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Contribution by workers and trade union **

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The main purpose of Workers and Trade Unions at CSD-16 will be to review progress on the Social Dimension of Sustainable Development, and specifically on commitments defined for workplaces, work processes and the communities in which workers and their families live. Workplaces are at the hub of production and much of the world's consumption of products provide a forum for social interaction and change. Our mission is to ensure that workers, with their energy, knowledge and organizations are involved in the changes that must take place.

2. Trade unions are active in sustainable development work based on Chapter 29 of Agenda 21, taking part in sessions of the CSD, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Food & Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), and numerous other fora. They are represented by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC), which together speak for over 168 million members in 153 countries and territories, as well as by Global Union Federations, which represent workers in specific sectors.

In January 2006, trade unions and SustainLabour partnered with the ILO, UNEP and the WHO to convene the first *Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment* in Nairobi, Kenya, in which over 200 trade union leaders and activists reached a common position on sustainable development linking poverty reduction, social justice, environmental protection and decent work¹. Later in 2006, a trade union *Sustainable Development Unit* was launched as an information and data service coordinated by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC), Global Union Research Network (GURN) and SustainLabour to analyse and report on progress, focusing on indicators for sustainable development. Country-by-Country data relating to CSD-16 themes is available at: <http://www.tradeunionsdunit.org/profiles/>

II. Trade union assessment of progress since the WSSD

3. Trade unions regard CSD-16 themes as a closely-interrelated cluster embodying environmental, social and economic concerns. WSSD outcomes in these areas provide an agenda for our Review, and it is within this context that trade unions address their priorities; in particular, Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Use within the context of the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land (MFCAL), with special attention to agricultural workers and Africa, where many issues are most urgent.

A. WSSD outcomes require this CSD-16 review to include the effective integration of the three pillars of sustainable development.

4. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities** The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), the Johannesburg Declaration (JD²), and Agenda 21 (confirmed by WSSD) call for a complete integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into programmes and policies with attention to the social dimension and support for social protection systems. Poverty eradication and social development are to be integrated with sustainable patterns of production and consumption. The International Labour Organisation and its work on the social dimension of globalization” and enhanced participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 21, as well as to promote transparency and broad public participation (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 2, 14, 45(d), 121(a), 121(g), 122(c), 19(b) and 126(a)*).

5. Agriculture and food are basic to our civilization, and patterns of development in these sectors are therefore crucial to plans for sustainable development. WSSD outcomes demand an all-encompassing review according to the principles underlying the *Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land (MFCAL)* (*See JPOI paragraphs 38(b) and 38(e)*). MFCAL is based on the premise that agricultural land is where workers live, raise families, and build communities. It values local control and good industrial relations, with workers involved in decision-making, target-setting, implementation, auditing and reporting, with a role for trade

unions as contemplated in Agenda 21 Chapters 29 and Chapter 14, *Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD)*. Half of the world's workers are engaged in 'agricultural production', and while many are victims of unsustainable practices, they are also in a position to promote changes throughout the food chain.

6. **The record since 2002:** Although trade unions note some progress towards MFCAL, much of the evidence points to a downward spiral in the agriculture and food system, with developments like 'factory farming' pushing environmental degradation to crisis levels, combining deterioration of water quality, toxic inputs with some of the worst employment practices. Domination of food and agriculture by a few large multinational corporations (MNC's) results in growing influence over agricultural production and consumption through aggressive retailing, undermining the ability of local communities to grow crops for their needs, or to exercise stewardship of the land, with negative implications for safety and security of food supply. Liberalised terms of trade and deregulation have resulted in free movement of hazardous technologies and products around the world, with little attention to environmental and social costs or security of food, particularly in developing countries.

Preserving farmland and community in India In 2007, the IUF-affiliated union PBKMS joined workers, small farmers and villagers of [Singur](#), West Bengal to prevent loss of 400 hectares of farmland to a Tata Motors small car project that will deprive 30,000 people of their land and livelihood. Camps are permanently occupied by villagers and leaders of the

Farmlands Protection Committee, with daily rallies and meetings. Protesters have been attacked by police armed with batons, shields and tear gas. Many families living near the acquired land are in urgent need of food and medicine. (http://www.iuf.org/cgi-bin/dbman/db.cgi?db=default&uid=default&ID=4232&view_records=1&ww=1&en=1).

B. WSSD outcomes call for poverty eradication as a focal point of sustainable development

7. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities** The WSSD called for concerted measures at all levels to enable developing countries achieve poverty-related targets within a sustainable development context. This includes the Millennium Development Goal of halving by 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day and those who suffer from hunger or lack access to safe drinking water. It called for a world solidarity fund to eradicate poverty, promote social and human development in developing countries, mobilizing the effective use of financial resources to improve living standards, increase food availability and affordability, as well as equitable and efficient distribution systems, by promoting, for example, community-based partnerships linking urban and rural people and enterprises (*See inter alia paragraphs 6, 6(a), 6(b) 76 and 6(k) of the JPOI*).

