

To all UNI Global Union Affiliates
To members of the UNI Global Union World Executive Board (titular and substitute members)

Climate change is union business

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to you as a follow up to [Resolution N°15](#). The Trade Union Movement steps up for Climate Change, which was adopted at the UNI World Congress in Cape Town in 2014.

We are facing a major challenge. The facts and science are there. Our global emissions of greenhouse gases continue to climb and the business as usual scenario takes us to a global temperature increase of +3 to 4°C compared to pre-industrial levels. This scenario would trigger an unprecedented humanitarian crisis with millions of refugees and threaten our very existence. We need to stay below +2°C if we want to give humanity a chance to adapt to the already on-going climatic changes.

The root cause of the climate crisis is the same that triggered the financial crisis: market failure, short-term thinking in financial markets and CEOs fuelling their pay with winning short-term returns on investment. Only 90 companies are responsible for two thirds of global emissions. Governments spend as much money on fossil fuel subsidies as on health care. Climate change is a threat to democracy and peace.

This year is a crucial year. World leaders will meet in Paris at the UNFCCC COP21 from 30 November to 12 December 2015 with the aim of reaching a global agreement on climate change. 194 nations need to agree on how they will share their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at national and global levels and to mobilise financial resources to help developing countries adapt to climate change.

This is a call for action. Climate change is our business: it is union business. In the lead up to Paris we need to push for mitigation, adaptation, finance and reporting every five years. Last but not least we need to mobilise people.

On 14 and 15 September, the ITUC brought together 250 union leaders from around the world including from UNI. The Trade Union Climate Summit endorsed three key demands for the Paris Agreement calling on governments to:

- put back the language of “just transition” that has been stripped from the draft agreement;
- raise ambition before 2020 and invest in the potential of jobs and climate action and commit to a binding review of effort;
- support the most vulnerable with promised financial commitments.

As a trade union movement, we are asking for a just transition towards a low carbon economy, including the greening of jobs, green skills, social protection and funding for the poorest and most vulnerable people and nations.

What does it mean more concretely and what can you do about it? There are three ways for you to do your part:

1. Make your voice heard and mobilize towards COP21

- **Sign up to the ITUC [Climate Justice Pledge](#):** if you have not yet done so, you can sign up for the climate justice pledge as an organisation and ask other leaders to do so too. The UNI Global Union pledge includes a:
 - a. Call for a phase out of fossil fuel subsidies;
 - b. Call for a shift in pension funds investment portfolio of at least 5% towards climate investments;
 - c. Call on governments to mobilise funding and contribute to 110 billion dollars/year by 2020 for international climate finance;
 - d. Call on governments to adopt more ambitious emission reduction targets to have chance of limiting global warming to maximum +2°C;
 - e. Call on governments to reach zero carbon emissions globally by 2100.
- **Join the #unions4climate campaign:** UNI Global Union will take part in the #unions4climate campaign through social media during the World Executive Board meeting, on 11 November 2015. If you would like us to highlight any of your climate activities during this day please let us know.
- **Join the climate march on 29 November and take part in the organising committees:** This will be the day before the start of the COP21 and the best moment to pressure our leaders to agree on a strong climate deal in Paris. There will be people's rallies in many cities around the world and we strongly encourage you to take part in the local organising committees. Let us make this the biggest climate mobilisation ever. To find out more about what is happening in your city you can click on this [map](#).
- **Contribute to the debate on just transition:** ITUC is organising two days of debate with trade union leaders from around the world on 3 and 4 December near Paris. If you would like to contribute or organise an event, please get in touch with us and Anabella Rosemberg (ROSEMBERG@tuac.org).

2. Include climate issues in the bargaining process

We already need to think about the implementation of mitigation plans after the COP21. We have a seat at the table through social dialogue in many sectors and companies. Let us use our strength and ensure that climate change becomes part of the bargaining process between employers and employees. Having an ongoing dialogue will ensure that transition towards a low carbon economy is also creating decent jobs for all. We have drafted an example of a climate clause which could be included in collective agreements and global framework agreements:

"Company X reaffirms its commitment to reduce its carbon emissions and its global environmental footprint to contribute to the protection of natural resources and climate.

Company X and trade union X agree to set up a regular dialogue to set and review emission reduction targets on an annual basis, with the goal of becoming carbon neutral as soon as possible and as far as possible along the supply chain.

The parties will also look into new opportunities to ensure a just transition by creating new jobs, greening existing jobs, developing new technologies, encouraging the use of renewable energy sources, saving energy and providing training on new skills for its employees.”

3. Green your workplace

By greening our workplaces we can also walk the talk and make a very real and tangible difference. There are many things you can do to reduce your carbon emissions as an individual and as an organisation, ranging from saving energy in the office building to avoiding high-emitting modes of transport and using videoconferencing services. You can use this practical [step by step guide](#) by the ITUC to start the transformation.

4. Tell us what you are already doing and join the UNI climate list

Last but not least, if you are already doing something around climate change, please let us know so that we can share best practices among affiliates and build up synergies within the organisation. We also encourage you to send us the name and contact details of the person who will work as your union climate focal point to include in our UNI climate list and keep each other informed.

If you have any questions, please contact our staff team:

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Let's embark together on this exciting journey towards a low carbon economy and a safe climate future!

Yours sincerely,



Philip J. Jennings
General Secretary, UNI Global Union