



Trade Union Priorities for the UN “Pact for the Future”

- **Organization’s name:** INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC), which represents 191 million workers in 167 countries and territories, and leads the [UN Workers and Trade Unions Major Group](#).
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Chapeau

- a) The ITUC calls for an explicit commitment of UN Member States to the **UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO Fundamental Conventions and the Agenda 2030**, as well as the three pillars of the United Nations – development, peace and security, and human rights – as interlinked and mutually reinforcing.
- b) The ITUC stresses the need for the UN reform to **increase the accountability, effectiveness and policy coherence of the UN System**, recognizing the responsibilities of Member States with the UN Charter.
- c) The Chapeau should include a specific reference to **decent work for all, freedom of association and collective bargaining** as key tools to fight poverty and inequalities.
- d) Concerning the call of the Pact for the Future to “reinvigorate multilateralism”, such call should refer to an **“inclusive and democratic multilateral system”**, with **social partners** on board at global, regional and national levels, as *conditio sine qua non* to redress the current uneven distribution of power and wealth within and among countries and accelerate action on the SDGs.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

- e) Midway to 2030, the SDGs are more relevant than ever, thus ITUC supports the **call for accelerating the full achievement of the Agenda2030** in Chapter 1. Still, in order to make tangible headway national governments urgently need to step up their SDGs commitments both in terms of policies and financing, while the UN must set up more inclusive multilateral frameworks with stronger accountability mechanisms to monitor progress.
- f) ITUC supports the **reaffirmation of commitments included the 2023 SDGs Summit**, especially: a renewed commitment to decent work for all, social protection and equal pay for work of equal value, and the support for the implementation of the UN Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions with the ILO in the lead.

- g) Trade Unions call for extensive references to accelerated efforts related to the environment. Such references should include Member States' commitment to **Just Transition Programmes** based on tripartite social dialogue and focused on upholding human and labour rights and gender equality, enhancing mitigation ambitions to create decent jobs, delivering on adaptation needs through social protection plans, such as re-skilling and up-skilling programmes and funding mechanisms, and providing the finance for the Loss and Damage facility. Particular attention must also be devoted to the consequences of climate change on health and safety at work, now recognized as ILO fundamental principles at work.
- h) As far as **financing for development** is concerned, the call for fulfilling all commitments under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda should translate into concrete action to:
 - **increased official development assistance (ODA)** to a 0.7% commitment, with 0.15 to 0.20% of GNI for least-developed countries. At least 7% of ODA should be allocated to social protection by 2030, also to support a Global Social Protection Fund;
 - **a transparent and multilateral debt relief architecture, with debt restructuring and cancellations;**
 - **UN-led multilateral coordination on taxation** to tackle tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows, while promoting progressive fiscal reforms to improve wealth distribution;
 - **increased ambition for the reallocation of special drawing rights** of the IMF to support an SDG-led recovery and resilience in developing countries;
 - **aligning of all investments (including climate related investments) with SDGs**, ILO standards, responsible business-conduct and mandated due diligence for human and labour rights, including in bilateral or multilateral Free Trade Agreements.

Chapter II. International peace and security

- i) Given that peace, democracy and rights are the foundation for realising the SDGs, the ITUC calls for UN Member States' **concrete effort to maintain international peace and security** and promote a culture of peace and democracy, in line with the UN Charter.
- j) Chapter 2 should recognize that "**universal, just and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice**", as stated by the ILO Constitution. Peace must be built on the cornerstone of a new social contract, where democracy and inclusive societies, social protection, just wages, maximum working hours and fundamental labour rights are guaranteed.
- k) Concerning disarmament and arms control, ITUC calls for the **universalisation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and for the conversion of current investments in public funding on weapons - including nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction- into investments in social infrastructure to safeguard peace and stability**. Research by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has shown that each country's spending on nuclear weapons could have paid for at least 100,000 intensive care beds, or tens of thousands of healthcare workers
- l) We suggest including a specific recognition of the **role of trade unionists as both human rights defenders and peace builders**, in line with SDG 16. Indeed, as detailed in the [ITUC Global Rights Index](#), trade unions play a key role in many countries where conflict, authoritarianism and far right-wing and authoritarian governments are destroying freedom of association, collective bargaining and the right to strike.
- m) The Pact for the Future should acknowledge **home grown peace solutions**, conflict and mediation approaches rooted in local contexts, that are currently being promoted by local peace builders including labour activists and trade unionists. The unique and special **role of women activists** in catalyzing lasting peace and security, especially in fragile and conflict contexts, should also be

acknowledged.

