office in Switzerland, the unions signed the agreement, and committed to strengthen cooperation, to implement joint action, and to engage IBM in a dialogue at the global level. The first action was a joint day of action on June 14 to highlight the role of IBM employees in the company's success and call for respect for IBMers, in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of IBM. The IBM unions also agreed that the Global Union Alliance should work to increase unionization in the company, share information on collective agreements and support unions facing anti-union actions by the company.



Caterpillar Network meeting in Chicago

Members of the IMF **Caterpillar** Network met in Chicago, USA on March 30 to 31, 2011 to advance the trade union work

initiated a year earlier in Grenoble, France. This was shortly after the successful conclusion by the United Auto Workers (UAW) of a new six-year contract covering some 9,500 Caterpillar workers at seven facilities in the USA. UAW bargainers said the Network provided a boost to reaching this agreement without strike action. Each of the participating unions committed to take the necessary steps to promote regular exchange of information and provide solidarity support to each other when needed. They also adopted an action plan. The Network Steering Group will meet again in early 2012

Union representatives in the newly merged **Fiat and Chrysler** auto company, and Fiat Industrial met in Turin, Italy in June to create a global network and push for an International Framework Agreement (IFA). It was the first meeting for worker representatives from both Fiat and Chrysler. The participants confirmed that international cooperation of worker representatives and unions is necessary in order to avoid workers being played off against one other. A coordinator and contact person from each country will run the network, gather and distribute important information, and organize mutual support and common actions. The first common initiative is a formal request to start negotiations for a World Works Council and an IFA.

ICEM and IMF renewed their global framework agreement with **Umicore**, the global materials technology group with some 14,400 employees, at a ceremony on September 6 in Brussels. The new agreement covers human rights, working conditions and the environment. Umicore pledges to respect the UN Declaration of Human Rights and ILO core labour standards. "All parties have benefited from the constructive relationship fostered by the agreement," said IMF General Secretary Jyrki Raina speaking on behalf of both global union federations. "This gives a big value in our policies towards the issues of sustainable development," said Umicore's CEO Marc Grynberg.

## IMF-ICEM-ITGLWF

The IMF, ICEM and ITGLWF are gearing up for the creation of a new industrial **International**. In May, the task force agreed at its fourth meeting, in Germany, on the financial base for a new global union federation for industrial workers – which would unite 50 million industrial workers in more than 130 countries. Progress was also made on the **new statutes**, and a framework for regional and sectoral activities was almost finalized. On May 25, the executives of the three federations considered questions of governance, affiliation fees, regional and sectoral structures and voting rights in the new organisation. A working group was established to prepare an **action plan** for the new organisation. If approved by the IMF Central Committee on December 7 to 8, and the decision-making bodies of ICEM and ITGLWF, the **founding congress** of the new International will take place in Copenhagen from June 18 to 20, 2012.

## TRADE UNION RIGHTS

The **Hungarian** Metalworkers Federation VASAS denounced a newly proposed labour code that would seriously roll back worker's rights, making it easier to terminate employees, cut vacation time and allow employers to vary work schedules. VASAS rejected the proposed legislation and demanded change. In September thousands of union protesters took to the streets around the Hungarian Parliament to express their opposition to the proposed Labour Code. The IMF gave full support.

A district court in **Mexico** ordered the Mexican Ministry of Labour to proceed to legal registration of the Workers' Union of Honda (STUHM) in the state of Jalisco. José Luis Solorio Alcalá, STUHM Secretary General, said the union registration had been systematically denied, including through trickery and illegal and corrupt practices. STUHM called the court's decision a historic victory for the working class of Jalisco, as it is the first time ever that an independent union is

recognized in this Mexican state. Earlier, in February 2009 the IMF had submitted a **complaint** to the International Labour Organization demanding that the Mexican Government stop the practice of **protection contracts**, which allows companies to sign collective agreements with a union of the company's choice without informing the workers and in essence, blocking any attempts by workers to form independent unions, a violation of ILO Convention 87, to which Mexico is a signatory.



SME workers resist union repression in Mexico

After 23 months of resistance, the Mexican Electricians' Union SME, that staged a protest camp for over seven months at the central plaza in **Mexico** City, the "Zocalo", won its show-down with the government of Calderon in the run-up to Mexico's Independence day. On September 13, the government agreed to negotiate with SME over outstanding grievances and to find a solution for more than 16,000 laid-off members to return to work. The government also recognized the union's elections, and unfroze 21 million pesos (US\$ 1,626,000) of the union's funds. On September 13, before over 50,000 protesters in the Zócalo, SME leader Martin Esparza told union members that they needed to keep up the pressure on the government.

## PRECARIOUS WORK

Unions from around the world joined with local Swiss trade unions in Geneva in mobilizing to defend trade union rights and decent work on the occasion of the **World Day of Decent Work** (WDDW) on October 7. Unions, including several IMF affiliates, who had been attending the

ILO Workers' Symposium on precarious work on October 4 to 7, joined with Swiss unions in front of the United Nations Headquarters calling for stronger protection against dismissal for shop stewards and better union access to workplaces. The unions then marched to the ILO where the Workers' Symposium on precarious work was taking place with a symbolic social safety net containing union demands. The Symposium produced a set of recommendations on measures that the ILO should take to reduce precarious work and improve conditions for precarious workers.



Workers protest against dismissals at Hanjin shipyard in Korea.

Thousands of workers from across **Korea** - including the Korean Metal Workers' Union (KMWU) - marched to Hanjin Heavy Industries Yeongdo shipyard on April 8. Workers rallied beside union leaders who had been carrying out a sit-in protest against mass dismissals at Hanjin and demanding a comprehensive revision of the Trade Union Labour Relations Act. The dismissal of 170 workers was in breach of employment security agreements concluded in March 2007 and February 2011. The Hanjin Heavy Industries Local of the KMWU had been on strike since December 20, 2010, and was calling for the company to withdraw the mass dismissals, to secure a future for the Yeongdo shipyard, and to implement employment security agreements and the collective agreement.

The Russian State Duma approved the bill on amendments to some legislative acts of the Russian Federation - known as the "agency labour banning bill" - on its first reading (there will be two more readings). The bill was introduced in the autumn of 2010, to make a number of changes to the tax and labour laws. The bill means that employees cannot be transferred to a third party, when private employment agencies act as an employer and send employees to the company, bearing virtually no responsibility for them, said Mikhail Tarasenko, chairman of the IMF-affiliated Miners' and Metallurgical Workers' Union MMWU and IMF Executive Committee member. The bill received support from the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) and another national centre Confederation of Labour of Russia (KTR).

## STRIKE

The collective bargaining agreement between the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and Verizon in the **USA** expired on August 6, the day after, members of CWA and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) went on strike. Verizon wanted to freeze and eliminate pensions, increase offshoring of jobs, slash health care plans and eliminate disability payments for injured workers. In total Verizon had nearly a hundred concession demands, despite profits of US\$ 19.5 billion and payments of US\$ 258 million to its top five executives in the last four years. On August 20, an agreement was reached on how bargaining would proceed, and workers returned to work on August 23. The existing contract would be back in force for an indefinite period, but can be terminated by either party by providing seven days notice after September 20. CWA and IBEW represent 45,000 workers at Verizon covered by this contract from Virginia to New England.

