

**Modes of Organising Global Labour solidarities:  
Exchanging Experiences, Developing new  
Perspectives**



**International Workshop on the eve of the World  
Social Forum 2015 in Tunis**

**Topic**

The basic function of trade unions is to reduce competition between workers in order to secure the reproduction of labour-power. However, the history of capitalism shows that the level of solidarity among workers was always contested: Workers can organise themselves inside a plant, at the level of a corporation, an industry, a nation-state or internationally. Under the conditions of capitalist competition workers can always try to realise their interests collectively or individually, in solidarity with others or against others. Since the 1970s capitalist production has changed dramatically. The internationalisation of capital, outsourcing and offshoring of work, the development of global production networks show the limits of the traditional forms of organisation of the labour movement which are confined to the level of the plant, the corporation, the industry and the nation-state.

In this workshop we would like to discuss past and current practices of organising beyond the borders of the nation-state. We would like to explore the possibilities and the difficulties of new forms of organisation in order to change workers conditions of life and to support their collective emancipation. For this purpose, we will start with some short introductory remarks and a panel discussion on experiences of unions in different parts of the world with cross border organising. Based on this overview, we will focus on concrete examples: The first slot will deal with the experiences of the Global Union Federation IndustriALL. The second will focus on recent efforts in uniting the working class of the south and the north. In this slot reference will be made especially to efforts of cooperation between unions from the south and the north to organise precarious labour in a combined effort.

**Guiding questions are:**

(1) What concrete experiences does your union have with cross border (regional, international) organizing and networking? (2) How do you try to organize workers along the global value chains? (3) How is the utility of the present global union federations (sectorial and inter-sectorial) evaluated by your organisation? (4) Which forms of international organisation (in the field of labour) do you see as appropriate in the future, and how do we might get there?

The workshop aims on a high level of participation and on sharing concrete experiences of unions in and with global unions and international union networks. Thus we like to welcome unionists active in the field of international labour cooperation, to present their evaluation on modes of current global labour solidarity and suggestions for further action.

**Timeframe**

23<sup>rd</sup>: 16.00 – 19.00 (3 hours workshop, afterwards dinner)

24<sup>th</sup>: 09.00 – 16.00 (6 hours workshop, 1 hour break)

**Venue**

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung North Africa Office; 23, Rue Jughurta; Tunis 1082; Tunisia

**Preliminary Program**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
<b>23 March</b>		
16.00– 16.30	Tea break / Welcome	
16.30 – 16.40	Welcome	<i>Welcome notes, administrative remarks, schedules</i>
16.40 – 17.10	Introductory round, collecting expectations	<i>Everyone presents him / her self</i>
17.10 – 17.20	“Why we need to discuss experiences of global labour solidarities and develop new perspectives”	Short input: Florian Wilde (RLS)
17.20-19.00	Exchange of experiences with cross border organizing - comparison of experiences from different continents	TUC (Ghana), DISK (Turkey), SINTRAJAP (Costa Rica) Moderation: Stefanie Kron (RLS)  <i>Moderated panel discussion, followed by plenary discussion</i>
19.00 – 19.10	Conclusion / administrative affairs	
19.10 – 20.30	Joint dinner	
<b>24 March</b>		
9.00 – 9.10	Welcome / administrative affairs	
09.10 – 10.40	Experiences with global union organizing: The example of IndustriALL	Input by Industriall; Comments by NUMSA (South Africa) and CNT (Guinée) Moderation: Florian Wilde (RLS)  <i>Presentation, followed by comment and plenary discussion</i>
10.40 – 11.00	Tea break	-
11.00 – 12.30	“Towards Joint Trade Union Action in the 21st Century: Recent efforts in Uniting the Working Class of the South and the North in an Imperialist World”	Input: NTUI (India) Comment: CILAS (Mexico); Novi Sindikat (Croatia) Moderation: Thomas Sablowski (RLS)  <i>Presentation, followed by comments and plenary discussion</i>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch break	-
13.30 – 14:45	Which forms of international labour organizing do we see as appropriate for the future, and how do we might get there?	Moderation: Florian Höllen (RLS)
14:45 – 15.00	Break	Break
15.00 – 16.00	evaluation	Moderation: Florian Höllen (RLS)
16.00	WSF Demonstration	Joint departure to the demonstration