8. **The Record since the WSSD** For hundreds of millions of workers around the world, particularly agricultural workers, WSSD outcomes are far from being realized. For nearly half

of the global population (3 billion people) who live on less than \$2/day, and the 1.5 billion who live in extreme poverty, poverty eradication is a dream. According to the FAO, proper nourishment is denied to nearly 800 million people in developing countries and 34 million in industrialised nations, with children most vulnerable.

9. Global climate change could negate poverty reduction gains, particularly for those who make a living from the land in Asia, home to over 60 per cent of the world's population and 87 per cent of the world's known 400 million small farms. The expansion of biofuel crops linked to deforestation, furthermore, could worsen climate change, and increase emissions, as well as leading to conflict between crops grown for food and those grown for fuel. (See: *Up in Smoke? Asia and the Pacific* <http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/asiaupinsmoke191107.aspx>) This disproportionate effect of climate change on agriculture, particularly for the world's poorest, is predicted in the IPCC's 4th *Assessment Report* which projects that the worst impacts in the short to medium term will come from increased variability of weather, with more frequent and extreme events like storms, droughts, floods and heat-waves. Impacts on agriculture will, particularly affect Africa, where production will be severely compromised. The irony is that it is these people who are least to blame for climate change, but stand to lose the most.

C. WSSD outcomes call for Decent Employment as a key aspect of sustainable development

10. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities** The WSSD called for decent employment as a route out of poverty, and called for assistance at all levels to increase income-generating employment taking into account the International Labour Organisation (ILO) *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, as well as poverty programmes that reflect priorities of the poor and enable access to productive resources, public services and institution. It called attention to ILO and UNESCO Conventions to end gender-based discrimination and for improved access by indigenous people and their communities to full, sustainable employment that contributes to safe, clean and healthy work, community and physical environments. Participation of workers and their trade unions must be promoted in environment and development programmes, including employment, industrial strategies, labour adjustment programmes and technology transfers (*See inter alia paragraphs 9(b), 10 (c), 6 (c), 6 (e), 9(b) of the JPOI, paragraph 25 of the JD and Chapter 29.2 of Agenda 21*).

11. **The Record since 2002:** This Review cannot ignore the fact that so much of the world's food and agricultural production continues to be carried out under unacceptable and unsustainable conditions, particularly by waged agricultural workers who comprise 60 per cent of workers in developing countries and who are ironically amongst those least able to afford food they produce. They are on the frontline of a system that is seeing continual increases in demand for agricultural products, countered now by production for biofuels. With a forecast increase in world population to 9 billion by 2050, the demand will raise even further.

12. The majority of the poor in developing countries live in rural areas, where millions work as small and medium-sized farmers, peasants and shareholders, or in informal relationships – as well as forced, slave or indentured labour, or as child labourers. As the FAO, ILO and IUF point out in *Agricultural Workers and Their Contribution to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (2006)*, poverty is also a factor in commercial operations, with migrant labour a major issue. Today, agricultural workers on full-time, secure contracts of employment are an exception, as most are seasonal, casual or temporary. A large number are migrant workers, working for low pay, with little job or social security or unemployment benefits. *Trade Union Country Profiles* reveal that some governments allow or even promote precarious employment practices and deprive a growing number of workers of trade union protection.

Decision-makers commit to Action for Decent Work, Decent Life signing the *Call to Action for Decent Work, Decent Life* in November 2007 committing to: changing unfair trade rules, protecting the rights of workers to organise, ratifying and implementing the UN and ILO conventions around the protection of migrant workers and providing social protection to the 60% of the world's population who live without it. Signatories include dignitaries, such as the Director General of the ILO, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body, Labour Minister of Argentina, Labour Minister of Brazil, Labour and Social Security Minister of Portugal and the EU Presidency, and the President of the Party of European Socialists. The campaign is collecting signatures through national coalitions that include trade unions. See: www.ituc-csi.org

13. Attention must be given to the some 25 million environmental refugees already created by climate and weather events; according to some predictions, 100 million will be directly at risk from coastal flooding by 2100³. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has suggested that these numbers could reach 150 million by 2050, many of whom will be extremely vulnerable. The German trade union, IG BAU is one of many unions to respond with programmes for migrant workers. In has co-founded the European Migrant Workers Union, and in 2007, it launched a campaign for "Fair Seasonal Work" that includes a labelling scheme denoting good labour practices in enterprises. As well, the DGB, the German national trade union central centre maintains a department to provide services to migrant workers⁴.

Global Union Federation Provides a Charter of Rights for Migrant Workers The IUF has produced a *Charter of Rights for Migrant Workers in Agriculture* to educate trade union affiliates on migrant worker issues, noting risks from unscrupulous labour contractors, racism and xenophobia. To defend and organise these workers, the IUF has vowed to expand activities to construct bipartite and multilateral international agreements between affiliates in the countries of origin and destination, and an international union card. It notes that the fundamental right of both employers and workers to e join organisations of their choosing is enshrined in the principle of freedom of association as expressed in the ILO Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No.11), the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No.87) and Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No.141); all integrated in the ILO International *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*.