Metalworkers at **Volkswagen in Brazil** went on strike on May 5 for 40 days to demand a fairer share of company profits. The local

Greater Curitiba Metalworkers Union, affiliated to the CNTM/FS national metalworkers' federation, asked for R\$ 12,000 (US\$ 7,340) in two instalments. Volkswagen employs 3,600 workers at San José, and the company lost the production of 5,000 vehicles during the strike. The strike indirectly affected 20,000 workers in the supply chain, including suppliers of auto parts and outsourced work. On June 10 the workers accepted a package guaranteeing profit sharing, an increase in base pay, pay bonuses, a new pay scale and early payment of the 13th salary for 2012.



Bridgestone workers in South Africa Protest

Workers at **Bridgestone South Africa** returned to work on May 19, ending an eight week lockout. The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) made the decision to return with workers, after an unfavourable labour court ruling that deemed the lockout legal and with due regard to the hardships that the 1,200 workers endured during the lockout, going two months without pay. NUMSA General Secretary Irvin Jim acknowledged the fight put up by Bridgestone workers, saying "Our struggle is not over. We are prepared to take on this exploitative employer again and again until we have victory for workers."



India, Sudharshan Rao (IMF) reads message of solidarity sent to Maruti-Suzuki workers

Industrial unrest continues at **Maruti-Suzuki** Manesar IMT plant in **India** as Metal World goes to print. The dispute began with management harassing workers on June 4, one day after the workers had applied for registration of a new union, the Maruti Suzuki Employees' Union (MSEU). 3,000 workers began a sit-in strike and on June 6, management dismissed 11 workers including MSEU office bearers. After more than two weeks of unrest at the plant, and with support from workers in the region, an agreement was reached on June 23, including the reinstatement of the dismissed leaders. However, following the rejection of MSEU's registration by the state on June 27, the dispute intensified. Management began victimizing workers through suspensions and terminations and then by locking the gates on August 29, declaring that only workers who sign a Good Conduct Bond could enter the plant, in effect locking out workers who refused to give up their labour rights. Production was completely halted by the workers. A settlement was reached on September 30, but soon fell apart after workers were subjected to changes in their jobs when work resumed on October 3, and demands for the rehiring of contract workers were denied. The IMF and its affiliates continue to support the workers in their struggle for union recognition and rights at work.

In July and August in Canada, striking **Canadian** Auto Workers (CAW) Local 2228 in Arnprior, Ontario, warded off pension reductions, cost-of-living compensation rollbacks, and contract language deletions. On August 8, union members ratified a three-year agreement with **Sandvik** Materials Technology Canada with an 80.6 per cent vote, ending a successful strike that began on July 13.





**FEATURE**



On October 6, 10,000 Indonesian workers demonstrated in front of the Indonesian Stock Exchange to demand immediate social security protection for all.

Photo: Maxie Ellia

# SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR PRECARIOUS WORKERS - A UNION STRUGGLE →

Text / Jenny Holdcroft





Precarious work is growing around the globe and, with the increased insecurity it brings, workers are ever more in need of social protection. Yet precarious workers are the most likely to be excluded from these very protections. →



Alex used to work as a contract worker in the Cavite Export Processing Zone in the Philippines, for CQS Stainless Corporation which produces metals for the automotive industry. Safety equipment at the factory is only supplied to regular employees, who comprise less than half of the workforce. Two months into his employment, the machine Alex was working at malfunctioned and he was hit in the face by a piece of metal the size of a basin. He was taken to the hospital, but when he got there he found out that his employer had not paid any social security contributions for him, so there was no money to pay for his medical care. He was forced to return home against medical advice and when he reported unfit for work he was dismissed.

Sadly, Alex's story is not untypical. Today, millions of precarious workers all over the world are excluded from social security provisions solely because of their employment status. In Chile, 63 per cent of part-time workers do not contribute to social insurance schemes. When IMF conducted its comprehensive survey of affiliates on changing employment practices and precarious work, affiliates responded that the most common area in which employers use precarious employment to avoid their responsibilities is that of social security and pensions. This exclusion was made evident in the treatment of precarious workers during the financial crisis. Not only were they among the first workers to be laid off, but it soon became clear that many unemployment insurance schemes, which were widely used by governments to respond to the crisis, were unavailable to precarious workers who lost their jobs.

Attempting to extend the scope of social protection to ensure that workers employed under the myriad forms of precarious employment do not miss out is liable to be particularly difficult in an environment where, in many countries, unions are being forced to defend existing social security provisions. Government austerity packages arising from the financial crisis and neoliberal demands for ever smaller government are resulting in restrictions on health care coverage, extension of retirement ages and lowering of unemployment benefits. Even the viability of many contributory schemes is being put at risk as their coverage shrinks. In this context, extending benefits to precarious workers is a massive challenge.

resulted in the National Social Security System Law (NSSS) being passed on 19 October 2004. This law would ensure a minimum living standard for all, in accordance with the ILO Social Protection Floor. However, nearly 7 years later, the law has yet to be implemented.

IMF affiliates FSPMI and Lomenik have taken a leading role in pushing for social security provision for precarious workers. Roni Febrianto from FSPMI explains some of the difficulties.

'After 7 years the social security system cannot run because no law has been passed to regulate the bodies that run the social security system. This is why we request the government and the parliament to approve this law and we request that all these bodies be controlled by a trust fund. Now the situation is that the money is controlled by government so that government can use the money every time and for everything. For example last year they used the money for a political party campaign.'

According to the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, social insurance carriers in Indonesia are run as profit-oriented state enterprises that have to pay corporate tax and dividends to the government. This has resulted in an IDR 10 trillion (US\$ 1.1 billion) deduction from social security for private sector workers. To make matters worse, compulsory contributions by Indonesian employers and employees are the lowest among ASEAN countries.

Precarious workers are not the only workers in Indonesia who are not covered by social security provisions. For the 64.84 million informal workers (out of a total workforce of 104.49 million) there is no social security at all. Social security benefits in the private sector are run through a state owned body called Jamsostek which covers employment accidents, old age benefits, death benefits and health services. Despite the system being compulsory, coverage of workers is extremely patchy. All enterprises with a minimum of 10 workers or a salary bill above IDR 1 million must join, but since Jamsostek has no enforcement powers and relies on the Labour Ministry to ensure compliance with the scheme, many companies simply do not comply. Membership is currently at about 20,000 companies.

## UNIONS MOBILIZE

Union frustrations with the amount of time that the Government has taken to implement its legislation led to a massive demonstration involving 100,000 workers on May Day 2010. Workers gathered in central Jakarta from the early hours of May 1 to demand changes in the social security laws and system. The size of the crowd was unprecedented in the history of the Indonesian labour movement, with workers travelling from as far afield as Bandung, Tangerang and Bekasi to join in. Thousands of FSPMI members led the march from the Thamrin area of Jakarta towards the Presidential Palace for a demonstration that lasted till late evening.

