

Labour Gets Support From World Leaders at ILO Meeting

A number of prominent world leaders have addressed this year's 98th Session of the International Labour Conference, which is taking place over a three week period in Geneva, Switzerland. These world leaders include Mr. Luiz Ignacio Lila de Silva, President of Brazil, Ms. Christina Fernandez de Kirchner, President of Argentina, and Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France. Mr. Bruce Golding, the Prime Minister of Jamaica will address the Conference tomorrow. Also addressing the Conference was Mr. Rennie Demas, Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development.

The Minister of Labour is leading Trinidad and Tobago's delegation to the Conference, which also includes Senator Michael Annisette, Mr. Vincent Cabrera, General Secretary of NATUC representing Labour and Mr. Walton Hilton-Clarke and Mr. Reuben Mc Sween representing employers. The annual Conference which is the largest in the world is organised on a tripartite basis with countries being represented by workers representatives, employer representatives and government representatives.

The French Prime Minister, Mr. Sarkozy received a standing ovation from the Conference for his fighting words in support of labour. He praised the ILO for working towards the happiness of workers at the workplace. He condemned financial capitalism for causing the world financial crisis. He said that the central issue is to provide a framework for globalisation, based on social justice. The French Prime Minister declared that "we will either have justice or revolution". He said that labour is not a merchandise to be sold like goods. He called on the IMF, WHO and ILO to be given new powers to ensure that standards are implemented. He proposed the creation of a World Environment Organisation.

He called for a complete overhauling of the world's financial system including hedge funds. He said that the world has passed a total catastrophe and we must not return to that catastrophe. Mr. Sarkozy said that the conditions of labour are at the heart of the crisis and it is France's duty to lead the world to a new global governance.

In the Service of the Working Class

Vincent Cabrera
General Secretary
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