



Declaration of IndustriALL Global Union's World Base Metals Conference on the Global Steel Crisis

Duisburg, Germany - 22 November 2016

The steel producing unions from across the world meeting in the Industrial Global Union's World Conference for Base Metals Industries in Duisburg, Germany today call for urgent action to protect our jobs and communities from the current wave of industrial destruction that is wiping out industrial jobs on a global scale and systematically eroding workers' rights and working conditions.

As trade unions, we defend the rights of all workers across the globe and the right of development for every country. But with this right comes the responsibility to pursue development that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

We believe that if our societies are to be truly sustainable then so must be the way we trade with each other and how we develop our own markets. We believe that the strongest sign of a fair society is the way in which workers and their unions are treated.

Steel is the world's second largest industry with a turnover of \$900 billion. It has been the foundation for the last 100 years of industrial progress, driving industrial and environmental innovations and technologies and supporting economic growth in many other industrial sectors. Global steel use is projected to increase by 50% by 2050.

Yet the current conditions faced by the industry are the worst in a generation. Despite an increase in average steel use over the last decade, overcapacity is now a serious threat to the long-term future of our industry. China's annual production, driven by state-owned and controlled enterprises, has increased five-fold in the past 15 years and now exceeds 800 million tons. This unchecked expansion combined with a long-term slowdown of China's economic growth is now dumping 90 million tons of steel into global markets, with devastating effects on steelmaking communities and the environment.

Equally devastating is the impact of this economic contraction on industrial workers in China. IndustriALL reiterates our solidarity with the Chinese working class and our demand that China, like all other nations, respect freedom

of association and collective bargaining and allow independent and democratic trade unions and NGOs to operate.

We believe it is not acceptable for any country to threaten the jobs, families and communities of hundreds of thousands of workers across the world due to unfair and illegal trade practices. Ignoring the impact of these decisions on workers and their industries while claiming to be a responsible global partner is unacceptable behaviour from any nation. It is also unacceptable to ignore the continued state-sponsored financing of new steelmaking capacity with no commitment to long-term sustainability. All nations must respect the rules of global trade.

We also believe that global institutions and our governments must do more to highlight where market distortions occur and develop strategies to prevent them. National governments must aggressively enforce WTO anti-dumping rules, strengthen laws against unfair competition, and recognize the right of affected workers and communities to seek relief through those laws. Governments must also recognize the value of collective bargaining and workers' right to freedom of association.

Our governments must also proactively coordinate efforts to prevent unfair steel dumping. In particular the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) High Level Steel Committee must continue to pursue a fair and just global framework for steel producers, free of market distortions. The "Global Forum on steel excess capacity" initiated by the G-20 in September 2016, must operate to effectively restrain Chinese overcapacity. We call on IndustriALL Global Union and IndustriALL European Trade Union to collaborate in raising these issues in European forums.

We note that the Political Resolution adopted by the Second Congress of IndustriALL demanded that "no moves be made to grant China Market Economy Status without a public debate on all social, economic and legal implications, a strengthening of existing trade defense instruments and improvement of social, labour and environmental conditions in China." Likewise, IndustriALL Europe has stated: "The decision that the European Commission takes regarding the Market Economy Status of China is therefore of crucial importance for the future of the steel sector and other related sectors suffering from unfair imports at dumping prices. We will reject the proposal of any alternative 'solution' which falls short of our demand to create a fair level playing field for our European Steel sector".

Given the failure to meet these demands, and taking into account IndustriALL Europe's call of 19 October 2016 to "Say No to Dumping and Save Our Jobs in the Steel Industry," we strongly oppose any effort by national governments or the European Commission to grant market economy status to China, which would open the floodgates to further unfair competition at a time of economic vulnerability.

In place of a downward spiral of unfair competition, we call on our governments to adopt active and sustainable industrial policies including massive investment in sorely-needed infrastructure and training, with a focus on joint apprenticeship programs. Governments must also make targeted interventions to rescue steelmaking communities threatened with extinction by plant shutdowns. Governments and global institutions must consider the climactic consequences of shutting down steel-making capacity that meets the strictest environmental and quality standards while allowing unfettered growth where such standards are ignored. Governments should also enact policies to invest in clean energy and industrial energy efficiency and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, in the spirit of the Paris Agreement of 2015.

As unions we commit to coordinated action to save the global steel industry and the millions of family- and community-sustaining jobs it creates. We will continue to mobilize union members, their families and communities, and the public to fight back against destruction of industrial jobs and raise awareness with our public policy makers over the important contribution that the steel industry makes to our economies and to society as a whole. We will also continue to demand that our employers and governments invest in creating decent work that conforms to ILO core labour standards, promoting equality for women, young workers and ethnic minorities, and committing to eliminating precarious work from global supply chains. With this in mind we will aim to develop an environment that enables the global steel industry to flourish and steelworkers along with it.

To this end, we have here in Duisburg approved a comprehensive action plan to ensure that the steel industry and our jobs continue to be an engine of truly sustainable industrial development .