D. WSSD outcomes require attention to child labour and gender-based discrimination

14. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities:** The WSSD called for measures to end child labour and for adjusted/ gender sensitive programmes to address problems faced by women working in agriculture and food, including violence and discrimination, and improving the status, health and economic welfare of women and girls through full and equal access to economic opportunity, land, credit, education and health-care. It called for an end to gender-based discrimination with equal employment opportunities and remuneration for all workers, whether in formal or informal working relationships and for adequate economic, political and

social support systems and services, including child care and parental leave, and an increase in the proportion of women decision makers, planners, technical advisers, managers and extension workers in environment and development fields, (*See inter alia JPOI's paragraphs 38 (e) and 6 (d), Agenda 21 Chapters 24.1, 24.3 (d), 24.3(f), 24.2(b), and 25.3*).

15. **The Record since 2002** Noting that 70 per cent of the world's poor are female, with many involved in casual, temporary, migrant work or self-employment in food and agricultural sectors, the 2007 IUF Congress expressed concern that such fundamental rights as freedom of association, non-discrimination, maternity and social protection are absent or undermined and considered the effect of insecurity, low wages and irregular hours on family life. Hundreds of thousands of women workers lack adequate health and safety protection, with many accidents and illnesses never officially declared. Add to this gender-related violence, intimidation and sexual harassment and the fact that half a million women die annually from pregnancy-related complications exacerbated by poverty, remoteness, and a lack of medical care, as well as HIV/AIDS. Women also dominate the workforce in Export Processing Zones that have direct connection to the food and agricultural industry, which are beyond the reach of labour legislation and where trade unions are virtually non-existent. Many countries have yet to ratify ILO Conventions on Freedom of Association, Equal Remuneration, Discrimination, Health and Safety, Maternity Protection, Workers with Family Responsibilities and on Home Work, etc.

16. **The WSSD also called for an end to child labour** and action to ensure that children can

attend primary school, with access to all levels of education; for immediate and effective measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour; for international cooperation to assist developing countries address child labour and its root causes in poverty; to combat human rights abuses against young people; for programmes to provide health, nutrition, education, literacy and poverty alleviation. It called organisations to cooperate with ministries and organizations, with strategies for alternative employment opportunities and provide required training to young men and women. (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 6(d) and (g), 11, 12, 47(f) and numerous passages in Agenda 21*).

17. **Unfortunately, the record since 2002** shows little follow-through on WSSD commitments, as levels of child labour remain high, with many condemned to the worst forms of work. The ILO's 2006 *Global Estimates* show 132 million children aged 5-14 years - almost half of all child labourers – employed in agriculture. Child labour is one of the most shameful features of a global economy in which dangerous and precarious work is transferred from rich countries to the poor. It is particularly prevalent in Africa and other developing countries, disproportionately involving girls who are likely to work for long hours, in addition to homemaking and housekeeping tasks. Children in rural areas or in migrant worker families are twice as likely to be exploited this way, as many work alongside parents. The ILO estimates tens of millions of child slaves around the world, many in agriculture. In some countries, child labour is fostered by explicit economic and social policies, and families sell the children outright or bond them into slavery in order to pay off debts or simply to survive.

A New Partnership to Eliminate Child Labour in Agriculture

During the 2007 International Labour Conference (ILO), the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) formed a partnership with the ILO, FAO, IFAD, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) to issue a *Declaration of Intent on Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture* to conduct a broad program of research, support and action to end child labour in this sector.

World Day against Child Labour

The ILO dedicated 12 June 2007 as World Day against Child Labour, calling for a long-term, sustained commitment from governments, employers, trade unions and civil society. Harvest for the Future: Agriculture Without Child Labour calls on governments to ratify ILO Convention 184 on Safety and Health in Agriculture. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), representing the Alliance of the Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), confirmed its cooperation with other partners in efforts to eliminate child labour in agriculture. It supports 15 international research centres conducting groundbreaking work in support of policy solutions to cut hunger, malnutrition, and poverty. See

http://www.ifap.org/en/newsroom/pr_childlabour_12-06-07.html

E. WSSD outcomes require attention to the health and safety of workers linked to strong and accessible systems for public health

18. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities** called for action to strengthen ILO/WHO programmes for occupational deaths, injuries and illnesses linked to public health; to protect the health and safety of workers by *inter alia* taking into account the ILO *Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work*, and link workplace measures to improved health services. It recognized the value of bipartite and tripartite mechanisms and greater access by workers and their representatives to training on the environment, safety and health, and economic and social welfare and called on trade unions, employers, governments and international agencies to involve workers and their representatives in ILO and WHO programmes to link occupational health with public health. (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 46 (m), 48 (c), 46 (m), 44 (a) and 48, as well as Chapters 29.3 and 29.12 of Agenda 21,*)

19. **The Record since the WSSD** Agricultural work is one of the three most dangerous occupations in the world (along with mining and construction) with some 170,000 of the 330,000 work-related deaths annually and thousands more affected by injury or illness. The WSSD intent was to utilize workplace programmes as a springboard to public health. CSD-16 therefore faces a number of issues, including the safety and security of food supply in global climate where changes in ecosystems threaten the food supply and health of millions.

20. Following the adoption of a *Global Action Plan for Workers' Health* by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2007, trade unions partnered with the WHO, the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) and the International Federation of Public Health Associations (IFPA) to improve occupational health and safety practices in the world's workplaces⁵.

