

Trade Unionists against competition for location and world-wide wage dumping

Stop the G 8 Summit – Trade Unions on to the global arena!

As trade union members from many countries we are part of the protest against the G-8 summit 2007 in Heiligendamm. Like no other international institution, these annual summit meetings are symbols of world-wide neoliberal dominance. World economic summits serve global coordination and division of power. That way they stabilise the neoliberal world economic order with its ever worse consequences for the majority of the people. An elitist minority in that context appropriates the wealth that millions of people produce.

We support the protest against imperial power strategies and wars, against the predatory exploitation of nature and the ever more threatening climatic change. As against its promises, global capitalism drives humanity into existential crisis. Without peace, nothing is worth it. And without an answer to the threatening climatic catastrophe nothing is worth it either.

The globalisation of capital and labour markets has placed the employees in a world-wide competition against one another. Without scruples, the workforces of individual countries, branches and locations are played out against one another – in a dumping competition for jobs, working conditions, wages and human dignity. As union members we therefore demand:

- The **core work norms** are a human right and must be imposed as human rights. Among them there count the rights to the founding of trade unions and to the conduct of

collective bargaining, the abolition of child and forced labour in work and profession. Infringements must be made public and be followed by harsher sanctions.

- **Legal maximum work time:** Work redistribution is the decisive means against an unemployment 200 million high and 1.4 billion “working poor” world-wide. Productivity advances must become social progress by way of cuts in work time: the 30 hour-week being the goal, the 40 hour-week must become the world-wide legal maximum labour time.
- **Minimal wages** that already exist, even if inadequately so, must become world-wide minimal standard. At 60% of the respective national average wage, they must be allowed to unfold global validity.
- **Systems of public existential services and guarantees for the future** must be built up or respectively protected against privatisation and commercialisation. Health, education, public security and the natural bases of life should not become merchandise.
- **Business protection and participation rights** must be regulated by law in order to guarantee the employees minimal protection against arbitrary treatment by the employers.

The relationship of forces between capital and labour has dramatically shifted to the benefit of capital in the course of globalisation. Global financial markets and firms acting across borders in the meantime dispose of a

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gigantic potential for extortion face to the nation states (tax and environmental dumping, deregulation of labour markets) and face to the trade unions organised solely on the basis of the nation state.

We have to get out of this historical defensive by staying right on the heels of capital, overcome linguistic barriers and mutual ignorance and recognise the communalities in our interests, cooperate across frontiers at all levels of trade union activity and get together for protest and resistance, for instance

on occasion of the strike demonstration against the Bolkestein directive, of the international strikes of the harbour workers and sailors and now in June 2007 against the World Economic Summit in Heiligendamm.

We know that we are still at the beginning of this road. Yet we also know that only by the overcoming of competition among each other and with the help of globally acting trade unions we will be able to effectively counter globally acting capital.

Signatories

(Selection, an official publication with all first signatories will follow)

Detlef Baade, Business Councillor/Schweb representation/K-Sbv, Hamburg
Hagen Battran, GEW District chairman, Freiburg
Gerd Buddin, Vice chairman of the trade union ver.di, District of Berlin
Patrick von Brandt, ver.di Regional district youth secretary, Lower Saxony-Bremen
Jeanine Geißler, ver.di youth education secretary, Hannover
Werner Dreibus, authorised representative of IG Metall, Offenbach
Roland Hamm, first authorised representative, IG Metall, Aalen
Ralf Krämer, ver.di trade union secretary, Berlin
Walter Mayer, IG Metall trade union secretary on pension, Berlin
Bernd Riexinger, ver.di District executive chairman, Stuttgart
Werner Sauerborn, ver.di trade union secretary, Stuttgart
Heidi Scharf, first authorised representative IG Metall, Schwäbisch-Hall
Michael Schlecht, ver.di trade union secretary, Berlin
Berno Schuckart, collegial representation, ver.di Hamburg
Sibylle Stamm, ver.di regional chairman, Baden-Württemberg
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and many others.....

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