

Media release:

Workers' rights groups launch campaign for Decent Work in football in the lead up to 2010 World Cup

Trade unions and labour rights activists today launched a world-wide campaign to promote decent work in world football, focusing initially on the construction sector, in the build up to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. This campaign will also link up with initiatives around supply chains in the sporting goods industry.

Meeting at the World Social Forum in Nairobi, Kenya under the banner of the Decent Work, Decent Life* campaign, the organisations issued a Memorandum to the organisers of the World Cup, FIFA, calling for workers' rights to be respected in all the industries associated with the world's most popular game.

"The organisers of the 2010 World Cup, FIFA and the companies which will benefit from the estimated 2.4 billion euros (\$3.1b US) of investment in infrastructure owe it to football fans world-wide to ensure that their game is not tainted by labour rights violations and that instead all those who contribute to the success of this event do so under decent working conditions from the construction phase and onwards", Anita Normark, the General Secretary of Building Workers' International (BWI) said today.

The campaign will mobilise football fans worldwide to put pressure on FIFA, the South African government and the companies contracted to build and/or renovate the ten stadiums required for the staging of the Cup to form agreements with the workers employed to ensure that:

1. The work is undertaken in an environment free from occupational, health and safety hazards;
2. Workers receive a decent wage, adequate social protection and other standards consistent with decent working conditions;
3. Contractors respect core labour standards including the right of workers to collectively bargain and join a union.

"For South Africa, with a 46% unemployment rate (using the expanded definition of unemployment), this event provides an important opportunity to create over two hundred thousand decent jobs that can help alleviate poverty and provide training opportunities. The joint campaign will make sure that this opportunity is not missed," Trenton Elsley from the Labour Research Service in South Africa commented.

The campaign is led by the BWI's South African affiliates and the Labour Research Service (LRS) in partnership with European and global trade unions and NGOs, principally Swiss Labour Assistance (SLA), who will also campaign around the UEFA championships in Switzerland and Austria in 2008 to promote the same aims.

"Football, as well as being the world's biggest game is also a multi-billion dollar industry. From the people who build the stadiums to the women in sportswear factories who sew the shoes, every worker involved deserves their fair share of the World Cup pie. Starting today, we commit ourselves to ensuring that football fans get the clean and fair game they deserve," Conny Reuter, Secretary General of Solidar stated.

More information about the campaign is available at <http://www.solidar.org/doclist.asp?SectionID=6>

Note to picture editors: Following the launch of the campaign, Nobel Peace Prize winner (2004) Wangari Maathai, the first African woman to receive this award for her contribution to sustainable

development, democracy and peace, will take part in a tree planting ceremony. 2010 trees will be planted before the start of the World Cup, drawing attention to both the environmental and human impact of the work. On 23 January, an initial 300 trees will be planted to emphasise the importance of workers' involvement in sustainable forest development and the provision of decent working conditions from tree cutting to construction sites.

The tree-planting ceremony will be followed by an informal football match featuring members of the organisations involved and visitors to the World Social Forum.

*The Decent Work, Decent Life campaign, launched at the World Social Forum on Monday, 21 January aims to put decent work at the heart of the globalization agenda. It is an initiative of the International Confederation of Trade Unions, Solidar, the Global Progressive Forum, Social Alert and the European Trade Union Confederation.

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Organisations launching the campaign:

Building Workers' International
<http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?Language=EN>

International Confederation of Trade Unions
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/>

Solidar
<http://www.solidar.org>

Global Progressive Forum
<http://www.globalprogressiveforum.org/index.cfm>

Social Alert
<http://www.socialalert.org/j/>

European Trade Union Confederation
<http://www.etuc.org/>

Labour Research Service
www.lrs.org.za

Swiss Labour Assistance
<http://www.sah.ch/>