

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

Fighting for a Just Future:
A Global Vision for Young Transport Workers

ITF YOUNG TRANSPORT WORKERS' CONFERENCE

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INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORT
WORKERS'
FEDERATION

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OUR VISION

Young workers are not just the future of the global economy; we are the present.

Every day young transport workers across all our sectors keep the world moving, helping goods and people get where they need to be. Our labour is essential to a planet which is ever more interconnected.

Despite this, young workers are often marginalised and face significant barriers to secure, decent employment. In many parts of the world, the reliable and rewarding jobs of older generations are a thing of the past. We cannot rely on a fair wage in a stable job or a pension that will maintain our dignity in retirement. The precariousness of our work exposes us to physical and mental harm, and violence, harassment and discrimination remain too common. Meanwhile, climate change and deteriorating multilateral relations – including the scourges of war and imperialism – are making life even harder for us and the generations that will come after.

As trade-unionists we know that the only way to win intergenerational justice is through collective action. We must transform the labour movement and wider society to put the demands of young workers at the centre. We must challenge transport companies, governments, multilateral institutions and even our own unions to guarantee a future of hope, not fear, for young workers.

Meeting in Mumbai on 16-18 October 2023, the ITF Young Transport Workers' Conference has brought together nearly 150 young workers from every transport sector and 48 countries around the world. Here, in a country where a mass movement threw off the shackles of colonialism to become the world's largest democracy, we have shared our experiences of struggle. We have come to understand that, along with great and beautiful diversity, we hold much in common. We are committed to building a world in which everyone can expect a safe and dignified working life, no matter their age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, caste, religion or disability.

The 44th ITF Congress, held in 2018, adopted resolution 20 which calls on affiliates to build and activate youth structures, to prioritise the interests and self-determination of young transport workers. Now, as we approach the next ITF Congress in 2024, we commit once again to playing our leading role in the labour movement. We call on all transport workers, regardless of their age and particularly those in elected leadership positions, to demonstrate their solidarity and join us in fighting for a just future.

INQILAB ZINDABAD!

PATHWAYS TO A JUST FUTURE

Following our deliberations in Mumbai, we submit the following pathways for consideration at the 46th ITF Congress in Marrakesh:

01. Unions affiliated to the ITF should continue to build youth structures and create leadership opportunities for young members. Great progress has been made in building membership, with a 59% increase in declared young members, and in strengthening the voices of young transport workers, with over 50 affiliates out of 199 respondents confirmed creating new structures since 2018. Nevertheless, much more can be done to ensure that our issues and those of future generations are placed at the centre.

Making space for young workers starts with making time for our voices to be heard. We will continue to develop ITF capacity-building programmes to equip more young transport workers with the tools we need to express ourselves, connect with our colleagues and take action in our workplaces and sectors. In particular, we are the generation that can make the most of the opportunities afforded by digital organising to fight and win campaigns.

We welcome the renewed commitment of the General Secretary to ensuring that the ITF is the organisation we need to build our power in the transport sectors. We will achieve youth structures in every affiliated union and a dedicated youth seat on every ITF National Coordinating Committee. We will promote the election of young members to offices beyond those specifically allocated to our age group.

We will promote the leadership of all young transport workers including those from marginalised groups in our societies. The leadership of our unions and our movement must come to genuinely reflect our intersectional sectors and the world in which we live.

02. The struggle for decent work remains at the core of all our activities. ITF research published on International Youth Day 2023 identified again the wide range of challenges faced by young transport workers on pay; occupational safety and health; violence, harassment and discrimination; employment misclassification; education and training; and social security. Campaigning, bargaining and advocating for young transport workers' labour rights must be a priority for the ITF and our unions at all levels, not just for young people.

On the issue of education and training, our movement should prioritise implementing Recommendation 208 of the UN International Labour Organization (ILO) on Quality Apprenticeships. Apprenticeships and other forms of training should be genuine pathways to lifelong decent work, rather than another means for employers to exploit the labour of young workers.

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03. Young transport workers are not all the same; we recognise our diversity and the need to win equality for groups traditionally marginalised in our sectors and wider society. This is not only a matter of justice. Transport workplaces which are not safe and inclusive for everyone are those which sacrifice the contributions different people bring to the world of work, to the detriment of us all.