21. Action is particularly needed to deal with unhealthy conditions for agriculture for workers who live where they work. The WHO estimates that at least 40,000 people die annually from pesticides, with millions more severely poisoned in fields and homes. Agricultural workers are also first to be threatened by such new hazards as the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza, which raised alarm in 2007 about possible mutation into human transmission. However, most countries have yet to ratify ILO Convention 155 *Occupational Safety and Health* or the 2001 ILO Convention 184, *Safety & Health in Agriculture*. Workers' rights are linked to working conditions, food safety and public health, as agricultural workers are in the best position to identify infection and contain outbreaks or to determine whether minimum food safety standards are being implemented. Although a proactive role by these workers and their unions could help restore confidence and public trust in food safety, few employers and governments involve them in this way.

IUF Calls for Urgent Global Action on Toxic Food Flavouring Ingredient Diacetyl to control the use of the food flavouring chemical that has been linked to the crippling lung disease *bronchiolitis obliterans*, or "popcorn workers lung" in the U.S. Due to insufficient regulatory and labelling, however, the full extent of exposure is not known. Information on products and brands using diacetyl must be made readily accessible, and food workers' unions involved in a program of comprehensive research into the hazards, including on-site monitoring, evaluation of production methods and protective measures and medical surveillance of workers at risk. Today's knowledge warrants an immediate suspension of the use of diacetyl pending a thorough appraisal of its workplace risks. <http://www.iuf.org/>

22. HIV/AIDS is a worker and workplace issue because it impacts on the health, jobs and security of workers generally, and because the workplace is well adapted to prevention and care. ILO statistics show that the epidemic is concentrated amongst people in their working years, as nearly 36.5 million people involved in productive work (a wider definition than 'labour force') are HIV-positive⁶. Over 70% live in Africa⁷ where some governments have already reported that the pandemic is eroding their capacity to implement climate change adaptation measures, or to provide environmental and emergency services.

23. HIV-AIDS not only kills or debilitates, it reinforces a cycle of poverty, leading to loss of household income, reduced productive capacity, and growing personal, enterprise and national cost. For many of working poor, sickness or injury often leads to job loss with no compensation

or access to health care. A conference convened by French President Chirac in March 2006 concluded that health care costs and indirect expenses are the single most determining factor driving people into poverty. More than a third (36%) of the world's population lacks access to any health service. Concern about the situation has grown in recent years, but when global initiatives are undertaken, workers' representatives have yet to be invited to the table.

28 April Campaign Highlights HIV/AIDS The 28 April International Commemoration Day (ICD) is dedicated to workers killed, injured or diseased because of unsafe, unhealthy and unsustainable workplaces and processes. Since the first International April 28 ceremony at the UN in New York in 1996, ICD has grown to encompass thousands of rallies, sectoral, educational and lobbying events around the world. 28 April is now recognised formally by governments in 15 countries or territories (Argentina, Belgium, Bermuda, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Luxembourg, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Taiwan, Ukraine, Venezuela). In addition, the Andean Community, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and associate member Venezuela, have agreed to recognise the Day, which would bring the total to 19 countries. The ITUC has begun a process for the eventual recognition of 28 April by the U.N. General Assembly. Country activities for 2007 can be seen at: http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpT_4a.EN.pdf

24. The world today urgently requires more health care workers, according to the Public Services International (PSI) and the World Health Organisation, as more than 1.3 billion people lack access to basic care, with the greatest shortage in sub-Saharan Africa, which has 11 per cent of the world's

population and 24 per cent of the burden of disease, but only 3 per cent of the world's health workers. The 2007 *WHO World Health Report* reports that more than four million additional doctors, nurses, and other public health workers are urgently needed to fill the gap in 57 countries, 36 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, these countries are hardest hit by an out-migration of Health Care Workers. While trade unions support the right to migrate, the negative impact of this migration on health care systems in developing countries, the majority of whom are women, has reached crisis proportions and must be addressed.

PSI Organises International Migration and Women Health Workers Campaign In December 2005, the Public Services International called on affiliates to join a week of campaigning around the issues of ethical recruitment of health care workers and the negative impact of migration on health services in sending countries. A 16-country network, established as part of the PSI International Migration and Women Health Workers Project invites all affiliates, particularly those with members in the health sector, to organise activities in their regions. As women are affected, both as health workers and users, women's committees are particularly involved. PSI has developed information materials, a model resolution and a leaflet about the importance of ethical recruitment for trade unions to use in their campaigns, and. For more information, email equality@world-psi.org.

F. WSSD outcomes require attention to Employment Transition as a fundamental precondition to implementation for sustainable development

25. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities** Human insecurity, and particularly job insecurity can be brought on by changes that, more often than not, have left workers and their communities bearing the greatest cost. Without ‘just transition’ policies and programs, the inevitable result of job loss or dispossessed land holdings is increased poverty, social inequity and hardship. The WSSD called for measures to promote participation of workers and their trade unions in programmes for employment, industrial strategies, labour adjustment programmes and technology transfers and recommended that international financial institutions and other agencies support developing countries economies in transition, in their efforts to adjust to changes in energy and related technologies. (*See inter alia JPOI paragraph 19(j) and Agenda 21 Chapter 29.5*).

