



# 11<sup>TH</sup> AFRECON

HAMMAMET, TUNISIA

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2009

## YOUNG WORKERS' WORKSHOP

### TOMORROW'S PROGRAMME

**AFRECON**  
9H00-12H30

#### WORKSHOPS

**WATER AND  
SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT**

**TRADE UNION  
RIGHTS**

#### LUNCH

**AFRECON**  
14H00-18H00

#### WORKSHOPS

**ELABORATE  
ALTERNATIVES TO  
PUBLIC SECTOR  
REFORMS:  
CASE STUDIES**

**MILLENNIUM GOALS,  
QUALITY PUBLIC  
SERVICES AND  
ALLIANCE BUILDING**

**T**he PSI young workers workshop was held on 24 March 2009 in Hammamet, Tunisia. Fourteen young members were present at the workshop representing young unionists from PSI affiliates throughout Africa and Arab countries.



Donald Mokgwe, Botswana Public Employees Union, chaired the round table and Sani Baba Mohamed from PSI regional office in Togo and Che Cyprain from PSI sub-regional office for Southern Africa facilitated the debates.

The importance of recruiting and organising young workers for the future of the trade union movement was once again stressed as



well was the importance of young trade unionists' contribution to the present. Indeed, in a global context of soaring unemployment rates, increasingly precarious jobs and poor working conditions, recruitment of young workers into trade unions is, in general, declining.



The participants had a common motivation for joining their trade unions: injustice and a strong wish for a better life. All came to the conclusion that integration of the young workers in trade unions has to become core priority for the movement in order to ensure a effective

representation at the workplace and to bargain successfully for decent working conditions including fair and equal pay, non discrimination, etc.

The young workers described the activities for young workers taking place in each sub-region and identified other activities which should be implemented, as for instance, capacity building to empower young unionists, leadership training, administrative and financial management and training on trade union strategies, sensitisation of trade union leaders to the issues facing young workers.

Ghassan Slaiby, PSI Sub-regional Secretary for Arab countries, ran a very animated session on “recruiting and organizing young workers”. The group identified one of the main problems for young unionists as not only poor recruitment levels but also the lack of participation or inclusion of young workers in the trade union’s activities. The causes of this lack of participation varied from country to country but included fear of retaliation by employers as well as victimisation by trade union leaders, lack of information about the role of trade unions and lack of knowledge about rights at work.

Karin Ström from PSI affiliate ST, Sweden, gave participants presentation on how her trade union is seeking to attract young workers by offering cheaper memberships fees to students and services for young workers entering the labour market such as a free telephone legal service.

The young unionists concluded their workshop by compiling recommendations to be put to AFRECON (annexed but not yet adopted).



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO AFRECON FROM THE YOUNG WORKERS' WORKSHOP

**A**ffiliated organisations to develop strategies for recruitment of young workers including

- Member recruitment drives in the tertiary institutions
- Young worker's education, capacity building and empowerment in trade union rights
- Conduct fund raising activities for young workers' programs, including capacity building
- Facilitate exchange programs within affiliates
- Facilitate networking

Priority areas for PSI affiliated organisations

- Amendment of union constitutions to guarantee young workers' participation in all decision making structures
- Ensure dedicated budgets for young workers' programs
- Setting up of young workers structures
- Involving young workers in all collective negotiations.
- Ensure that the recommendations from the young workers are properly implemented

## R recommendations to PSI

PSI should:

- Fund capacity building programs specifically targeted at young workers
- Facilitate exchange programs for young workers within affiliates
- Facilitate networking for young workers

Recommendations to AFRECON on areas to be amended in the Regional Constitution to reflect young workers issues:

- Article 6.2.3 (c) - Titular of the young workers representing the above named Sub-Regions
- Under Item 7 - Advisory Committee, that young workers committee should be added
- Item 7.3.2 - The chairperson of the women and the young workers' committees of the various affiliates in the country shall have seats on the national coordinating committees.