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No climate change talks in Qatar without labour rights

The international union movement has called on the parties to the UNFCCC to reconsider their decision for Qatar to host the 2012 UN Climate Change talks.

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary International Trade Union Confederation said the announcement from the climate change talks in Durban sent waves of concern through labour unions around the world as Qatar has been a permanent barrier in climate negotiations.

“The international union movement will not accept climate change talks being held in a country which does not respect workers rights.

“Migrant workers in Qatar have no labour rights, wages are exploitative and occupational health and safety risks are extreme.

“Success in tackling climate change can only be achieved where workers rights are respected.

“It is not possible to tackle climate change effectively unless people are fully involved in the decisions that affect them.

The blanket denial of workers’ rights by Qatari authorities sends the wrong message to governments, unions and civil society working together to tackle climate change, and risks causing further delay in climate change action,” said Sharan Burrow.

Qatar was also controversially selected to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022, leading to migrant workers building nine new stadiums and refurbishing three in ten years.

Problems with labour rights have been brought to the attention of FIFA who are raising the international unions concerns with Qatari Authorities.

“Action on climate change and workers rights is too important for the 178 million workers we represent, their families and communities and must not be derailed by the shifting of climate talks to Qatar, ” said Sharan Burrow.