For Lomenik and FSPMI, the goal is a social security system that is independent from government and able to deliver social protection to everyone including precarious and informal workers. For Prihanani of FSPMI, protection of precarious workers is essential. 'Now precarious workers don't have social security, they don't have health insurance, they don't have pension benefits but in our struggle for social security reform they will be covered by the law



## FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION

In Indonesia, trade unions have been at the forefront of a struggle to extend social protection to all workers. Pressure for a comprehensive social security system mounted after Indonesia's economic crisis in 1997-98. It ultimately



On October 7, 2009, Lomenik participated in a decent work demonstration in Jakarta.

Photo: Lomenik





In Thailand, access to social security payments is central to the struggle to gain permanent employment for subcontract workers.

Duangmanee Sopeng has direct experience of the difference permanent employment can make to access to social security. Both she and her husband were employed at Ford/Mazda in Thailand as subcontract workers up until May 2009 when the Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand succeeded in winning them permanent status. Subsequently, when Duangmanee's husband severed an artery in his arm whilst cooking, the 50,000 Baht (US\$ 1,400) surgery needed to repair it was covered by their new permanent worker benefits, which includes cover for injuries sustained at home as well as at work. If the accident had happened while he was still a subcontract worker, they would have struggled to pay for the surgery.

According to Yongyuth Menta Pao, General Secretary of IMF affiliate TEAM, one of the principal reasons that employers prefer subcontract workers is because they want to reduce costs by not paying social security contributions.

In 2009 after three years of temporary employment at Ford/Mazda in the Rayong Province, Duangmanee Sopeng is now a permanent employee thanks to the efforts of the Auto Subcontract Workers' Union of Thailand.

Photo: Anaya Latter

and it means that they will have the same benefits as permanent workers,' said Prihanani. 'They will have health insurance, they will have pension benefits, that's why the precarious workers have to support our struggle for social security reform.'

Many other trade unions and NGOs in Indonesia share this goal and together set up a Committee on Social Security Action (Komite Aksi Jaminan Sosial, KAJS) to fight for improved social security, particularly health insurance for life and a mandatory pension fund for all.

Eduard Marpuang, President of Lomenik explains: 'To change legislation we cannot be alone because trade unions in Indonesia are fragmented. We have on average 100 national federations and 5 confederations and 3 bigger confederations. We had the idea to discuss social security implementation with the government because it has been six years that it has not been implemented. We established KAJS together with 64 trade unions and civil society united together to push for implementation of social security law. It has already been one year that we have discussed but the government does not implement the laws so we campaigned to the media and to the public as well as to the government and the employers and also the civil society economists, politicians.'

Actions taken by KAJS have included a series of mass demonstrations and lobbying government and political parties. KAJS also initiated a citizens' lawsuit against the President and Vice President, Chairman of the House of Representatives, and eight of the relevant Ministers. The claim was that by failing to implement the law on social security, they are violating Indonesia's Constitution. Represented by Said Iqbal, President of FSPMI, KAJS was involved in 27 hearings at the National Court in Central

Jakarta before the case was decided on July 13, 2011. The three sitting judges found that the President and the other defendants were guilty and derelict in their duty. They were ordered to immediately legislate to implement the National Social Security Act and pay court fees.

The President and the parliament agreed to continue discussing the legal drafting. KAJS is closely monitoring the process and held another mass rally on July 22 in front of the parliament building to support union demands for universal health insurance, pensions for the formal sector, and a social security body established as a trust fund and controlled by a tripartite body. A result is expected by the end of October.

## TAKING THE FIGHT TO THE ILO

Just prior to this momentous court decision being handed down, in June 2011 Indonesian unions had taken their fight to the International Labour Conference (ILC) where Indonesia President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was delivering an address on the effects of the global economic crisis. The unions submitted a statement to the ILC, which was supported by IMF, ICEM and ITGLWF and demanded that the Indonesian government comply with the Global Jobs Pact by providing comprehensive social security for all Indonesian people. The statement pointed out that "the people of Indonesia continue to face problems of low wages which are not comparable with the needs of a decent standard of living, unsafe working conditions with the expansion of contract work and outsourcing and the absence of comprehensive social security for all people."

Their intervention was timely, since the ILC was in the midst of a discussion on the role and importance of social security as a key pillar of decent work. 1952, ILO Convention 102 on minimum standards for social

security has set the benchmark for minimum social security coverage for people in employment. However, in 1952 the world of employment was very different and the Convention does not take account of the myriad employment relationships that have developed and which deny workers access to social protection. Neither did it envisage that the majority of the world's workers would become trapped in informal employment.

For these reasons, the focus of the ILC debate was on establishing a basic social protection floor for all that would provide coverage for health, child benefits, a basic pension and some form of income protection for working age people.

### SOCIAL SECURITY UNDER PRESSURE

In many industrialized countries, social security systems have evolved to offer greater levels of protection than the minimum standards of Convention 102. However, these systems are coming under increasing political and financial pressure as a result of ageing populations, increased costs of health care and the ongoing fallout from the financial crisis that has diverted public funds into propping up financial systems. Governments are increasingly taking policy measures to limit the scope of health care coverage, extend retirement ages, restrict eligibility for unemployment benefits and reduce the amounts of those benefits. Under such conditions, precarious workers become even more likely to miss out on social protection. Following the financial crisis, the most common social protection measures taken by governments to respond to the mass layoffs were unemployment insurance schemes. However, these were not extended to the massive numbers of precarious workers who were among the first to lose their jobs.

Unions face a massive challenge not only to defend existing social security systems against these pressures, but to extend their coverage to all workers, including those in precarious employment. The radical transformation of

employment relationships threatens not only workers' wages, conditions of employment and job security, but their access to health, unemployment and retirement benefits. Social security systems need to take account of these ongoing changes to employment relationships in order to ensure that precarious workers do not fall through the gaps.

But precarious workers themselves are not the only ones to suffer the consequences of their exclusion from social protection. For many workers in permanent employment relationships, protection is guaranteed through contributory schemes. The success of these schemes depends on them having enough contributing members to be financially stable enough to be able to withstand financial and political pressures over the long term. As employers continue to replace stable jobs with precarious ones, and increasing numbers of precarious workers become unable to access these contributory schemes, the risk is that the schemes themselves will become less viable as they cover a shrinking minority of the workforce.

### SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR ALL

Extending coverage of social security to all workers is crucial. When feasible steps to achieving this objective are debated, as they were at the ILC, a strong emphasis is put on facilitating workers' transition from informal to formal employment, and with good reason. Once people enter formal employment, they start paying taxes and contributing to enlarging government budgets for social security. Furthermore, with 80 per cent of the world's working age population with no effective access to comprehensive social protection, social security systems where they do operate tend to be based on the model of Convention 102 and target their protection at formal workers.

It is tempting therefore to conclude that shifting employment from informal to formal will in itself be enough to extend social protection to workers who do not currently benefit from it. Certainly, the importance of

"A lot of precarious workers are completely alienated from social security provisions provided by the government. On the factory level, because of discrimination against precarious workers, they are also not receiving the same level of benefits and social security provisions. So they are actually receiving double, triple kind of discrimination and alienation."