26. **The Record since 2002** Workers continue to face economic hardship or insecurity as a result of climate change and other drivers of change. Threats to traditional patterns of agriculture and food supply have grown exponentially since the WSSD, affecting agricultural workers, small farmers and others who depend on these sectors, especially in developing countries. Trade unions have consistently lobbied for employment transition programmes to provide an element of justice and build confidence and support for national efforts to address climate change. The trade union Nairobi Action Plan for Africa depends on the involvement of workers and their communities in climate change adaptation strategies that are especially required on that continent⁸ Except for very few negotiated agreements with employers and governments, a ‘Just Transition’ remains a distant ideal. Governments and employers have yet

to ensure that workers are able to adapt, to include as a minimum, adequate job forecast and skills management, a reconversion programme, and income support programmes for workers in affected industries. Trade Union *Profiles* show that most countries have yet to ratify such ILO Conventions as C-122, the *Employment Policy Convention* or the 1974 *Resolution on the Social and Economic Consequences of Preventive Action*, which calls for arrangements for social-economic consequences affecting workers.

Decent work for sustainable development: The challenge of climate change, a paper for the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization (*GB.300/WP/SDG/1 Geneva, November 2007*) focuses on socially-just transition to green jobs and the relationship between climate change and decent work. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), SYNDEX, the German Wuppertal Institute and the Spanish institute ISTAS, undertook their own study, financed by the European Commission, Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, Spain and the U.K which examined the potential impact on employment of EU's CO2 reduction targets on four key industrial sectors: energy production (electricity, oil), energy-intensive industries (steel, cement), transport, and building/construction, and concluded that there could be an overall net gain in employment identified with transfers to environmentally-friendly forms of energy production and use. It warned, however, that jobs will only be created where companies take advantage of opportunities created by climate policies and lost where companies cannot adapt (See European Trade Union Confederation 2005 *European Governments and Unions Assess Employment and Climate Change*

Synergies: A ten month study on impacts of climate change and CO2 reduction policies on employment and other activities in 25 EU countries)

27. Finally, a ‘Just Transition’ to Sustainable Patterns of Production & Consumption cannot occur without changes to trading patterns that disadvantage developing countries. Development in industrialised nations has provided an inappropriate model for other parts of the world, particularly Africa. Developing countries struggle with negative terms of trade, crippling debt, and demands for structural adjustment that render sustainable development much more difficult.

ILO Head Promotes Green Jobs Initiative as Transition Strategy Huge opportunities exist to create green jobs through energy and industrialization policies which reduce emissions, says ILO Director-General Juan Somavia as investments in energy efficiency, clean energy technology and renewable energy have great potential to create productive and decent work; the market for clean energy technology alone could be worth 1.9 trillion dollars by 2020, creating green jobs and sustainable economic growth. “We must also prepare for job losses and support workers and enterprises in shifting to new ways of working that substantially reduce emissions,” said Somavia. “We need to invest much more in low emissions strategies for development that do not slow progress in poverty reduction ... [to] ensure a smooth transition for all involved. (*Statement by ILO Director-General Juan Somavia to the High-level event on climate change, New York, 24 September 2007*)

G. WSSD outcomes require a review of energy, water and chemicals inputs into the food and agricultural industry

28. **WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities/Trade union priorities** Energy, water and other major inputs into food and agriculture industries are major issues for production and consumption, as well as for public utilities. The WSSD called for integration of all energy considerations, including affordability and accessibility into all programmes, especially for such energy-consuming sectors as agriculture. It also called for research and development on reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy for sustainable development and for development and implementation of integrated land management and water-use plans with strengthened capacity for Governments, local authorities and communities to monitor and manage these resources. It established priorities for access to potable domestic water, hygiene education and improved sanitation and waste management at the household level with priority to the needs of the poor, within stable and transparent regulatory government frameworks involving all concerned stakeholders to monitor and improve accountability of all service providers. (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 38(b), 38(e), 17(e), 24, 25(b), 24(b), 25, 60, 60(a)*).

29. **The Record since 2002** Problems noted at the WSSD in 2002 persist today, as productivity and profit priorities in food and agricultural industries overshadow environmental and social concerns. Environmental degradation from unsustainable practices is now at crisis levels from unsustainable patterns of energy, chemicals and water related use including: increased inputs of pesticides,

biomedical substances, fertilizers and toxic inputs; increased use and deterioration of water quality, loss of biodiversity, wildlife habitat and landscape; and lack of safe water for domestic purposes. Groundwater contamination from factory farms continues from unsafe use of pesticides and other synthetic inputs, as well as from manure in lagoons or on the land. The Sierra Club estimates that 13% of the drinking-water wells in the American Midwest contain unsafe levels of nitrates as a result, in addition to environmentally-damaging amounts of phosphorus and antibiotics and air pollution from emission of hydrogen sulfide and ammonia. Researchers have found that farmworkers and families living near animal factories show symptoms of respiratory, physical and emotional illness at levels significantly higher than other groups, as well as high levels of tension, depression, anger and fatigue⁹.

