

IndustriALL Global Union's World Conference for the Aerospace Industries

1-2 July, Berlin, Germany

Action Plan

IndustriALL's World Conference for the Aerospace Sector gathered together a Global Alliance of aerospace unions in Berlin, 1-2 July, 2015. The aerospace unions represented at the Conference constitute the most powerful aerospace unions in the world including participants from North American, Europe, South America, Africa, Asia and Australia.

During the Conference, participants discussed the importance of the aerospace industry to the world's economy. In addition to producing high-wage, high-skilled jobs, the industry also produces leading edge technology that has led to the creation of other industries.

Despite the health of the global aerospace industry, delegates noted that aerospace workers which are responsible for the industry's success continue to confront many challenges, including:

- National austerity programs, including those in Europe and "sequestration" in the U.S., that threaten national aerospace industries and that have resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of aerospace and related industry jobs.
- Increasing anti-union and anti-worker extremism that seeks to weaken labor laws where they exist and keep them from being established where they do not already exist.
- Continuing outsourcing of unionized work within countries and outside of countries, often to non-unionized workforces in countries like China or Mexico, where fundamental human rights like the right to form a union and engage in collective bargaining are either not recognized or not enforced.
- Increased unfair competition from countries like China that do not abide by international trade rules and demand the transfer of technology and production in return for aircraft sales, rather than fair trade and a level playing field;

In order to meet these and other challenges, Conference delegates agreed on the following:

1. Build Union Power by:

- Supporting organizing activities, such as the IAM efforts at Airbus in Mobile, Alabama;
- Focusing on gaining union density, improving collective bargaining rights and social dialogue in the aerospace industries in all regions;
- Supporting the development of strong, democratic, independent, representative and sustainable trade unions;
- Building unity among workers and unions at the global, regional and local levels.

2. Confront Global Capital by:

- Supporting affiliates who are fighting for their rights or for decent work against governments and employers in the aerospace sectors;

- Establishing networks of aerospace union leadership with non-company email addresses, that will be accessible for sharing information, calling for international solidarity with respect to campaigns and other work as needed;
- Further developing communications systems where alliance affiliates can electronically inform one another about organizing and collective bargaining developments in each of their countries;
- Building trade union networks for the same or related multinational companies (both horizontally within a company and vertically through its supply/value chain); GKN, Finmeccanica, BAE, and Rolls-Royce are possible examples;
- Using European Works Councils, where they exist, as a vehicle for arguing for common standards based on best practice for all workers in multinational companies;
- Seeking Global Works Councils with multinationals where the opportunity presents itself;
- Developing common messages for aerospace unions, including a demand that all global aerospace and related companies sign global framework agreements that adhere to the principles adopted by IndustriALL's Executive Committee, labelling responsible and compliant companies as well as companies that behave badly;
- Urging trade negotiators to include strong prohibitions on demands for technology and production transfers in return for sales, particularly for countries like China which abuse these practices;
- Coordinating with other Global Union Federations, like the ITF, to further develop and implement the components to carriers program and agree on targets.

3. Defend workers' rights by:

- Continuing to develop a global alliance of aerospace unions and create innovative forms of international solidarity that will be effective in expanding our cooperation, building our capacity to mount global campaigns, and building our collective strength;
- Combatting anti-union, anti-worker efforts, such as the recent attacks on Airbus union members in Spain for exercising their right to strike;
- Fighting austerity programs and attacks on social standards, wherever they emerge;
- Coordinate efforts at including women and young aerospace workers and utilizing their enthusiasm, creativity and energy;
- Making full use, where appropriate, of intergovernmental and international bodies such as the UN, the ILO, and the OECD to ensure that global standards and international expectations are adhered to by aerospace employers.

4. Fight Precarious Work by:

- Sharing best practices on outsourcing and precarious workers;
- Motivating affiliated unions to participate in IndustriALL's "Fight against Precarious Work" campaign;
- Seeking the elimination, at least minimization, of clauses that limit the coverage of precarious workers in collective bargaining agreements.

5. Ensure sustainable industrial employment by:

- Raising awareness of sustainability issues and building a shared view of sustainable industrial policy within the aerospace sector;
- Influencing the shape and purpose of industrial policy development and implementation for the aerospace industries at global, regional and local level;
- Investigating synergies with the sustainability strategies of other IndustriALL sectors, particularly automotive, mechanical engineering, and energy;
- Seeking better international, national, and regional legislative and regulatory frameworks for the protection of occupational health and safety, and the environment;
- Insisting on the full protection of the safety and health of aerospace workers, through the full recognition of their rights to know about all of the hazards of their work and receive the education and training to do it safely, the right to refuse or shut down unsafe work, and the right to be a full partner in the development and implementation of all health and safety policies, programs, risk assessments, and work procedures.

The Conference urges IndustriALL leadership to appropriate greater resources, including sufficient staffing, to the work of its Aerospace Section. There should be various level of activities such network meetings, fact-finding missions and regional workshops in between the World Sector Conferences. It is essential that IndustriALL develop robust programs based on daily efforts that include these activities.

Delegates stressed each and every one of these action items as important priorities for the Aerospace Section. Delegates also urge the IndustriALL leadership to make sure of proper reporting to the affiliates in the Aerospace Section at least twice a year on the progress made on each of these items.

In adopting this action plan, IndustriALL and its affiliates will have clearly defined targets and desired outcomes to make an impact and include components of organizing and building stronger unions.

In the globalized economy of the 21st century, global trade union rights are more relevant than ever before. IndustriALL Global Union and its affiliates will not rest while these rights continue to be under threat.