**Hyeong-woo, vice president of Korean Metal Workers Union**

Photo: KMWU





“It affects my family because I am the one that is responsible for my family. I would like things to be the same as the permanent worker.”

Veli Kunene is 30 years old and has been employed as a precarious worker at Bandag Tyres in Swaziland for nearly two years. As a precarious worker he earns a lower salary for the same work as permanent workers and is unable to get a bank loan. He also is not covered by health insurance and is unable to contribute to the provident fund. Only 4 out of 70 workers at the plant are permanently employed and covered by the two schemes.

Photo: IMF



formalizing employment and the benefits it delivers to workers and nations should not be minimized. However, nor should the existing gaps in social security provisions be overlooked. In order for everyone to be able to benefit from a shift from informal to formal employment, social security coverage gaps must be fixed. Only then will we avoid the scenario of workers making the move from informal to formal employment, only to find themselves once again without social protection because the only available job is a precarious one.

of suggested policy options are policies to enable all workers including those in atypical (sic) employment to take advantage of social security (union efforts to change the terminology, since precarious work is now more often typical than atypical, were unsuccessful).

Unions must use the opportunity of the 2012 ILC discussion on a Recommendation to push strongly for the ILO, governments and employers to recognize how the growing prevalence of precarious employment denies workers access to social protection, and for any resulting Recommendation to take proper account of the impact of the transformation of employment relationships in proposals for social security reform.

## UNION ACTION NEEDED

Every day, unions are seeing more and more examples of employers replacing permanent employment with precarious forms of employment such as contract work and agency work, even outsourcing their entire workforces. It is crucial that trade unions take up the battle for social security reform, to ensure that precarious workers are not excluded from the very protections that they are most in need of because of the insecure nature of their employment. Union action is needed both at national level, as in the case of Indonesia, and at global level to put pressure on governments and employers through international bodies such as the International Labour Organization.

At the next meeting of the IMF Central Committee in Jakarta, Indonesia on 6-8 December 2011, the challenge of ensuring that precarious workers have effective access to social protection will be discussed by delegates. An important contribution to the debate will be an explanation from the Indonesian trade unions on how they were able to mobilize workers on this issue.

As the number of workers forced into precarious employment continues to rise around the world, the struggle must continue towards the goal of social protection for all.



Indonesian workers demand social security for all at mass demonstration on May 9, 2011

Photo: FSPMI

The discussion at the ILC concluded in a commitment to establishing social security for all as a powerful and affordable tool to promote economic growth, reduce poverty and mitigate the impact of crises, in particular through a Social Protection Floor. The ILC passed a resolution that the next ILC in 2012 should include on its agenda a standard-setting item on the Social Protection Floor with a view to the adoption of a Recommendation. The published conclusions of the discussion, while failing to address the problem of lack of access by precarious workers to social protection, nonetheless referred to the need for Social Protection Floor policies to aim at reducing informality and precariousness. The conclusions also referred to the need for integrated national policies to promote productive employment. Among a long list



**SPECIAL REPORT**



IG Metall youth protest action 'Justice in society', part of the national campaign for secure jobs in Germany 'Together for a good life'.

Photo: IG Metall

**BUILDING UNION POWER FOR SECURE JOBS AND A SECURE FUTURE**

Text / Alex Ivanou







The IMF World Congress in 2009 took place in the middle of a global financial and economic crisis. In a difficult situation, metalworkers' unions renewed their commitment to organize and build stronger unions, fight for trade union rights and join the forces of workers to build a counterweight to transnational corporations (TNCs). This article summarizes the IMF's work in the key priority areas during the past two years. →



## TRADE UNION NETWORKS IN TNCs

Since 2009 the IMF has worked pragmatically to build unity and solidarity amongst workers within TNCs and in their supply chains. The purpose has been to build effective solidarity and cooperation amongst unions present in TNCs. In order to ensure an equal playing field for workers which goes beyond minimum standards.

Building, developing and managing company union networks is not simply a task but it's an important activity, as more workers find themselves affected by decisions taken in TNC management boardrooms. With this in mind the IMF has sought to develop strategies and activities to strengthen solidarity between workers across sectors and TNCs.

The IMF's first step in doing this has been to develop Guidelines on Trade Union Networks in TNCs. Unions have always cooperated but the guidelines and the process of developing them has helped with transparency and understanding amongst affiliates. The guidelines contribute towards better tools, a better exchange of information, and more mutual trust and knowledge between workers. While at the same time recognizing that the guidelines cannot provide a model that fits all but can provide a common platform. The guidelines are now posted on the IMF website.

In addition to the guidelines the IMF has also held a TNC Coordinators meeting in March 2011 in Brazil. This meeting provided the opportunity for participants to come together and to further develop the knowledge and expertise on networking among the IMF affiliates. Also to hear about different experiences in networks that have already been developed such as Tenaris/Gerdau and others such as Caterpillar that are being developed.

The outcomes included a realization that more work needed to be carried out in the regions in order to build the same level of knowledge across all regions. That a case study of different networks would help provide a useful reference point and could act as a training and education tool. Also that an internal guideline on negotiating other global agreements would be useful (these are not International Framework Agreements).

Along with the knowledge building exercise, the IMF has also developed a list of priority companies to build networking activity. There is now a dedicated area on the IMF website for TNC Networks. These different company networks are not the only companies we deal with but

are the targets for building networking activities in the future. Networking activity is also integrated into the IMF's sectoral approach.

## TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND CAMPAIGNS

In September 2009, the IMF created a special Trade Union Rights and Campaigns unit working on a concept of reacting in a quick and efficient manner to violations of trade union rights by companies or governments, and conducting campaigns to strengthen workers' rights in problem countries or companies.

The levels of IMF response stretched from protest letters and news stories on the web site to long-term campaigns concerning individual countries and full-fledged corporate campaigns against TNCs. In each case the IMF sought to mobilize affiliates, develop an appropriate communications strategy, and use different tools varying from union networks and IFAs to the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines and others. The IMF worked in cooperation with other Global Union Federations (GUFs) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and built alliances with NGOs when appropriate.

From 2009 to 2011 the IMF has organized a number of campaigns extending support to affiliates, trade union allies and activists with major activities against violations in Mexico, Colombia, Canada, India, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, Russia and the United States.

In Mexico the IMF held an intensive multi-GUF worldwide solidarity campaign in favour of independent trade unions in February 2011, affiliates from more than 30 countries participated.

## UNION BUILDING AND ORGANIZING

Building strong national unions continues to be one of the main pillars of the IMF's work. Strong national unions deliver better wages and conditions for metalworkers around the globe, raising their political influence and ability to counter devastating effects of neoliberal policies such as the extension of precarious work in all IMF sectors. This has become one of the major challenges all trade unions face today. The IMF is convinced that timely and focused support to unions organising workers today, will contribute to building strong unions tomorrow.

IMF union building projects target three priority areas: organizing the unorganized & precarious workers, strengthening national union structures and networking in transnational corporations (TNCs) with a sectoral/regional focus.