We reiterate our support for ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment, which applies to everyone but is especially important for marginalised groups. We commit to continue supporting gender equality initiatives in the ITF and our unions, including the vital role which young male transport workers can play in overcoming the intergenerational burden of patriarchy. We also welcome emerging initiatives in support of other marginalised groups, including recent ITF conference resolutions on the rights of LGBT+ and disabled transport workers.

Many young transport workers are internal or international migrants, and we oppose any attempts to divide us on the basis of our nationality, race, ethnicity or religion. We commit to organising migrant workers. We must challenge immigration systems designed to demonise migrant workers while maintaining a reserve of precarious labour for exploitation by transport employers.

04. In the world of work, mental health is important issue for everybody – but it especially affects young workers. We know that young people are more likely to suffer mental health challenges, but we are also the ones leading the way in raising awareness, breaking taboos and working to change the conditions around us for the better.

Recent ITF research demonstrated the damage done to the mental as well as physical health of young transport workers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, we also saw how many of our unions responded dynamically to the crisis in educating, campaigning, bargaining and advocating on mental health issues. There are inspiring examples of young transport workers' leadership in this area from around the world.

We are committed to a collective rather than individual approach to mental health, one which creates safe and healthy environments across all our sectors.

05. Around the world, young people are at the forefront of the struggle against climate change and environmental degradation. We are inheriting a planet immensely damaged by the actions of earlier generations, and climate impacts are already causing more injuries and deaths among transport workers and passengers as a result. It falls to us to ensure that our workplaces and sectors and the wider economy become sustainable.

However, we cannot allow a green transition which merely replicates the same injustices and inequalities of today's society. Instead, we need a just transition – one in which environmental, social and labour issues are tackled together. The position paper from the 2021 ITF youth summer school lays out our demands on governments, employers and our own unions. At our conference, we also adopted resolution 2 on the importance of public transport in climate action.

We will increase our efforts to organise, campaign, bargain and advocate for just transitions across the transport sectors, from our local workplaces to the highest level of multilateral

politics. In support of this, we will strengthen our alliances with youth-led environmental movements across the world. The jobs pledge signed by the ITF and the International Road Union (IRU), representing employers in the road transport sector, is a welcome step in the right direction.

06. One of the major trends in the transport sectors is the rapid growth of the gig economy, and its impact on our working lives and the future of work. Under the guise of flexibility and freedom, multinational companies have launched an assault on hard-won labour standards with the sole purpose of carving out profits. While a new generation of app-based companies have pioneered this business model by denying their responsibilities as employers, the same approach is spreading to many other areas of the transport sectors and beyond. New technologies such as algorithmic management are being used to re-impose historical forms of labour exploitation.

The response of the ITF and our unions is based on worker organising, strategic litigation and legislative reform. The ITF Gig Economy Employer Principles set out our expectations for progressive change, and we will continue to fight to make these a reality in countries around the world. We must organise, we must campaign, we must build power and we must regulate gig companies.

Recent collective bargaining agreements, new laws emerging in Australia, India, Kenya and the European Union, and the failure of Deliveroo's initial public offering all demonstrate the impact of our collective power when we organise. Alongside local, national and regional efforts, we will continue to pursue an ILO standard on the platform economy to establish a global framework for these practices.

07. Everyone deserves dignity in retirement, and pensions are an issue of intergenerational justice. In many parts of the world, governments and employers are withdrawing support from entitlements and effectively barring access to decent pension schemes for young workers. Combined with lower wages and more precarious jobs during our working lives, many young workers are due to retire into poverty.

We demand a just future, where the retirement benefits enjoyed by older generations are maintained across time and extended to everyone at the end of their working lives. Our conference adopted resolution 1 in support of the struggle by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) against government pension reforms, and we will carry this struggle into other countries too.

Our power as young workers comes from our humanity and our fight against injustice, ideals reflected in our statement for peace. Together, we can build a world fit for our future. Together we can fight for, and win, a just future.

