

Star BUSINESS

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Trade unions meet in Vienna to create new confederation

AFP, Vienna

Delegates from 360 trade unions in 150 countries are meeting in Vienna to create a new and broader entity, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), aimed at stepping up opposition to globalisation by ending decades of strife among unionists.

Organisers hope the consolidation will strengthen trade unions in countries where their existence is weak or under threat while promoting more effective measures against practices of multinational companies considered harmful to workers.

One of the world's largest trade

union movements, the World Confederation of Labor (WCL), dissolved itself on Tuesday and is to be regrouped under the new body.

A second organisation, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), was expected to take similar action.

Together, the WCL and ICFTU represent more than 180 million workers worldwide.

The new ITUC, which will be formed on Wednesday at the start of a three-day congress in the Austrian capital, will also incorporate a dozen national trade unions without any international affiliation, such as the French CGT or the Argentinian CTA.

The giant will ultimately embrace 190 million unionists worldwide.

Staying away from the ITUC however will be the Communist-affiliated World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), which after the WCL and ICFTU is the third largest trade union group in the world.

With 145 syndicates and 42 million workers, the WFTU said it was defending "a class line" and criticised the ICFTU for making "compromises and concessions."

But ICFTU general-secretary Guy Ryder, who is expected to head the new organisation, said its creation was a "historic" event after

decades of strife among trade unions.

"(The ITUC will) build world trade union strategies to counter those (strategies) of capitalism," he said, adding that globalisation had led "over twenty years to a major fall in revenue, to the detriment of salaries and for the benefit of capital."

The ITUC will have to "confront multinational companies" and "support trade unionism where it is weak and oppressed," Ryder said.

"Trade unionism is weakening under pressure from neo-liberal globalisation," according to WCL Secretary-General Willy Thys, and is losing ground both in former European strongholds such as Britain and Germany and in the United States where its membership has been halved in 15 years.

Trade unionism is also under threat in Central America, Africa and in parts of Asia.

To strengthen its influence, the ITUC hopes to build closer ties with "civil society" groups, such as non-governmental organisations, and to take part in anti-globalisation forums and organise worldwide mobilisations.

The congress will open on Wednesday with a speech by Austrian President Heinz Fischer before the new confederation adopts its charter.

On Thursday, the directors-general of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Pascal Lamy, and the International Labour Organization (ILO), Juan Somavia, will speak during a day of debates.

The head of the ITUC will be elected on Friday when Ryder gives the closing speech of the congress.



PHOTO: SOUTHEAST BANK

Participants of a workshop on "Foreign Exchange Regulations for Remittance", organised by Southeast Bank Ltd (SEBL), are seen with senior officials recently. Among others (sitting third from left), SEBL Senior Assistant Vice President Hossain Akhter Chowdhury, Deputy Managing Director Syed Imtiaz Hasib, Bangladesh Bank Deputy General Manager Kh Khalidur Rahman and SEBL Vice President Mustafizur Rahman were present.

China steel exports soar

Industry warns against anti-dumping moves

AFP, Beijing

China's steel exports rose steeply in the first nine months as the industry association warned it would actively defend its interests against any anti-dumping measures, state media said Tuesday.

China exported 28.6 million tonnes of steel products in the January-September period, up 81 percent from a year earlier, the China Daily reported, citing the China Iron and Steel Association.

"The rapid growth was mainly the result of strong global demand for steel products and much higher prices on the international steel market," the newspaper said, citing Luo Bingsheng, vice chairman of the association.

International prices have exceeded domestic prices by up to 150 dollars per tonne in recent months, encouraging Chinese companies to export, it said.

Overseas steel makers have argued that China is suffering from capacity build-up and is now dumping its excess supply on the world markets.

China doubled its steel production between 2002 and 2005, and it now accounts for about 30 percent of global output, according to US estimates.

"We hope our disputes with foreign countries on steel exports will be resolved through dialogue," said Luo.

"However, Chinese steel companies will actively respond to any anti-dumping charges to protect our legal interests," he said.

The United States saw steel imports from China rise 192 percent in September from the same month a year ago, according to the American Iron and Steel Institute, an organization representing US producer interests.

US markets are being impacted not just directly because China exports more steel, but also indirectly, according to the institute's president, Andrew Sharkey.

"Countries that were sending their excess capacity to (China) are increasingly seeking alternative markets, such as the United States," Sharkey said in a statement last week.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 31/10/2006

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Layar Sentosa	Sugar	Tuti	Park	14/10	2/11	1543
J/2	Xuan Cheng	GI	Lany	Cosco	23/10	4/11	1863
J/4	Golden Star	C. Clink	Jaka	ANCL	29/10	5/11	--
J/7	QC Teal	Cont	Col	QC SL	21/10	1/11	--
J/8	Vien Dong-2	GI	Buss	Prog	28/10	2/11	2080
J/9	New Legend Star	GI	Tian	Cosco	31/10	6/11	--
J/10	Chung Jin-2	Sugar(Bag)	Bank	Mutual	22/10	6/11	--
J/11	Kota Rakayet	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	18/10	3/11	118

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Banga Bijoy	1/11	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Sea Bridge	2/11	--	PSAL	Urea (BCIC)	--
Black Rose	31/10	Roman	Jinship	Wheat(P)	--
Ja Pallas	1/11	--	Vega	Cont	Sing
Yick Hua	1/11	Novo	Alseas	GI(St. C)	--
Surplus	2/11	Sing	Asa	GI(St. C)	--
Banga Bodor	1/11	P.Kel	Baridhi	Cont	P. Kel
Manisa Green	1/11	P.Kel	Everbest	Cont	Sing
Spring Trader	2/11	Yangoon	Everest	GI(St. C)	6 Units
Josco View	2/11	P. Kel	RSL	Cont	Sing
Kota Berjaya	2/11	Sing	Pil(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Pan Express	2/11	--	ANCL	C. Clink	--

Tanker due

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSDJUP-1	
Alexandros M	2/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSDJUP-1	--
Nordbreeze	2/11	Sani	Rainbow	CDSO(RM/3/4)	--
Champion Ventra	3/11	Braz	USL	CDSO	RM/3/8
Bw Havsol	4/11	Viza	MBL	Amonia	K/A
Hawaiian Star	4/11	Jebel	DSL	Crude Oil	--

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo call	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
Geo Eastern	--	--	IBSA	R/A(18/10)
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/A(27/10)
Kudam	Crude Oil	Rast	OWSL	06/10

Outside port limit

Name of vessels	Cargo call	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
Geo Eastern	--	--	IBSA	R/A(18/10)
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/A(27/10)
Kudam	Crude Oil	Rast	OWSL	06/10

Vessels at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Cargo call	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
Eastern Star	Cont	Sing	PML	23/10
Mare Hibernum	Cont	P. Kel	Seacon	23/10
Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Baridhi	24/10
Pacific Express	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	24/10
Kota Rancak	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	24/10
Cape Bonavista	Cont	P. Kel	Bdship	24/10
Yongling	Cont	Col	PSAL	25/10
Xpress Manaslu	Cont	Col	Seacon	26/10
Gao Cheng	Cont	Sing	PML	26/10

The above are the shipping position and performance of vessels at Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by Family, Dhaka.



L A Mukul, managing director of Rupayan Group, a local business house, and Tanvir Ibrahim, head of Corporate Sales of mobile operator Banglalink, shake hands after signing a corporate agreement between the two companies recently. Under the deal, Banglalink will provide Rupayan with complete mobile communication solutions under its 'Professional' package.

STOCK