In close coordination with affiliates, the IMF Regional offices play a critical role in identifying the strategic areas to concentrate efforts, and the implementation of all union building activities.

The IMF coordinated and collected information about the affiliates' bilateral activities, mapping out who is working where and disseminating information on the externally funded projects, in order to develop a dynamic union building network. Following affiliates wishes, the IMF also developed a virtual website database, enabling affiliates to record their project work and to find when and where activities take place.



In July, as MAS-DAF workers fight for reinstatement after being fired for joining the Turkish union, gendarmerie storm the rally and forcefully detain 12 workers and union leaders.

Photo: Birlesik



## PRECARIOUS WORK

Following the successful Week of Action against precarious work in October 2009, during which 80 IMF affiliates in 50 countries held actions, the question of precarious work has been discussed at all regional and sub-regional meetings in 2010 and 2011 with the intention to further develop the IMF's strategy against precarious work.

The IMF has cooperated with other GUFs through the Council of Global Unions' Work Relationships Group. The group developed a set of draft Global Union Principles on Temporary Work Agencies. This document establishes a common trade union position on dealing with temporary work agencies, starting from the principle that the primary form of employment shall be permanent, open-ended and direct employment.

As a result of the union interventions by Global Unions including the IMF, the final versions of both the UN Human Rights Council's Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and the OECD's revised Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) set a much stronger framework for implementing the rights of precarious workers, including in supply chains.

Combating precarious work continues to be a major focus for action by IMF and its affiliates. Increasing pressure is being put on the ILO to support precarious workers through better implementation of labour standards, particularly the right to bargain collectively with the principal employer.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Based on a resolution adopted by the IMF Congress in Gothenburg, the IMF together with ICEM, the two European federations EMF and EMCEF promoted action on "Cutting emissions, transforming jobs: Working in green jobs for a secure future" at the United Nations meeting on climate change in Copenhagen in December 2009.

A section on climate change has been created on the IMF web site. At a joint IMF-ICEM-EMF-EMCEF meeting in Bad Orb, Germany in October 2009 the discussion focused on the Copenhagen process, sectoral concerns, sustainable job creation and green jobs, just transition and joint principles for future work.

Since 2009 the IMF has continued to promote industrial policies adopted in a series of climate change and sustainability conferences in order to achieve a fair, legally binding and comprehensive global agreement ensuring sustainable employment and just transition. The IMF has also extended support to regional studies/policies on the issues, especially in Africa and Asia.

## SUSTAINABLE TRADE, EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

From 2009 to 2011 the IMF has focused on monitoring trade policies at the bilateral level with the close collaboration of affiliates, and has been actively involved in the bilateral and bi-regional assessment of the repercussions of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) on jobs and development.

The regular annual IMF Working Party on Trade, Employment and Development focused its work on the social and economic impacts of FTAs and their potential challenge to worker solidarity.

In 2011 the Working Party on Trade Employment and Development in Geneva reiterated the strategic importance of keeping dialogue and exchanges between IMF affiliates of the different regions. IMF work at regional level has developed especially in Africa and India. The negotiations for a Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement have been and continue to be followed with the involvement of affiliates in Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

In 2011 the IMF, in collaboration with the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC), played a prominent role in debates around the update of the OECD Guidelines on Multinationals and bringing metalworkers' problems and interests to the forefront in the OECD debate around corporate responsibilities.

## SECTORAL WORK

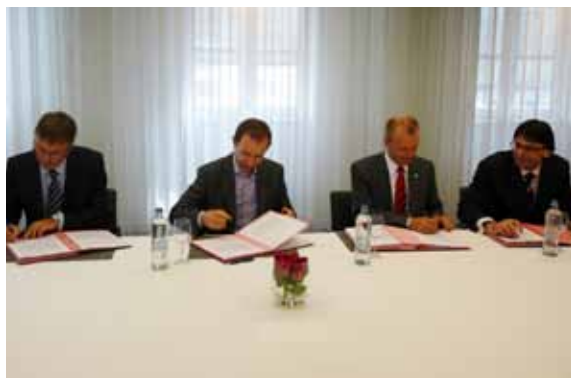
The IMF's approach within the Steel and Non-Ferrous sector has been to continue building networks in ArcelorMittal, Tata Steel, Tenaris, Gerdau and Alcoa. In addition to the networking activities The IMF has also continued to participate in the OECD Steel Committee demanding a more sustainable industry from Governments. The IMF has also held a joint meeting with the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) in order to develop a common approach.

The Joint Global Health Safety Committee in ArcelorMittal also published a review after three years since the global agreement was signed with management. While highlighting progress, the review also questions the introduction of behavioural based safety techniques, unions are against this. The review clearly states that until the company has zero fatalities the goal cannot be achieved.

In the Auto Sector the approach has been to use a range of different tools. As an example the IMF has, alongside the EMF, renegotiated and revised the IFA with Peugeot Citroen PSA. The new agreement includes new sections on the environment and provides for the creation of a new World Works Council (WWC) including representatives as full members from Brazil, Argentina, and also Russia.

A number of network meetings have taken place at the global and regional level in: Bosch, Daimler, Fiat/Chrysler, Ford, Hyundai/Kia, Mahle, Renault, Volkswagen, GM/Opel and Volvo. The IMF's priority has also been to assist the United Auto Workers' (UAW) in their efforts to organize workers in US transplants of Japanese, Korean and German companies.

In 2009 the IMF initiated work on collecting and sharing collective bargaining information in the aerospace industry in order to identify the core issues for bargaining in each country. In 2010 a major IMF conference of aerospace



In September the IMF and ICEM renew their global framework agreement with Umicore, the Brussels-based global materials technology group.

Photo: ICEM

## SPECIAL REPORT

unions was held, which recommended the development of union networks in Boeing, Airbus, Rolls Royce and their suppliers.

Industrial developments, impacts of the economic crisis and the continuing rise of precarious work were the focus of the IMF's work in the sector of ICT, electrical and electronics. A strong emphasis was put on the need to overcome challenges to organizing, and threats to workers' rights.

In 2010 in the ICT, electrical and electronics sector, affiliates decided to define a list of priority companies where networks in TNCs and their supply chains could be developed. The companies are Siemens, IBM, Nokia, Philips and Hewlett Packard. Organizing attempts in the sector continue to face strong hostility, as was the case in India in disputes at Foxconn and BYD Electronics in 2010.

In January 2011, a significant victory was achieved in Malaysia when the newly registered Electronics Industry Workers' Union (Southern Region) successfully campaigned to secure union rights at ST Microelectronics in Muar, Malaysia.

With the same idea of building union networks in mechanical engineering one of the most significant developments has been the creation in 2010, of a Caterpillar trade union network aimed at promoting the exchange of information and developing joint action in support of workers' rights. The network is attracting interest outside the founding members, and efforts to include unions from emerging/developing countries have started showing some encouraging results.

In 2011 the IMF decided that future activities in the sector should focus on the sub-sectoral level, starting with machinery for construction and mining, and agricultural machinery. There are TNCs in these sub-sectors, such as John Deere, Case New Holland and Komatsu, and a potential for network development, building on the experience gained with the Caterpillar network.