RESOLUTION 1: **GUARANTEED** PENSION SCHEME

Proposed by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), seconded by the Garuda Indonesia Flight Attendant Association (IKAGI).

INTRODUCTION

Pension/social security is a necessity and requirement to survive for a worker post-retirement. In the twilight of his/her life, when the earning capability is NIL, financial support is the utmost need with failing health and ever appreciating costs of food, clothing, essential items, healthcare costs etc., A retired worker finds himself in a tight spot with his hands empty and is left in lurch with minimal/no finances to support himself or his family on a day-to-day basis, even after serving for three to four decades in a company/government organisation. Privatisation, contractorisation and outsourcing have gone hand in hand with neoliberal policies piloting and adding fuel to the already extant pitiable condition of a retired worker. While the money value is depreciating with the neoliberal policies being encouraged by powerful financial institutions.

- In India all workers joining service on or after 1 January 2004 were compelled to join the present scheme of National Pension System (NPS). The NPS works is governed by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) working under the directives of the Government of India and is solely responsible to manage the finances of the workers collected from employees and invest in the stock market instruments. A youth joins at the earliest at 21 years into an organised sector and as of 1 January 2023 s/he would be about 40 years with about 20 years left before s/he attains the age of superannuation, i.e. 60 years.
- On superannuation an employee receives 40% of the saving and 60% is used to pay back to the employee as pension based on extant stock market investments from time to time.
- General Secretary, All India Railwaymen's Federation Comrade Shiva Gopal Mishra, also Convener of the National Joint Council for Action (NJCA), formed a Joint Forum for Restoration of Old Pension Scheme (JFROPS) with the representation/participation of workers from all sectors in state and central government to unitedly launch a struggle for achievement of legitimate demand, i.e. 'Scrap NPS and Restore the Defined Guaranteed Old Pension Scheme (OPS)'.
• The JFROPS was constituted on 21 January 2023 with a total of 36 organisations from all the state and central government trade unions and declared in its inaugural meeting that "pension is a fundamental right of a worker".
- On 10 August 2023, a national-level rally was successfully held wherein more than two lakh workers held a protest rally in New Delhi demanding the scrapping of New Pension Scheme.

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- The demands for a guaranteed pension are also being raised in France. As it is known that the recent pension reforms initiated, have led to widespread unrest and protests. It is proposed to raise the retirement age from 62 to 64. An employee is required to serve for 43 years before being able to draw pension post-retirement. The change will be gradual, increased by 3 months per year till the year 2030.
 - Similar proposals are in the offing in UK, Denmark, Cyprus, Ireland and Belgium, to name a few.

MAIN CONTENT

01. In view of the above and the perilous consequences that is bound to affect the social security of the present youth in future and also keeping in view the widespread protests globally, the essence of this motion is being felt.
02. All-India Railwaymen's' Federation (AIRF) seeks support and solidarity from ITF and all affiliates to demand 'sustainable non-contributory pension for all' aimed at financial safety and social security of a worker post-retirement.
03. AIRF also demands the ITF for formation of region-wide/sector-wide committees to work towards a campaign/solidarity action plan to achieve the legitimate demand – 'sustainable non-contributory pension for all'.
04. It may be noted that our view is in consonance with the views of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – "Governments and Employers can and must ensure sustainable pension systems and adequate retirement outcomes for citizens".

RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL

In view of the foregoing, AIRF demands ITF to launch: 'Inter-Sectoral United Struggle for a Sustainable Non-Contributory Pension For All'. Once the resolution is passed in the Youth Conference, we shall forward the same to ITF London for adoption of a final motion in ITF Congress to be held in October 2024 at Marrakech, Morocco.

RESOLUTION 2: YOUNG PEOPLE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Proposed by the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT, Britain), seconded by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF).

INTRODUCTION

Conference believes young people will be most damaged by a failure to act to fight climate change and we welcome the mass activity of young workers around this issue.

Conference notes the ITF statement on sustainable transport that:

“We're moving towards a sustainable transport future, advocating for smarter cities and transport systems connected by publicly owned urban transport. We're fighting for climate justice by ensuring the world acts both ecologically and equitably to protect our planet, while guaranteeing a just transition for workers. “

Conference further notes transport is one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases and that we can cut harmful emissions by expanding public transport and getting more people onto public transport. But in many countries the Covid-19 pandemic has created a public transport crisis, driving down passenger numbers and employers and governments are using the crisis to attack public transport services and jobs and conditions.