North American Coalition Opposes Intensive Livestock Operations The *From the Beyond Factory Farming Coalition* is drawing attention to hazards posed by livestock operations in North America, where giant feedlots of 20,000 cattle, mega hog barns of 5,000 to 20,000 hogs, poultry batteries of 100,000 birds exist on small land areas, and under intensive conditions resembling manufacturing. Animals' feed is often grown far from these 'factories' and manure is spread or sprayed onto fields in quantities that exceed the nutrient needs of crops, causing pollution to surface and ground water. Numerous toxic or pathenogenic substances are found in drinking water around these farms: hog urine and feces, human waste, hog carcasses, cleaning chemicals, insecticides, weed seeds, volatile organic compounds, salts, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium and manganese, metals (cadmium, zinc, nickel, lead, iron, manganese, boron and copper, vaccines, antibiotics and

antibiotic-resistant bacteria, parasites, and other bacterial and viral pathogens such as *cryptosporidium*, *salmonella* and *e-coli*. The quantity of manure is itself an issue, as factories use millions of gallons of drinking water to flush manure out of the barns into lagoons or holding pits. Countries spend \$billions to treat human sewage, but the greater volumes of animal manure produced on factory farms receives little or no treatment.

(<http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org>)

30. Although *electricity* supply has been extended to 1.3 billion more people in developing countries in the last 25 years, 1.4 billion people still lack access according to the IEA, with the number reliant on biomass expected to increase to 2.7 billion by 2030. The World Health Organization has blamed exposure to biomass for nearly two million deaths from cancer, respiratory infections and lung diseases. As well, lack of access to energy provides a serious barrier to basic social goods like health care and education. The end of ‘cheap oil’, moreover, means increased poverty for many, including recipients of debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries who are heavily dependent on their food and agricultural sectors. To this injustice can be added the fact that global dependence on fossil fuels is a major cause of the climate change that is threatening the lives and livelihoods, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

31. Although the widespread *privatisation, deregulation and liberalization* has slowed, it continues to affect food and agricultural industries, their workers and communities, particularly in

Africa. [Water and energy prices continue to rise in](#) some of the world's poorest countries, forcing households to spend a substantial part of their income for safe water and sanitation, and creating particular difficulties for girls and women.

The Public Services International (PSI), together with its research arm, the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU) conducts cutting-edge research into issues relating to energy and water services, as well as other utilities and services. A 2007 study on the Asian Development Bank's involvement in power sector privatisation in Pakistan, [Water as a public service](#), shows how the international community can support governments, public institutions and workers in developing countries to extend and improve water and sanitation services. As well, the PSI published a report in collaboration with the World Development Movement, *Pipe dreams: the failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries* which reviews investment in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and East Asia. Dozens of related publications may be accessed at <http://world-psi.org/>

32. WSSD renewed the commitment in Agenda 21 to **sound management of chemicals** through their life cycle, to ensure that their production and use minimises adverse effects on human health and the environment, uses transparent science-based risk assessment and management procedures and takes into account the precautionary principle. It committed to partnerships and to helping developing countries strengthen capacity for management of chemicals and hazardous wastes; to promote ratification and implementation of international

instruments on chemicals and hazardous waste, including the Rotterdam *Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedures* and the Stockholm *Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants* and encouraged countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for classification and labeling of chemicals. (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 22, 22(a), 22(c), 22(d) and 22(f)*).

33. **The Record since 2002** The production and use of chemicals in agriculture and food is producing a growing number of environment and human health problems. The highest level of exposure normally occurs in the workplace, but agriculturally-dependent communities are also exposed to a “chemical cocktail” spread by wind or water. Ozone depletion, acid deposits, pollution of water, soil and air, and loss of biodiversity are by-products of improper uses of chemicals, particularly ones that are persistent, bio-accumulative, and travel across boundaries. Participation by workers and their trade unions is crucial to proper management of chemicals, but even though participatory methods have yielded enormous public health and environmental benefits, they have yet to be recognized in most national policies. Such key notions as the precautionary principle, clean production, best available techniques, and best environmental practice have yet to be put into practice.

34. Trade unions have collaborated in such international agreements as the Strategic Approach for an International Chemicals Management (SAICM), or Conventions and Agreements under the ILO, UNEP on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), Prior Informed Consent (PIC), Greenhouse Gases under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change (UNFCCC), the International Framework for Chemical Substances (IFCS), the Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety, to mention a few. Good results are expected from the implementation of the Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals (REACH) in the European Union.

H. WSSD outcomes require a review of technological innovation in agriculture and other industries related to CSD-16 themes

WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities Technological innovation is a primary area of concern for all consumers, but particularly for workers who come face-to-face with new products and processes that threaten their health and that of their communities. The WSSD addressed genetically-modified organisms (GMO's) and other innovations involved in the intensification of food and agriculture production and called for action to promote and finance access to and development and diffusion of environmentally-sound technologies and corresponding knowledge, in particular to developing countries on favourable terms, as set out in Agenda 21 Chapter 34. It also called for participation of workers and their trade unions for policies and programmes on environment and development, including for employment, industrial strategies, labour adjustment programmes and technology transfers. (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 99, 100, 100 (a), 100(b) and 102, and Chapter 29.5 of Agenda 21*).