After the global financial crisis, economic performance and employment in the shipbuilding sector have been heavily hit. The industry needs to achieve a fair, level playing field in order to create a sustainable industrial base. On the other hand, the volume of shipbreaking continues to increase massively at low-wage labour-intensive yards, which are usually unorganized. Many fatal accidents still occur in this sector all over the world, especially in Turkey (both in shipbuilding and shipbreaking) and in the South Asian region (in shipbreaking).

To render its work more effective and stronger the IMF has concentrated on the biggest concerns of the sector namely on health & safety, organizing issues and promoting sustainable and green industry. Part of this work was done jointly with EMF. The IMF intends to continue to reinforce this cooperation.

The IMF continues to reach out to organize workers, mainly in India, and in 2011 in Pakistan and Bangladesh. The work will now focus on linking shipbuilding and shipbreaking workers in order to seek strategic policy, making the shipbuilding/breaking industry fairer, safer, greener and more sustainable, also providing workers with the skills needed in the future.

For a number of years organizing non-manual workers was one of IMF priorities. In 2009 the IMF started mainstreaming non-manual workers' issues in all IMF activities and union-building projects. This work continued in 2010 with further focus in 2011, on organizing young non-manual workers, white-collar workers' and unions that are not yet members of the IMF.

### IMF WORK IN REGIONS

The IMF advances its work in the regions following the sectoral priorities set out in the IMF Action Program. Immediately after the IMF Congress in 2009, at all regional and sub-regional meetings, affiliates were involved in discussing trade union rights campaigns, strategic organising, projects and developing the cooperation process leading to the creation of a new International organisation.

In Latin America and in the Caribbean region a substantial program of union building workshops and seminars is implemented in Peru, Chile and in particular Colombia, in order to bring IMF affiliates together to build strong and active national unions.

In Colombia, cooperation with ICEM affiliates has been a reality since 2010, and in Chile, two IMF affiliates have signed Memos of Understanding to merge in 2012. The IMF and ICEM have also been involved in joint campaigns in Chile, for the ratification of the ILO Convention 176 on health and safety in the mining sector. In Peru, a national union for subcontracted mining workers has been formed, with the first collective bargaining negotiations taking place in 2011.

Networking in "Multilatinas" (Latin American-based TNCs), is another joint IMF, ICEM and BWI activity aimed to develop regional union networks in priority companies. The companies selected are related in terms of their production chain, making them relevant for joint action and strategic networking. Organising networks for companies headquartered and operating in Latin America is a relatively new initiative for all 3 GUFs, creating expectations for future integration.

In Mexico, union building programs go hand in hand with the fight for freedom of association. In coordination with the Trínational Alliance formed in 2010 in Toronto, the IMF actively supports the struggle of a coalition of democratic unions against *contratos de protección* (employer protection contracts). After the strategic planning meetings held in 2011, the IMF is preparing a common union building programme to grow the Mexican democratic union's membership.



Delegates of the IMF international conference for shipbreaking workers visit the Mumbai shipbreaking yard. Delegates extended their solidarity to the shipbreaking workers.

Photo: IMF-SAO





The IMF shows solidarity with Mexican miners by taking to the streets of Mexico on May day.

Photo: IMF-LACRO



Key focus areas in Central and South Africa from 2009 to 2011 are organizing, union building, education, health and safety, HIV/AIDS and climate change.

In 2010 the office redesigned the regional printed and web based yearly publication Umoja.

The IMF encourages joint work between unions from South Africa, Zimbabwe and Tanzania around the company Metal Box/Nampak. Solidarity support was provided to NUMSA in South Africa and workers in Mozambique to resolve a conflict at BHP Billiton, as well as in a NUMSA's collective bargaining dispute and lock-out at Bridgestone in April 2010. Union building and gender projects are ongoing with SINTIME in Mozambique.

In Tanzania, while many unions in the region were experiencing a decline in membership, TUICO has been growing continuously. Thanks to the IMF union building project, TUICO reported 80 per cent growth in membership (now representing over 60'000 workers) with 30 per cent of women in leadership positions. The union produces its own educational material and now contributes 20 per cent of its budget to the education of its members. At national level, TUICO is recognized as a democratic and representative union, playing an important role in the main National Centre, as TUICO's president is currently the President of TUCTA (the National Centre).

the IMF helps SATU with skill development. The IMF is supporting NEWU and other unions in Zimbabwe to merge through an initiative of the ZCTU.

In 2011 the IMF participated in the World Social Forum in Senegal and in the ICEM Sub Saharan Regional Organisation Conference in Ghana.

The main focus of the IMF's work in Maghreb has been the strengthening of trade union organizing, particularly at local production sites and at supplier companies of TNCs. The IMF has also put efforts into educating women workers who represent a fast growing percentage of the workforce, and strengthening independent and democratic trade unions.

These activities were directed at particular companies signatories to IFAs with the IMF and made part of a four-year programme implemented with the support of Spanish ISCOD-UGT, and with the participation of IMF affiliates in Tunisia, Morocco, France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

In 2011 the unprecedented uprising in the countries of North Africa against undemocratic and repressive regimes has gone beyond all expectations and has been able to dismantle corrupt power systems that had been in place for decades. Workers have played and continue playing a key role in this democratic and peaceful movement that began in Tunisia and expanded to Egypt then further to other Arab countries. The IMF has rendered all possible support to the workers in their efforts on rebuilding the trade union movement in their countries with hope to establish freedom of association and build new democratic structures.

IMF activities in Eastern European countries, particularly Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) were focused on organizing, union building, protection of trade union rights and development of communications to oppose the shift to a neo-liberal model in their countries.

The world financial and economic crisis had serious implications for trade unions of the region. Quite often the answer of the state authorities and employers to the crisis has been to increase pressure on workers and trade unions. In many cases interference of the state and employers with unions' internal affairs took place in Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine and other countries.

In January, Russian national centres VKT and KTR, with the support of the FNPR confederation lodged a complaint to the ILO about extensive and systematic violations of freedom of association in Russia. The IMF supported this complaint.

In carrying out the work in South-East Europe the IMF has cooperated a lot with the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF). Efforts are being made on both sides to synchronize activities.

The priorities for many unions include development of training programmes, improved collective bargaining, social dialogue, occupational health and safety, organizing and the strengthening of trade union structures. From 2009 to 2011 the IMF helped affiliates to build up their capacity in these areas through various workshops and projects.

In 2010, as part of its cooperation with other GUFs, the IMF joined the multi-union two-year project on organizational development in South-East Europe that is partly sponsored by FNV Netherlands. In addition to the ICEM, the IUF and



IMF joins with other GUFs in a demonstration outside the Egyptian mission in Geneva as part of the ITUC's Global Day of Action in support of democracy in Egypt.

Photo: UNI Global Union



In 2011 the office continued to foster cooperation between two metal unions in Angola. In Zambia, the training of shop stewards and women workers is ongoing. A series of missions were undertaken to Guinea, Nigeria and Liberia to explore union building opportunities.

