

International Automotive Workers' Coordination



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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM OF STRUGGLE OF THE AUTOMOTIVE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

(adopted at the 2nd International Automotive Workers' Conference
in Vereeniging, South Africa on 22 February 2020)

The goal of the International Automotive Workers' Coordination is the realization of an effective coordination of the struggles of automotive workers. International workers' unity is necessary to oppose the greed of the highly organized multinational corporations. The global distribution of this international program of struggle, its discussion in the run-up and its adoption at the IAWC, as well as the conducting of international automotive workers' conferences will serve this purpose. We work on the basis of their decisions and organizational principles.

Common struggles not only arise from common goals, above all they require trust. In order to realize these goals of coordinating the automotive workers, this program of struggle precisely formulates our vision for the future and our most important demands in the international joint struggle.

THE DEMANDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOTIVE WORKERS' COORDINATION

1.) Reduction of working hours with full wage compensation!

A comprehensive process of restructuring is going on among the big auto manufacturers. They make use of their huge profits in order to achieve or even surpass the concentration and the profitability of the most dynamic technological sectors of the economy. Therefore they are in a race to make the best use of the new technologies. This restructuring is costly for the workers. Thousands of jobs are lost, plants are closed. Wages and social benefits decline. Instead of making use of technological progress for the benefit of humankind and nature, the auto companies do the opposite – job destruction instead of work time reduction.

Workers and their families are suffering under these attacks. The technological development did not improve the living conditions of the automotive workers. Achievements were lost. We see what effects these structural crises, including the transition to electromobility, will entail for all automotive groups and supplier companies. Under capitalist conditions increased production capacities through the new technologies will lead to the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs. Many companies have already announced such plans. We firmly reject this!

The reduction of working hours to 30 hours a week or 6 hours a day with full wage compensation is the most important economic demand in the struggle for every job and training place and against mass unemployment. This would allow the distribution of the wealth created through a higher productive capacity, and this would lead to **more free time available for the colleagues and to more social development.**

Given the lower demand for labor power that technological advances entail, we must distribute the work onto more shoulders to maintain employment, **reduce exploitation and improve workers' lives.** It is clear that working class unity is the way to achieve these objectives. We must put an end to agreements on flexibility, increased workloads and other measures that reduce jobs every day. In all unions we demand to end collaboration aimed at increasing productivity and flexibility and to fight for every job.

We call on all workers to unite in the defense of our jobs and to improve working conditions.

WE ARE MANY! YOU ARE NOT ALONE, THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE YOU FIGHTING INTERNATIONALLY!

2.) STRUGGLE FOR HIGHER WAGES!

Our real wages are declining while profits of the employers are increasing. Inflation and economic crises are devouring our wages, and it is necessary to defend the livelihood of the workers. We fight in every company for equal pay for the permanent workforce, newly hired workers, contract workers and the workforce of external companies. **We demand bargaining agreements for all, that equal wages for equal work be paid in every country in accordance with the national living conditions, and a general wage increase.**

3.) REDUCE WORK RATES, IMPROVE HEALTH!

We cannot allow that while the capitalists use robots to destroy jobs, those who do manual labor become ill and have accidents because of inhumane workloads.

Monotonous work in the automotive industry and increasingly stressful work rates due to the application of automated measurement systems are causing illnesses and injuries at an increasingly younger age. We must fight for more humane work rates to eliminate overexploitation in the workplace and protect the health of all blue and white-collar workers. We are committed to a society in which the positive opportunities offered by rationalization and the use of robots are used in the interest of the blue- and white-collar workers.

WE ADVOCATE THE AVOIDANCE OR RESTRICTION OF NIGHT WORK!

We fight in solidarity against speedup, intimidation and bullying of individuals, particularly militant colleagues, as well as entire workforces. Bullying in particular can lead to dramatic mental illness.

REDUCTION OF RETIREMENT AGE!

We reject the incessant attacks of capitalism upon our pensions and demand: Reduction of the retirement age especially for women, shift workers and those doing hard physical labor - with full retirement compensation!

4.) SOCIAL COMMITMENT TO RENEWABLE ENERGIES AND SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES!