35. **The Record since 2002:** The rapid and mostly-unregulated introduction of new technology in the world's food and agricultural systems continues to threaten the safety and security of our food supply, at the same time as it threatens the health of workers and the natural environment. Liberalised trading patterns buttressed by international agreements make it difficult for countries to protect themselves against inappropriate or dangerous innovations, or to set high food standards. Trade unions have documented threats posed by genetically modified organisms (GMO's), as well as the countless hormones, medicinal additives and other substances daily introduced into our agricultural operations and food supplies. The United Farm Workers of America (UFWA) regularly reports on excessive drug residues in livestock which puts farmworkers are at risk. A UFWA book, *California's Broken Promises: The Laws On The Books Are Not The Laws In The Fields* reveals many of these problems.

The United Farmworkers of America has issued an alert concerning Beef Northwest, one of the largest American feedlots, which fattens approximately 40,000 cows a year as "Country Natural Beef (CNB). The FDA has warned the company about excessive residues of two drugs which violate federal requirements. 60% of Country Natural Beef is sold through Whole Foods, a "natural food" store that claims ethical business practices. The UFWA has appealed to Whole Foods to ensure that the beef sold in their stores does not contain unsafe levels of drugs, as well as to demand that they stand by fieldlot workers who seek union representation.

<http://www.ufwaction.org/campaign/beef>

36. Trade unions have negotiated numerous workplace-centred approaches mechanisms for occupational health & safety that can be readily adapted to technological change and food safety. Joint trade union/employer initiatives for assessment and implementation could address such outstanding issues as: risk & hazard assessment and analysis/methodology in biotechnology, including public health risks; quality attributes for nutritional content, production methods and effective regulatory compliance, and support for the Codex Alimentarius.

Food & Agricultural Workers' Union Kicks Off Food Sovereignty Campaign The IUF at its 2007 Congress adopted policy defining the right of people to sovereignty in the production, distribution and consumption of food, to guarantee sustainable food. The current liberal economic model is forcing countries, once self-sufficient in food, to now import agricultural products. Export-oriented monocultural agro-business encroaches on public land occupied by traditional populations and family farmers, and the mass planting of the African palm and eucalyptus in Latin America, Asia and Africa, as well as sugar cane, palm and soya for bio-fuels destroys jobs, degrades the environment, exhausts natural resources, and destroys family farming. The IUF will support the fight for agrarian reform to preserve family farming and pursue decent standards of living and working conditions. As well, the *Alternative Project for Sustainable Mutual Rural Development* will bring farmers' and farm workers' organisations together to draw attention to the impact of plantations on work and society.

III. Moving forward with workplace action and agreements

WSSD outcomes/Trade union priorities As presented in Chapter 29 of Agenda 21, workers and their organisations possess tremendous capacity for sustainability. The WSSD called for removal of barriers to worker engagement and positive steps towards participation and empowerment, based on decent employment. It called for good industrial relations and partnerships to strengthen the contribution of workplace relations towards sustainable development, including a role for unions in addressing industrial change with environmental collective agreements aimed at achieving sustainable development. Numerous references are made to joint or tripartite mechanisms at the workplace, community and national levels to deal with safety, health, and promote workers' freedom of association according to ILO Conventions which governments are encouraged to ratify and implement. A central theme at WSSD was the focus on "Partnerships", including workplace-based partnerships and programmes, to promote transparency and accountability and information tools (e.g. eco-labels) that reflect human health and safety aspects (*See inter alia JPOI paragraphs 9 (b), 17(d), 14(c to e), Agenda 21 Chapter 29 and 29.7 Agenda and paragraph 25 of the Johannesburg Declaration*).

37. **The record since 2002** Unfortunately, the record shows that far from following through with the WSSD commitment to good industrial relations, many nations have moved in the opposite direction. The casualization and globalization of employment has reduced worker access to trade union representation. More drastically, the 2007 *Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights* compiled by

the International Trade Union Congress documents an alarming increase in the number of people killed because of trade union activities – from 115 in 2005 to 144 in 2006, with the sharpest increases in Columbia, Asia and Africa. Thousands were arrested for participation in actions to protect workers' rights, and many thousands more faced direct intimidation or dismissal. A number of industrialized countries have also moved to further restrict trade union rights¹⁰.

38. Workers continue to assert their rights, with information and support for organising precarious work, and educational resources, such as the recent IUF manual, *Outsourcing & Casualization in the Food & Beverage Industry: Threat to Workers and Unions*. Dialogue is the basis of over 2 million collective agreements negotiated by trade unions worldwide, which are supplemented by European Works Councils and the Framework Agreements that provide a platform of standards that a multinational company must apply wherever it operates. One of the earliest in the food industry was a 2001 agreement between IUF and CHIQUITA, the largest employer of banana workers in Latin America¹¹. As well, a proven industrial relations mechanism is the workplace committee for environment and occupational health, whose primary mandate is to educate members and participate in planning and monitoring for improved company performance. The WSSD also saw a role for workplace assessments whereby trade unions and employers jointly assess workplace performance according to agreed checklists of environmental, resource, occupational, health or social criteria, leading to joint plans of action to identify and resolve problems. (*See inter alia Agenda 21 Chapter 29.11,*

JPOI paragraphs 14(a), 17(b), 1(7d), 127, 104(a),103(b),119, 91(d), 99(c), 22,35, 103(c), 34(b), 34(c), 37(a), 37(a), 47(h), 38(b), 43(g) and 59(a)).

