

19 November 2015, Hannover Germany

IndustriALL Global Union

**Coal Mining Conference Statement on
Climate Change and the Coal Commodity Crises**

The representatives of the coal mining union affiliates of IndustriALL Global Union from the following countries, Australia, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Russia, Ukraine, Spain, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Turkey, Pakistan and South Africa, meeting in Hannover, Germany on the 18th – 19th November 2015, hereby make the following statement:

Noting that:

1. Coal Mining Unions are suffering from the triple challenge of climate change, the commodities crisis and the inherent employer ideology within the industry intent on destroying trade unions.
2. Coal Mining Unions have a proud history and tradition of militant struggle and global solidarity with each other. This proud history and tradition has seen coal mining unions defend and improve the lives and conditions of their members, their communities and society more broadly. This history and tradition include the acknowledgement that the industrialization of the global economy has been on the back of coal mining, even as ironically, coal mining unions are being threatened by the consequences of industrialization – climate change. Climate change is an existential question for coal mining unions that therefore take the issue of climate change more seriously than any sector of the global economic production value chain.
3. IndustriALL's Executive Committee meeting of 19-20 May 2015 in Stockholm, adopted unanimously a decision "calling upon IndustriALL affiliates to deliver a strong message to their governments on reaching the best possible result in the continuing UN climate change talks including Just Transition."
4. The almost hysterical call by some Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to shut down coal mines as a quick fix solution to climate change and the uncritical policy response by the European Union and the United States of America to accelerate the shutdown, while somewhat understandable, is misplaced and regrettable in the absence of Just Transition measures for coal mine workers, while ignoring the developmental imperative of emerging economies and some European union country members depending on coal for their development.
5. While the success of the German experience in the transition to a low carbon emission economy is noted as an example of a model for a managed transition that is socially acceptable, it is also a product of coherent deep rooted co-determination industrial policy unique to the German industrial relations system.
6. This Coal Mining Conference supports the ILO's adopted criteria for a Just Transition ahead of the COP 21 session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris, France. The adopted criteria for a Just Transition is critical in ensuring efforts:

- to raise ambition and ensure that concrete steps are taken to reduce emissions in line with the <2 C° pathway, including appropriate funding of and investment in technologies to reduce emissions from coal combustion.
- to ensure adequate technical and financial resources are made available to vulnerable and developing nations.
- to secure a Just Transition for workers and their communities, with all that it implies in the way of industrial transformation and social protection.

These efforts can be accomplished by adopting sustainable industrial policies, ensuring strong social protection programs, and designing and implementing specific Just Transition programmes.

7. Precarious work and contracting out, which has become rampant in the coal industry as a business model, present a direct threat to the existence of trade unions and the health and safety of mine workers.
8. Mechanization is recognised as another direct threat to trade union organising.
9. Privatization of the coal industry in the affected countries has caused immeasurable suffering to mine workers through a downward variation of labour standards and the rights of workers.
10. The current global coal crises is a direct result of the greed of the mining industry for profit, so immediate after the most unprecedented commodities boom in living memory.

Therefore, the Coal Mining unions gathered here hereby make the following Statement:

1. This Coal Mining Conference supports the ILO's adopted criteria for a Just Transition ahead of the COP 21 session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris, France.
2. We call upon the COP 21 Conference to adopt the ILO's criteria for a Just Transition which calls for sustainable industrial policies, strong social protection programs, and designing and implementing specific Just Transition programmes.
3. We call for investment in innovative clean coal technology such as carbon capture and storage and carbon re-use which is more than necessary to safeguard the future of a climate friendly coal. Therefore mining companies and governments/states should invest in research and development for the development and implementation of clean coal technologies.
4. We recommit ourselves to IndustriALL's call to affiliates to deliver a strong message to their governments on reaching the best possible result in the continuing UN climate change talks including Just Transition.

5. We call upon mining companies in the coal sector to respect trade union rights, human rights and environmental rights, particularly in this period of the global coal crisis.
6. We call upon IndustriALL Global Union to escalate the campaign against Precarious Work to which we, as coal mining unions gathered here, fully support.
7. We reiterate the demand that all countries not only take the necessary steps to ratify ILO Convention C176, but that they also take urgent action to ensure that the commitments contained in the Convention are put into practice.
8. We commit ourselves to implementing IndustriALL Global Union's 5 key strategic goals and objectives as a strategic response to the challenges discussed at this conference.