Conference believes transport workers jobs are under threat – and with them the skills and services so essential for decent public transport, whilst also denying young workers the opportunity to begin a career in public transport. Conference pays tribute to the young workers who have taken industrial action to defend their jobs, pay and conditions.

Conference notes the public transport crisis particularly impacts on young workers who are less able to afford rising fares and that young workers in many countries lack easy access to reliable bus, rail, metro and ferry services.

Conference further believes if we can make public transport more affordable, available and attractive to young people globally we can begin to introduce a global step change in attitudes that will encourage people to use public transport when they are younger and then throughout their lives, so helping to reduce carbon emissions.

Conference therefore calls on the ITF to strengthen The Future is Public Transport campaign and Safe and Sustainable Rail campaign, and highlight the benefits of affordable, available publicly owned transport particularly from a young people and young workers' perspective, including supporting the fight against climate change.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The key principles of that campaign should be:

- An integrated, publicly owned and accountable rail, bus and ferry network.
- A massive growth in public transport use, delivered by a huge increase in funding.
- Just transition for all workers, meaning guaranteed protection of employment on equivalent conditions, and a global youth employment strategy for public transport.
- Ending the damaging outsourcing of vital public transport functions, such as rail cleaning, maintenance and engineering.
- Strengthening the democratic participation of young workers in decision-making about public transport.

Conference also calls on the ITF to coordinate examples of the successful campaigns by affiliates and actions by governments to increase public transport use and investment and share these examples amongst affiliates' young-worker members.

STATEMENT FOR PEACE

Proposed by the the Merchant Marine Officers' Union, Chile, supported by the Youth delegates of the ITF Young Transport Workers' Conference.

Dear Companions,

My name is Francisco, I represent the Merchant Marine Officers' Union, from Chile. I would like to start by saying "good morning", but unfortunately for many people in Gaza today will not be a good day.

While we are gathered here, working together for a better future and enjoying the comforts of this beautiful hotel, hundreds of people are losing their lives due to the wars that are currently destroying the world. Tonight in Gaza, at least 500 innocent people lost their lives due to an explosion in a hospital.

STOP KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE, PLEASE STOP KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE.

Fathers, mothers, young people and children have died while fighting for their lives in a hospital. It seems ironic, but it is the truth.

I wonder: we are in the 21st Century, there must be other ways to resolve our conflicts. I stand in solidarity with the testimony of our companion from Palestine, and I would like us to raise our voices for peace together. Are you with me?

STOP THE WAR! STOP THE WAR! STOP THE WAR!

As young transport workers, we cannot remain silent in the face of these atrocities, which in one way or another touch our lives. Just as Horacio said yesterday, "we young people are not the future, we are the present".

Let the world know that more than 170 young people, representatives of 74 countries gathered in Mumbai, reject war and raise their voices for peace.

PEACE FOR GAZA, PEACE FOR UKRAINE, PEACE FOR THE WORLD!

SOLIDARITY! SOLIDARITY! SOLIDARITY!

ROAD TRANSPORT YOUTH JOBS PLEDGE

Signed by Stephen Cotton on behalf of the ITF and by Jens Hügel on behalf of the International Road Union (IRU).

Road transport is at pivotal juncture, facing the twin challenges of climate change and of building long-term stability based on good-quality jobs. As we look forward, the approach to young workers is critical. We need a fully engaged and highly skilled workforce operating within a decarbonised and resilient system to keep our societies and essential supply chains moving.

We need to address dramatic labour shortages in some countries and a critical shortage of decent jobs. Ensuring decent working conditions and social dialogue underpinned by fundamental labour rights is key to making road transport jobs more attractive, and bringing in, reskilling or upskilling, supporting and retaining the young workers the future of road transport depends on.

Achieving this will take collective action by employers, workers and governments. The IRU and the ITF are committing today to work together towards a just transition for young road transport workers, and to improve access to the sector and the attractiveness of the profession.

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