Strengthen the unity of the environmental and workers' movement in the struggle against the destruction of the natural environment and the deterioration of health! **We do not want to decide between jobs or protection of the environment – we demand both!** It is not the protection of the environment that is responsible for the destruction of jobs, but the striving for profits by multinational corporations!

We call upon the automotive workers of the world to cooperate with the militant environmental

movement and to take up the struggle in the companies for a life in harmony with nature. This requires a process of mutual learning and self-change on both sides.

With the exposure of the criminal fraud involving exhaust fume emissions through the manipulation of the software of Diesel engines and the increasingly open signs of climate change, the issue of the environment has moved into the focus of discussion in society since 2015. To achieve maximum profits, leading managers of VW, Audi, Daimler and many more corporations willfully accepted the destruction of the environment and the massive impact and health burden, including thousands of mortalities. In many countries this was covered and promoted by government officials who were accomplices of the international automotive and energy monopolies.

We automotive workers are aware of the considerable contribution of the automotive industry to serious global environmental pollution. We fight to ensure that automobile production no longer damages the environment. We need to get away from the burning of fossil fuel, both in engine production as well as in the production and recycling of raw materials. We reject a new global environmental scam: **WE WON'T FALL FOR THEIR POLICY OF CREATING FEAR.** We think that the time has come to say "this is enough!". The auto industry has experienced an exponential growth with astronomical profits. This restructuring will further increase them. That is why companies have to pay for it. The working conditions of the workers must be improved.

We demand the complete exposure of all criminal acts and the punishment and personal liability of the people responsible with their private property. End the shifting of the consequences of the criminal exhaust fume fraud to the workforces and their families, to the customers, as well as to the whole society. Struggle for a transportation system which is 100 % free of emissions, for a sustainable and environment friendly mobility of the future. For electromobility on the basis of renewable energies, knowing well that these technologies also have disadvantages and are not the solution. For free public transportation that meets people's mobility needs with electric and hydrogen mobility based mainly on regional renewable energies! In this way equivalent substitute jobs can be created. Private transport must be reduced.

5.) WE REJECT A SUBORDINATION TO THE COMPETITION OF THE CORPORATIONS AND THEIR PROFIT LOGICS,

which is also often supported by union leaders. When signing agreements for wage reduction or increases in flexibility, workers' living conditions are being attacked, and with higher work rates the health of many of us is being destroyed. The International Automotive Workers' Coordination rejects this policy of class collaboration and demands positive solutions for us, who create the wealth every day with our hands and minds in all companies.

We are doing everything to ensure that colleagues worldwide are allowed to organize themselves in free, non-party-affiliated trade unions. Our goal is the continuous higher development of unity in trade unions as militant organizations.

6.) WE ARE FIGHTING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE YOUTH!

Because we have the youth in mind, we cannot let our jobs be bought off, no matter how high severance payments are. We fight for every job! Second- or third-rate wages undermine the future of our young workers and new generations. The working-class youth is especially faced with the lack of rights caused by sub-contracted and temporary work. We demand regular jobs in keeping with training and permanent jobs for young workers! For a free education system at the highest level.

7.) FOR THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN!

In the auto and suppliers' industry, **women** are underrepresented in many fields and paid

worse. Besides this form of **double exploitation** there is a **special oppression** in the companies through unequal treatment of women and girls, even sexual oppression, bullying and violence. The entire burden of raising children and taking care of relatives, the reproduction of labor, is mostly shifted to women. We support the promotion of women in companies and unions and closely collaborate with the international militant women's movement. Women's and workers' movement – together undefeatable! For the liberation of women!

The special demands of women and families:

- Equal wages for women and men
- Free company kindergartens, because in our understanding childcare is not the exclusive task of women
- Special paid leave for parents
- We demand special protection for pregnant women and mothers after birth
- 100% payment for care of sick children
- Real equality in hiring

8.) FOR UNLIMITED WORK CONTRACTS AND PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT!

Automotive groups are using both temporary employment agencies and subcontracting to external companies as new forms of so-called precariousness, which is almost like slavery. Workers are hired again and again by the companies in temporary employment when those jobs are, in fact, permanent positions. This way they exert great pressure on labor performance, resulting in increasingly greater, unacceptable exploitation.

In addition, the wages and salaries of these blue- and white-collar workers lead to saving social benefits, since the parent company declares their payment as costs and not as wages.

