

Uniting Workers' Strength Across Borders

Submitted by United Food and Commercial Workers, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Laborers' International Union of North America, UNITE HERE and Service Employees International Union

WORKING PEOPLE in the United States increasingly are employed by global corporations which are not based in the United States, and which move capital and labor standards strategies across national borders with ease.

These corporations have become more powerful than individual national labor unions, or even than the countries in which they operate.

The only way to adequately represent workers in those global corporations is to unite them worldwide. Unchecked, these corporations have the ability to drive worker standards down globally. Only with strong, coordinated union representation, do workers have the ability to drive those standards up.

The percentage of the workforce that has a union is declining in virtually every country in the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the central thrust of the federation's international work must be to develop united strategies and action by federation affiliates and unions around the world to ensure that global corporations respect workers' freedom to form unions and negotiate agreements to raise living standards and improve working conditions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federation must expand its international orientation to take on global campaigns against anti-union employers as a means for building worker power; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that as one step in developing joint global strategies and joint campaigns, the federation and its affiliates and unions in other countries should exchange experiences and help each other improve effectiveness in organizing, bargaining and political action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federation's work with global union organizations should be oriented towards a union growth agenda, integrating organizing rights into the fight for fair trade agreements, with labor and worker rights, and environmental standards—and offering organizing capacity assistance to unions engaged in campaigns with global employers. Global framework agreements should contain explicit language which guarantees workers' rights to organize without employer interference and provides a union recognition procedure that is fast and fair.