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

- n) Chapter 3 (and the Global Digital Compact) should call for **policies and regulations governing technology, data and deployment of algorithms that are employment- and worker-friendly, that ensure privacy and people's control over and ownership of their own data**, and that reduce gender, nationality, and class biases, including through promotion of social dialogue and collective bargaining.
- o) We call on governments to enact robust measures to **safeguard the digital rights of their citizens** and to regulate the commercialization of personal data and digital identities. Legal frameworks should regulate artificial intelligence and recognise the differences between individuals' private, shared and official data and provide for collective representation of people in regard to shared data.
- p) We call on governments and international institutions to ensure **universal access to quality internet, proactive and fair digitalisation policies** and rules to ensure labour and union rights, including access to social protection, for homebased, platform and remote workers. The multistakeholder system of internet governance must be retained, and should not be subsumed to the state or the private sector.
- q) Member States should commit to maximise, in every country, the potential of **new technology to create decent and sustainable jobs** that contribute to building a zero-carbon, zero-poverty world. **Technology and knowledge transfer** must be ensured through provisions in loans and grants to enable all countries to undertake just digital transitions negotiated with social partners.
- r) The ITUC calls for a specific commitment to invest in gender-responsive strategies for **skills development and life-long learning**, to integrate workers in modern productive practices related to the digital transition. That should include measures to address women's structural barriers in accessing education and jobs in the digital and STEM economy.

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

- s) Member States should commit to **invest in sectors with decent job creation potential for young women and men, namely the care economy, green and blue economies and the digital and creative economies**, as well as measures to ensure fundamental rights at work for young workers and to promote the transition from informal to formal employment in all sectors.
- t) Governments should commit to establish **universal social protection systems** and strengthen **public services** - in particular education and healthcare - that are accessible to everyone, regardless of employment or contractual status, including young women and men in the informal economy. A comprehensive, coherent and coordinated approach, based on tripartite social dialogue, to articulate education, work, social protection and care policies should be promoted.
- u) Meaningful **youth participation in decision-making processes on economic, social and development policies** should be promoted at all levels. The ITUC will support the mobilisation and organisation of young workers in trade unions and strengthen their voice and representation in tripartite social dialogue and collective bargaining.
- v) Investments in **gender-responsive universal free and quality education, skills development and life-long learning systems are needed**, in order to provide decent jobs opportunities for young people. In this framework, governments should commit to urgently address teacher shortages and ensure that every student has a professionally qualified and well-supported teacher.

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

The ITUC very much supports a **strong take of the Pact for the Future on the reform of the International Financial Architecture**, including:

- w) A commitment from Member States to provide **more and stable flows of financial resources**, that shouldn't rely on occasional and temporary good will of countries. The necessary resources should provide from long term consensual contributions from a redefined and strengthened **global tax system** based on **participatory and democratic governance**, and able to promote stronger cooperation on tax avoidance and evasion. These financial resources should support the development of solid budgetary and fiscal capacities, as well as fair and progressive tax systems for the financing of public services and social protection, in order to gradually gain independence from external financial flows.
- x) A reform of the current **sovereign debt system**, through: (1) ensuring countries in need obtain **sufficient and rapid debt relief** to enable their recovery; (2) **overhauling IFI approaches to debt sustainability** and their **austerity-centered responses**, focusing beyond fiscal deficits to take full account of human rights, SDG and climate commitments; (3) a new UN-led process leading to a permanent **Sovereign Debt Restructuring Mechanism**; (4) binding principles and legislation including mandatory labour rights to ensure **responsible future lending and borrowing**; (5) stronger **transparency** and public scrutiny based on social dialogue to expose hidden, misused, unproductive and illegitimate debt.
- y) Reforming decision-making processes of the **Bretton Woods institutions**, transforming them into more democratic institutions that are responsive to developing countries' needs, not only the richer shareholder countries. The global financial architecture needs institutions that are both well-resourced and democratically governed, and unfortunately our international financial institutions so far fall short.
- z) Reforming the role of the **World Bank and other multilateral development banks**, which should work to promote equitable and sustainable development through public investment. To do that, these institutions need to not only provide resources but to promote accountability and democratic oversight and ensure that their projects advance —rather than undermine— decent work and social justice. This entails a commitment to fundamental labour rights, universal social protection, just transition, and the enforcement of robust investment project safeguards on human and labour rights.
- aa) The new architecture should **strengthen financial stability** with comprehensive, clear, and transparent rules against short term movements, as well the rules for the banking sector, building of safety-nets aiming to the protection of vulnerable economies, which are prone of external shocks or speculative attacks.
- bb) Recognizing the crucial links between social, trade, financial, economic and environmental policies, and coherently with the ILO Centenary Declaration, **trade unions reaffirm the important role of the ILO in the multilateral system including the reform of the international financial architecture**, and its unique contribution in promoting policy coherence in pursuit of its human-centred approach to the future of work through fair and democratic international financial rules that advance social justice.