

## Resolution 8

### GLOBAL ORGANIZING

WE ARE PART OF THE global labor movement and have an important role to play in it to improve workers' rights, and working conditions and terms of employment for all. Working with our sisters and brothers in unions—and those who want to be in unions—we have much to learn and some things to teach. We cannot limit our work or our dreams to the nation's borders.

Corporate-driven globalization continues to threaten the rights of workers worldwide. Globally, workers face stagnant or shrinking wages, weaker social protections and greater job insecurity. As multinational corporations employ more of the global workforce and increase their power, workers and the labor movement face continuing attacks and challenges.

Globalization reaches beyond private enterprise production, manufacturing and employment into such traditional public services as education, health care, transport and communications, to the detriment of the people and communities who rely on them, the accessibility and quality of service, and the professional and working conditions of the direct providers of such services. Characterized by pursuit of profit and the stripping away of professionalism and collective voice and representation for public employees, global privatization leaves in its wake inequality, substantially reduced funding and resources for those who need them most, disenfranchised communities, unaccountable decision making, and a general abdication of government responsibility and accountability for the provision of vital public services.

Globally, only 7% of the formal workforce is unionized into independent unions. Our labor movement nationally and globally has to focus on raising that

number. As American workers in a global economy, our lives and struggles are connected to workers across the world. The global workplace connects us across borders and around the world. Steelworkers in Bahia, Brazil, work for the same multinational as their counterparts in Beaumont, Texas. Woodworkers in Danville, Va., are part of the same global workplace as furniture makers in Sweden. Workers sewing clothes in Vietnam are linked to their counterparts selling those clothes in retail stores. Telecommunication workers in Charleston, S.C., work for the same multinational as their German counterparts. Teachers and education workers in the United States, Chile, Ghana, New Zealand, South Korea, the United Kingdom and across the world share the same struggles to preserve and improve public education as the engine of democracy and economic growth. The interconnectedness of workers globally requires increased education regarding globalization and the impact on workers.

In the United States, it is all too common for corporations to take advantage of weak labor laws and promote an anti-worker and anti-union culture. Multinational corporations with headquarters in Europe, Japan, Korea, Brazil and other countries often come to the United States with the practice of respect for workers' right to organize and collectively bargain. Unfortunately, once in the United States they often adopt the worst practices modeled by U.S. corporations, including union busting, fear and intimidation of workers and firings and reprisals for workers who try to organize and join a union. Despite adhering to higher worker rights standards in their own countries, these multinational corporations take the United States' low road model for worker rights. We will work collectively with U.S. corporations and multinationals that adhere to a high standard of worker rights and strongly campaign against those

that undermine workers' rights and decent working conditions. As part of the global labor movement, we must work with our partners to ensure that the U.S.-led anti-union model does not become the corporate model around the world.

Given the changing global economy and the strategies used by multinational corporations to degrade work and workers' rights, we commit to building strategic alliances with unions and partners worldwide. We will ensure that ILO core labor standards, including the right to freedom of association, will be the foundation for strong national labor laws that are effectively enforced. We will fight for decent work and against the growing use of informal work arrangements that undermine worker rights and good working conditions. Global supply chains require increased research capacity to understand how work is organized globally, how work moves from place to place, and the strategies needed to build worker power from the community level to the global workplace.

Our work with the global labor movement strengthens our organizing capacity at the community, national and global levels. By developing a shared analysis of global supply chains and the threats facing workers worldwide, we can develop effective, strategic campaigns that increase our ability to organize in our workplaces. We commit to working with the global labor movement to develop joint global bargaining strategies and new forms of cross-border representation with workers connected by the same supply chain and working for a common multinational corporation.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Support the collection and sharing of information on select multinationals operating in the United States, including collective bargaining agreements, effective Global Framework Agreements, European Works Council agreements and other standards applicable to the global operations of the corporations.
2. Support the collection and sharing of information between and among international unions and national and global union federations regarding

the activities of multinational companies and organizations and international financial institutions in the promotion of privatization of public services and in the restriction of labor rights.

3. Promote worker-to-worker exchanges that support a greater understanding of the global labor movement and strengthen strategic organizing and campaign strategies.
4. Develop training on the structures of the global labor movement and encourage the use of innovative tools to facilitate discussions on campaigning for stronger and more effective mechanisms for implementation, application and enforcement of international labor standards throughout the world.
5. Develop new strategies to build worker and community power to defend public education and other vital public services from the negative impacts of globalization and privatization, while ensuring a more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization.
6. In cooperation with international and national union partners and global union federations, convene working groups, foster meetings, and develop training with respect to privatization masquerading as "reform" and the sharing of policy research and best practices for preserving and improving the quality and responsiveness of vital public-sector services.
7. Develop a network of supportive researchers and academics nationally and internationally with expertise in priority sectors and campaigns.
8. Support the ongoing training of campaigners, lead organizers and strategic researchers working on campaigns developed through the ITUC Global Organizing Academy. Send experienced trainers to both classroom and mentorship trainings on one-to two-week rotations during crucial moments of priority campaigns.