We demand the **ELIMINATION OF TEMPORARY WORK, CONTRACT WORK, SERVICE CONTRACTS AND THE OUTSOURCING OF THE WORKFORCE** and that employees be hired by the main companies. "Sans Papiers" and other migrants work in many automotive and supplier plants. We demand regular work permits and equal rights and wages for all "Sans Papiers" and immigrant workers.

We do not accept that while companies increase their profits through technological improvements, the consequences for workers are dismissals and worsening conditions. For this reason, it is necessary to demand a progressive taxation related to turnover for large companies in order to provide sufficient funds from the social wealth to increase necessary retirement and social benefits.

Reimbursement of public aid payments received by companies that carry out mass dismissals or relocate factories! Multinational corporations that decide in every country whether they open or close plants continuously blackmail thousands of people, both in parent companies and at suppliers. Laws are taken advantage of to collect public subsidies that often end up directly in increased profits.

We demand that governments prevent such use of public resources by mandating the return of any aid given to companies that decide on dismissals, relocations and measures against workers.

But above all, we understand that union action against companies and the governments that protect them is the best tool to prevent blackmailing and decisions against workers. We struggle against any bribery of union officials by the corporations.

9.) EXTEND OUR COORDINATION TO THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE RIGHTWARD DEVELOPMENT OF GOVERNMENTS AND THE ADVANCE OF THE RIGHTWING AND FASCISTS IN THESE GOVERNMENTS!

Through the rightward development of governments and states, attacks on workers have massively increased. Political repression of the struggles of automotive workers and their families increased. At the same time, a progressive change of mood has developed internationally, which expressed itself in an increasing self-confidence and a rise of struggles.

We demand a full legal right to strike in all matters! Against oppression and division, we struggle for more democratic and political rights and liberties in companies and unions! For the acknowledgement of trade union rights!

No inch to reactionary and fascist forces in the companies!

Ban all fascist organizations, parties and their propaganda!

Work together with other movements in the struggle against fascism and against the rightward development of governments.

We will **not accept discrimination according to gender, sexual orientation, ideology, religion, origin or abilities**. We lead a struggle over the mode of thinking among the workers in all of these issues.

10.) FOR A SOCIETAL ALTERNATIVE WITHOUT EXPLOITATION, WAGE SYSTEM AND OPPRESSION IN PLACE OF THE CHAOS OF CRISES AND IMPERIALIST WARS .

We need a strategy debate among the workforce of the automotive industry about anti-capitalist, societal and socialist alternatives – against all anti-communist, anti-revolutionary and anti-anti-capitalist cheap propaganda!

Worsening living conditions of the masses of workers stand in contrast to the growing wealth of a few capitalists and international monopolies. Crises and wars lead to chaos, increasing misery and also to the destruction of our natural foundations of life. This is what this capitalist system based on exploitation has to offer. The achievements we have made, one by one, are being destroyed. It is necessary to overcome this unjust system.

With the development of trade wars and an increased struggle of competition among the international automotive monopolies, the danger of war increases. The increasingly aggressive rivalry is accompanied by the influence of a nationalist or social-chauvinist mode of thinking among the automotive workers and their families. Instead of being taken in for the power interests of national states or corporations, the workers have to reflect their class interests internationally and strengthen international class solidarity.

In order to realize our program of struggle, we organize local and international solidarity – with declarations, joint coordinated actions including strikes and solidarity campaigns. We workers do not only fight for our own interests, but also support other social strata (women, students, farmers) in their struggles. They also belong in our front.

Our **common international days of struggle** are the International Working-Class Day of Struggle, May Day, International Women's Day or International Day of Working Women on March 8th, International Day of Struggle to Save the Environment and the International Day of Struggle against Fascism and War. We promote the establishment of an international day of action of automotive workers and their families. This could be 17 October (day of adoption of the founding resolution of this Coordination).

“We do not restrict ourselves to the struggle for better wage and working conditions. We want a fulfilled, dignified and healthy life for all people in harmony with nature – a society without exploitation and oppression, because another world is possible.”
(Founding Resolution of International Automotive Workers Coordination in October 2015)

AUTOMOTIVE WORKERS OF THE WORLD, LET US CROSS BORDERS AND STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' UNITY !