The IMF has extended support to the pro-democracy struggle in Swaziland where NUMSA, with support of

the IMF, two European federations (EFFAT and EMCEF) and the IMF's Austrian affiliate PRO-GE are also providing financial and technical support. The overall objective is to strengthen union structures and promote regional sectoral cooperation and training. The project is generating a lot of interest among affiliates and has started to produce positive developments.

In South Asia the IMF centred its work around development of collective bargaining, enhancing women's participation, union building, organizing of EPZ workers, precarious work, health and safety, union networking, improving solidarity and climate change.

In June 2011, the ongoing India Steel Organizing Project reported 15'000 workers recruited in three states and in the Shipbreaking Project in Mumbai and Alang over 10'500 workers are now proud union members. Also in 2011, the shipbreaking project was extended to Bangladesh and Pakistan, aiming to create a regional network of shipbreaking workers.

A number of trade union rights campaigns have been coordinated from India office, including at Bosch, Nokia, Foxconn and BYD Electronics, Maruti Suzuki and others.

In 2011 the IMF continued implementing activities to raise awareness among affiliates, of the urgent need to organize and build strong national union structures, a national union building strategy was developed in Nepal.

To improve communications and information exchange in the region, in 2011, the IMF office in India launched a new magazine publication Metal-Asia Pacific. Initially designed for one region this publication was extended to the whole of Asia and the Pacific. The publication is available both in print and in electronic form on the IMF website.

The period from 2009 to 2011 in the East & Southeast Asia and the Pacific region has been marked with a number of serious struggles of workers for their rights, starting with a global campaign to fight for the unconditional reinstatement of more than 700 workers who were dismissed by Toshiba in Indonesia in 2009. The same year in June about 900 workers at the Kawasaki Motors plant in Thailand went on strike after the management unilaterally changed working hours and then sacked all the 11 shop stewards who opposed the change. In Malaysia workers fought for recognition of their unions at Bosch plants.

In February 2010 the IMF organized a fact finding mission to the Philippines, subsequently two new affiliates joined the IMF family.

Active organizing and building regional solidarity remains a fundamental aspect of the IMF's commitment and work

in the region. A regional strategy workshop was held in 2010 to engage affiliates from Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam to develop sustainable organizing projects and build a strong regional network of metalworkers' unions. Indonesia started with organizing drives to recruit around 5000 members in 2011, other organizing projects are in discussion with IMF affiliates.

Precarious work has been high on the union agenda in the region. Mass street demonstration and rallies to demand the eradication of precarious work that systematically erodes permanent gainful employment were held each year.

## IMF COMMUNICATIONS

From 2009 to 2011, the IMF promoted activities organized both by the IMF and affiliates, reporting on workers' struggles across the globe. The reports published on the IMF website and in the IMF magazine Metal World, primarily focus on union building, collective bargaining, trade union rights, TNCs and trade union networks, climate change and sustainable development.

In addition to the traditional channels (website, newsletters and printed publications) the IMF tried and mastered some new fields, particularly in 2010 by starting regular updates on Facebook and in Twitter and in 2011 launching IMF-TV, which is based on a YouTube platform for video messaging. The IMF also actively cooperates with union labour news network website LabourStart. All the regions developed their publications.

In 2009 the IMF jointly with the EMF, had a joint Global Communicators' Forum in Frankfurt. The IMF also cooperated with Global Union Federations and the ITUC within the GUFs Communications Task Force.

Since 2010 the IMF has focused on the development of communications in the regions and held communicators' forums in all the regions.

Two global Labour Film Shorts festivals have been organized in Geneva in 2009 and 2010 and a DVD was compiled with the selection of labour films in 2011 and launched at the EMF Congress in Berlin.

In 2011 the IMF jointly with ICEM and ITGLWF started a quarterly newsletter Stronger Together. The newsletter has reported on ongoing joint activities and the process of creating a new global International of industrial workers. At the same time the three federations started reviewing their existing capacities and began preparing for the development of joint communications.



IMF-ICEM-ITGLWF taskforce meeting in Japan, February 2011.

Photo: IMF-JC





**SPOTLIGHT**



As part of a nationwide strike in the engineering sector, NUMSA members gathered to the streets of Johannesburg on July 4, to make their demands for a living wage and decent work.

Photo / IMF

**TOWARDS  
NEW GLOBAL  
UNIONISM** →

Text / Jyrki Raina, IMF General Secretary



**In June 2012 in Copenhagen, the affiliates of the IMF, ICEM and ITGLWF will found a new unified global union for the industrial workers of the world. The unions are taking a bold step towards a new era of global solidarity and to fight for a model of globalization that is based on social justice.**

---

2011 will remain in history as a year when people took to the streets. In Europe, trade unions have mobilized against austerity measures which have been used to weaken social protection and union rights. In North Africa and the Middle East, revolutions and uprisings have highlighted the true problems of our world today: poverty, unemployment, inequality, social injustice, lack of democracy and lack of hope for a better life.

The global economic and financial crisis exposed the weakness of our existing systems of global governance and social protection. Tens of millions of jobs were lost as a result of financial speculation, and poverty increased in the absence of social safety nets.

Some lessons should be obvious. Disappointingly, the world's leaders have not managed to take serious steps to build effective financial regulation and to ensure that people are not left on their own in times of trouble.

Unemployment remains high. Too many of the lost permanent jobs in industrialized countries are coming back as precarious temporary and agency labour jobs. In the developing countries the situation is even worse. Typically 50-90 per cent of the workforce is in the informal sector, with no social security, health care or pensions.

## NEW SOCIAL MODEL

There is an urgent need to address these problems both in industrialized and developing countries. Unions have fought to show that austerity packages are not the way out of the crisis. Public finances are a problem in many countries, but in the long term, the road towards sustainable economic growth must be based on investments in the creation of good quality jobs, wage-driven consumption and increased purchasing power.

The global trade union movement has for some time already been arguing for a new paradigm instead of the failed neoliberal model. The new social and economic model has to be based on policies that put people first. We need urgent measures to create jobs, alleviate poverty,

**“We are a movement for democracy and peace. In North Africa and Middle East, our major project will be to help trade unions to become pillars of the new, hopefully democratic societies.”**

**Jyrki Raina, IMF General Secretary**

promote decent work, enforce labour standards and regulate the financial markets, including the introduction of an international financial transaction tax.

Now our challenge is to channel people's spreading expressions of anger into a broad progressive movement for change. We need to build political and social alliances and fight not only for the interests of our members, but for a better life for all citizens. That will also enhance our legitimacy and role as a leading voice for those wanting a world built upon social justice.

Trade unions remain the world's biggest democratic movement, but we are divided and not using all our potential. It is time to reorganize ourselves to fight back. It is time to build a stronger united trade union front worldwide.

## ACTION THROUGH STRATEGIC CHAINS

If the decision-making bodies of the IMF, ICEM and ITGLWF so decide, a new unified global union for 50 million industrial workers in more than 140 countries will be founded on June 18 to 20, 2012 in Copenhagen.

