

RESOLUTION 4.6

SUPPORT OF UNITED NATIONS EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS

Proposed by AFT/United States, CSQ/Canada, CTF/Canada, NASUWT/United Kingdom, TUI/Ireland

Original language: English

1. **NOTING**, that more than 60,000 men and women of the United Nations, working in 15 different U.N. agencies, are represented by several trade unions and staff associations, and are deployed worldwide on behalf of such organizations as the U.N. Headquarters, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Food Programme; and
2. **REALIZING**, that these staff workers, though employed in different countries, share many of the same concerns over career-affecting conditions of employment, including choice of assignment, mobility, family security, and travel and safety; and
3. **UNDERSTANDING**, that the work of U.N. staff will never be without risk, but that every measure must be taken to reduce those risks to the minimum and ensure that workers are protected; and that tragically all too many U.N. staff have been threatened, attacked or killed while serving in the world's most dangerous places and whilst also seeking to ensure access to education as a human right; and
4. **ACKNOWLEDGING**, that the ILO, where unions are equal partners in a tripartite framework, promotes workers' rights to organize unions and guarantees collective bargaining in its international conventions "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87)" and "Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98)"; and
5. **RECOGNIZING**, that there has been established a labor-management process for negotiating agreements over the terms and conditions of employment; however, in recent years, this procedure has been broken as a result of management walking away from the process and refusing to recognize consensus dispute resolution; and
6. **BELIEVING**, that by ending these discussions unilaterally, the U.N. administration has significantly damaged the few rights its workers had possessed; and
7. **ADDING**, that workers' rights must also include the right to raise issues of fraud and abuse where they might occur, but whistleblower policies at the U.N. are inconsistent, ineffective, and weakened by arbitrary loopholes; the non-partisan, public interest group, the Government Accountability Project, concluded that they are so weak as to be "officially inoperative."

The Seventh World Congress:

8. **STANDS** in solidarity with the 60,000 men and women who work for the United Nations worldwide, and honors their deployment often in dangerous theaters of war, natural disasters, or epidemic emergencies, in such places as Afghanistan, Haiti, South Sudan, Gaza, Iraq and Liberia.
9. **DEMANDS** that the United Nations, and all agencies and bureaus associated with the U.N., bring all workers under the unified protections afforded other workers worldwide, within the purview of the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the

fundamental conventions, "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87)" and "Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98)."

10. **URGES** the U.N. to fully and forcefully maintain its duty to safeguard the lives of all its workers by working with member states to strengthen established security measures, and enhance security in the field, including by the addition of needed security staff, equipment, and communications;
11. **SUPPORTS** the strongest protections for U.N. employees, contractors, and peacekeeping forces who uncover illegal or wasteful practices in the workplace, yet have no way to report them for fear of retaliation, demotion, or dismissal; the U.N. must bring about authentic whistleblower reform, including widening whistleblower protections, and investigating any retaliation against those who invoke them.
12. **MANDATES** Education International to inform the Secretary-General and the heads of all U.N. agencies of our support and solidarity for the rights of the U.N. workforce.
13. **CALLS** on EI to update its leadership and affiliates, on a regular basis, of progress made to improve workers' rights within the U.N. system worldwide.