



With the support of the
national trade union confederations
of the G7 countries

Our jobs, our planet

Trade Union Statement to the G7 Environment Summit Bologna, Italy, June 2017

The current economic model is unsustainable from an environmental, social and economic point of view. Trade unions are at the forefront of demanding global changes so that people and the planet are protected and quality jobs are made available for all.

The achievement of climate and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) opens up enormous employment opportunities, starting from the sectors of food and agriculture, cities, energy and materials, health and wellbeing. It is not therefore about choosing between jobs and environmental and climate protection, but managing a Just Transition towards a new sustainable economy, guaranteeing that it is not workers and their communities who pay for the change.

In 2015 government leaders from all over the world negotiated the Paris Agreement, which will regulate international climate action from 2020 onwards. In it, governments committed to take action to contain global warming below 2° C, and make efforts to limit it at 1.5° C, in order to avoid irreversible phenomena with devastating effects for all of humanity. They also confirmed their commitment to mobilise 100 billion USD by 2020 to support climate action and adaptation in developing countries and use this figure as a floor for future commitments.

The international trade union movement stands strong in calling for ambition from our political leaders on climate because we all know: “there are no jobs on a dead planet”.

The Paris Agreement united governments in a multilateral response to the climate challenge, and while much still needs to be done to ensure it reaches its objectives, it must remain the space where governmental climate ambition is to be measured and reported.

Today, we reaffirm once again our commitment to support ambitious climate action and the Paris Climate Agreement. Pulling out of the Paris climate agreement or from ambitious climate pathways equals abandoning a cleaner future powered by good jobs.

That said, we know millions of workers and families still depend on a fossil-fuel-based economy for their jobs and livelihoods. They have generated the energy required for today’s prosperity. Governments and employers, with workers and their unions, must sit

together and commit to protect our future through a Just Transition strategy; a plan which guarantees decent work for all.

Just Transition is a process which will take time: there are some actions we can take immediately and governments, businesses and unions should work together to do so. Other actions and policies will take a longer time to be deployed and have an impact. We must therefore start this process now and make progress as rapidly as we can, as climate change will not stand still. The inclusion of a just transition in the Paris Agreement is an important first step.

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G7 countries should lead among their government peers in:

- Ensuring that their respective nationally determined contributions (NDCs) deliver on the global emission target of a 2°C temperature increase or less; and
- Taking a leadership role in opening a dialogue with trade unions and employers on the means to secure a Just Transition for workers and communities, including support to the creation of “Just Transition” Funds in order to achieve more ambitious climate targets.
- Support investments in sectors with high employment creation and environmental protection potential, such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, with particular attention being paid to energy poverty, sustainable mobility, the upgrade of transport infrastructures among other investments.
- Strengthening environmental and climate priorities in their countries’ budgets and in international cooperation;
- Developing an environmentally-sound industrial strategy, which puts decent work and low emissions and efficient use of resources as equally important priorities;
- Strengthen regulations of environmentally-sensitive industrial processes and reduce the use of toxic substances;
- Increase the level of funding for supporting local populations facing extreme weather events, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, so that they are not forced into migration.

Trade unions ask governments to take action and to coordinate to further the momentum for industrial and economic transformation towards an economy that respects the environment, delivers decent work for all and is socially inclusive, and this starts from the confirmation and implementation of the Paris Agreement and the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.