The new global union will represent workers from extraction of oil and gas, all types of mining, generation and distribution of electric power, to manufacturing of metal, chemical and textile products. Its power and influence will be founded on uniting workers throughout these strategic chains of production.

Organizing and growth has to be a top priority for the new organization. The global crisis, job losses and increasing precarious work have left the trade union movement weakened. The average unionization rate in Europe has dropped to around 20 per cent. In developing countries, only 3 to 5 per cent of workers are members of a union. In too many countries unions are small and divided. We need to build unified structures so that unions have the necessary resources for fighting seriously for the goals they set.



In 2010 police arrested Foxconn workers who had been picketing and striking for several days in India.

Photo: KMWU





Rally in Canada as part of the global campaign to prevent Brazilian mining giant Vale from eroding working conditions and denying basic labour rights at Vale operations worldwide.

Photo: USW



## INDUSTRIAL POLICIES NEEDED

The new global union will advocate strong industrial policies that promote sustainable manufacturing industries as the engine of national economies and provider of sustainable, good quality jobs in both developed and developing countries.

In many countries in Europe and North America, there is no real industrial policy. In Africa, there is no industrial base and almost all countries are exporters of raw materials. The new global union and its affiliates in the South and the North should work together to develop a plan and mobilize support for accelerating industrialization and the creation of jobs through developing infrastructure, transfer of technology, proper training and skills development.

Climate change has not stopped despite the difficulties in global talks, which have been somewhat buried under burning financial problems. But a global treaty that takes into account social implications and promotes the path towards a low-carbon economy, is still needed. There is a lot of job potential in the development of new and renewable energies as well as clean and energy saving technologies. A sustainable and balanced energy mix is also the foundation of industrial production.

needs to plan systematic action in cooperation with the ITUC against governments that refuse to acknowledge fundamental labour rights. Some progress has been made in including core labour standards in free trade agreements and the World Bank's loan conditions, but we need to continue pushing for effective implementation.

The new International will be a strong counterweight to transnational corporations that dominate manufacturing industries. We need to continue to create and expand trade union networks for developing solidarity and joint action. Links between mining, energy and metal sectors provide interesting opportunities, especially if combined with strategic action with transport workers. Attacks by companies against union rights will be met with rapid and efficient campaigns, using various available tools.

Around 40 international framework agreements with major corporations have been concluded in industry and mining to guarantee trade union rights for millions of workers and to develop mechanisms for solving problems together. The IMF has reached other global level agreements with a few companies on health and safety. A number of World Works Councils and Global Networks have been recognized by the corporate management as counterparts for discussions. Further agreements on union rights, other topics and recognition will enhance our legitimacy to discuss matters at the global level.

In sectors as electronics and textiles where union density is relatively low, we will increase our cooperation with non-governmental organizations and civil society networks such as Clean Clothes and PlayFair in campaigns for decent conditions of work. Such alliances have already proven their usefulness.

## SOLIDARITY ACROSS BORDERS

In times of crisis, racism, xenophobia and nationalism traditionally increase, and this is the case also today. It is the responsibility of trade unions to take determined and visible action in favour of tolerance and solidarity.

We are a movement for democracy and peace. In North Africa and Middle East, our major project will be to help trade unions to become pillars of the new, hopefully democratic societies. We have seen that it is a complicated process, and it will take time.

Transnational corporations are increasing their investments in the manufacturing industry and mining in South and Southeast Asia. Obviously one of our absolute priorities in the future will be to assist trade unions to organize the 90 per cent of workers who are unorganized. There is a potential of millions of workers.

Finally, we will need to get more engaged in China. Last year's developments especially in the province of Guangdong and at Foxconn, Honda and other companies show that there is change in the air. It is in the interest of the world's industrial workers to help Chinese workers to develop true collective bargaining and improve their wages and working conditions. China remains a challenge, but I am confident that we will find ways of making our solidarity truly global.



Unions across Europe mobilized against excessive austerity measures pursued by their governments.

Photo: EMF



## UNION RIGHTS

In the majority of countries of the world, it is difficult to join a union freely and to bargain collectively. Each year some 100 union activists, national leaders and local union representatives, get killed, and thousands sit in prisons. Several governments have used the crisis as a pretext to weaken labour legislation, and companies have taken the occasion to attack trade union rights.

International labour standards are essential to the new global economic and social model. The new global union



## UNIONS IN ZIMBABWE FIGHT FOR DECENT WORK

Miriam Chipunza, NEWU, Zimbabwe, talks about her union's participation in the global action of the World Day of Decent Work and the importance of decent wages for workers in Zimbabwe.

Text & photo / Alex Ivanou

Miriam Chipunza, 28, joined the IMF Zimbabwe affiliate National Engineering Workers Union (NEWU) in April 2009 as an executive assistant to the General Secretary. She is responsible for organizing conferences and meetings and leads the communication work in her union. Miriam was one of participants of the regional communicators' forum for Central and South Africa organized by the IMF in Kenya in May 2011. Since then she has been preparing updates on the situation in her union and country. Some of her stories are published on the IMF regional webpage.

Miriam describes the recent rally organized by her union together with the national centre Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) on the occasion of the World Day of Decent Work (WDDW) protest action and explains why the issue of decent work is so important for her union and the members.

NEWU has participated in every WDDW action since it was launched by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) for the first time in 2008. This year a rally was organized in Harare and the theme of the action was "Save Our Rights, Save Our Economy and Our Jobs".

Miriam says that this action is extremely important because it concerns almost all workers in the country. "Nowadays the situation in Zimbabwe is that workers get only the basics to survive, their employers do not want to pay decent wages even if they can", explains Chipunza.

In fact, most workers live below the poverty line in Zimbabwe

not earning enough to reach the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) in 2011 defined for a family of six people at the level of US\$ 505 per month; in some cases workers are paid atrociously small wages of US\$ 40 per month.

At the rally, speakers raised issues of concern to Zimbabwean workers, namely unemployment, poor quality and unproductive jobs, unsafe work, insecure income, denial of rights and inadequate social protection and solidarity in the face of disability and old age.

Also, the ZCTU called for solidarity support to the Zimbabwe Domestic Allied Workers' Union (ZDAWU), which for almost four years has not been able to conclude a collective bargaining agreement on wages, and pledged to do everything possible to make Zimbabwe ratify the Domestic Workers' Convention 189 which was adopted at the International Labour Conference in June 2011.

Miriam says that the rally enjoyed a great success with participants coming both from trade unions and local communities, the event served a good example of unity in the struggle for decent work for all. "NEWU members are highly involved in ZCTU activities and mostly constitute about 50 per cent of total attendance in such activities", she adds.

At the global level, the ITUC identified precarious work as this year's primary focus of WDDW actions. The issue of precarious work remains high on the agenda for unions across the globe for more on this issue, read in the feature on social protection for precarious workers, pages 9-13.

## PROFILE

# MIRIAM CHIPUNZA

Country / Zimbabwe

Position / Executive Assistant to General Secretary

Union / National Engineering Workers Union (NEWU)



World Day of Decent Work action  
on October 7, 2011 in Harare, Zimbabwe

Photo: NEWU