Swedish truckers to perform workplace supply chain assessments Trucking and transport companies in Sweden are participating in nation-wide supply-chain assessments that will determine successful bids for transport or shipping contracts. The national Swedish Labour Organisation (LO-Sweden) and the National Society for Traffic Safety have agreed with more than 100 Swedish retail and manufacturing companies, a major component in the food and agricultural system, to take part in Quality III (QIII) to evaluate transport contract bids based on their performance relative to environment, traffic safety and gas emission indicators detailed in a manual for this purpose. It will award a QIII certificate which a growing number of retail and manufacturing companies have agreed to honour, thus shifting the burden of responsibility from the truck driver to the trucking companies. QIII will scrutinize a companies' air pollution, fuel mileage, vehicle performance and maintenance, as well as workloads, health care, ergonomics and work management, speed policies, equipment safety & supervision, etc. *For more information, contact Lasse Holm:*
lasse.holm@Q3.se

39. Since WSSD, trade unions have increased their capacity for training and information systems developed for occupational health and safety, that are based on democratic forms of worker participation are being adapted for agricultural workers, farmers, communities and consumers. As

well, vocational training, improvement of skills and lifelong learning, such as the 2002 *European Agreement on Vocational Training in Agriculture*, are equipping workers to adapt to changing conditions, as well as improving economic performance. As well, such instruments as enterprise assessments/audits and eco-labels have an educational impact, at the same time as they meet Agenda 21 objectives in the workplace.

40. **Global and regional alliances** Many of the issues in this CSD-16 Review can be linked to deepening globalization, which calls for a collective global response. Trade unions have never subscribed to the popular idea that globalization has rendered nations powerless to serve the needs of their citizens, and continue to see the state as playing a central role in providing such services as education and health care etc. In this regard, we note that the WSSD called for a stronger role for government by taking action at all levels to promote corporate responsibility and accountability, based on the Rio Principles.

German trade union promote sustainable development through joint projects German trade unions undertook one of the world's first sustainable development initiatives when they launched their "Confederation Eco-Audit" in 1994. The Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB) worked together with such environmental organizations as BUND, NABU, WWF to establish an ecological audit that was independent from industry employers. A successful environmental initiative for **sustainable forestry** was undertaken by the IG BAU. The trade union for construction, agriculture and environment workers was

jointly responsible for founding the “**Forest Stewardship Council**” (FSC) in Germany, the first organization to develop a certification system for sustainably-produced wood. The FSC promotes appropriate forest management all over the world, with close attention to the balance between ecological, social and economic demands of forestry.

41. Trade unions continue to pursue strategic alliances with business and other Major Groups, as well as national and sectoral initiatives. A 2005 agreement between the Spanish government, the Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO.), the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) and leading business organizations calls for collaboration on national efforts to meet Kyoto obligations, with attention to social and employment impacts. As well, agreements exist between the Government and the *Confederación General del Trabajo* (CGT) in Argentina, and in Belgium, the government has geared its approach to 'flexible mechanisms' under Kyoto to social and employment policy, dictating that project proposals must apply the principles of the OECD's *Guidelines for Multinationals*, ILO Conventions and the *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*. Trade unions monitor projects to ensure that essential services, are delivered to local populations, as well as for environmental, social and economic impacts.

IUF Intervenes in Key European Pesticide Regulation Vote Pesticide regulation in the European Union not only impacts the lives of workers in one of the world's largest agricultural economies, it also affects global practices. For this reason, the IUF intervened in the EU's "Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides" in October 2007. A proposed EU Regulation for plant protection products as well as a Directive for sustainable use of pesticides" will define a regulatory framework for agrochemicals for years. In an [*Open Letter to Members of the European Parliament*](#), IUF General Secretary Ron Oswald and European Regional General Secretary Harald Wiedenhofer called for assurance that human and environmental health will govern pesticide authorization, that the most toxic pesticides be eliminated or reduced, and that authorizations be based on comprehensive evaluation. See <http://www.sustainlabour.org>

1 See website at: http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_6d.EN.pdf

2 Adopted at the 17th plenary meeting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, on 4 September 2002.

3 Source: <http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/wg2/ar4-wg2-chapter6.pdf>

4 See website at: www.migration-online.de

5 See website at: http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA60/A60_R26-en.pdf

6 See HIV/AIDS and work: global estimates, impact and response, ILO, 2004

7 See Trade Union Country Profiles for HIV-AIDS at:

<http://www.tradeunionsdunit.org/profiles/profiles.php?ID=3&Lang=ENG>

8 Trade Union Statement to COP 12 2006 at http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpP_8Ae.EN.pdf

9 See at: http://www.sierraclub.org/cleanwater/that_stinks/

10 See Human and Trade Union Rights at <http://www.ituc-csi.org>

¹¹ See Framework Agreements at <http://www.ituc.org>