**Minutes of the 8th meeting of the Gerdau Workers’ World Council**

**Chimbote – PERU (May 19 / 22)**

The unions USW, representing Canada, EEUU and CNM-CUT from Brazil and SIDERPERU from Peru were present at the 8th meeting of the Gerdau Workers’ World Council.

The meeting evaluated the activities of the Council since the last meeting; considered positive was the Exchange of information and experiences that were used for bargaining in other countries, while on the other hand, the absence of representatives from Chile, Spain and Colombia was considered negatively.

Following is the report from the different countries present at the meeting:

**Brazil:** The Steel sector has improved but still is far away from where it was at its best times; the low cost of products from China and Turkey are affecting prices on the global market.

GERDAU is under investigation by the Federal Police due to potential tax evasion; it is possible that it will receive a fine of US$ 1500 million. If that is the case, it will definitively impact the workers because Gerdau will have to restructure to pay the fine. June 2 and 3, the Brazilian Committee of Gerdau Unions will meet to analyse the situation.

Gilberto Silva, representing CNM-CUT mentioned the need to improve coordination among the unions of Gerdau in Brazil, to strengthen their activities and to be the foundation of the World Council.

**EEUU:** As in Brazil, imports from China are affecting production, some plants are working at 70% capacity. Gerdau’s plant in California could be closed due to violations of environmental rules, which will make 300 workers lose their employment.

**Canada:** Whitby, Ontario is also producing at 50% of capacity due to competition by China and Turkey. In Manitoba their production is at 100% of capacity since they do not have international competition to the products made in that plant.

**Peru:** The furnace is still off inGERDAU’s plant. On the other side, Gerdau is investing in improving the port, showing that their interest is to import from China and Turkey, where costs are cheaper. Currently they are producing for Brazil and Peru.

Aceros ARICA and some other new companies only sell imported products from China and Turkey.

**After 3 days of exchanging information, following is the work plan approved by the meeting:**

1. Last year the council decided to prepare a survey comparing the buying power of workers in different plants of Gerdau; it was not done. The Council will conduct the survey this year.
2. Continue pushing Gerdau to recognize the world council.
3. Explore the possibility to have funds exclusively dedicated to the World Council to secure its functioning.
4. Improve the communications tools to ensure quick and accurate information circulating among the Council.
5. Prepare a data base with all collective agreements of Gerdau around the world.
6. Gilberto Silva was elected to follow up the Work plan.
7. Work with IndustriALL Global Union in Latin America and the Caribbean, to facilitate coordination among unions in Brazil.
8. To call a Skype meeting the second part of September.
9. Benjamín Villanueva from Peru was elected vice-president from the Spanish Speaking unions.
10. Next meeting of the Gerdau Workers’ World Council will be held in Montevideo URUGUAY in around 12 months from this meeting.