

In numbers

The 2010 Congress

6,249,600 is the estimated number of words spoken at Congress. Based on an average of 120 words spoken per minute, over approximately 124 hours of debate in seven languages.

117 There are 117 support staff working behind the scenes to make Congress work. This includes 45 staff from the ITF's London office, 22 regional office staff and a 50-strong team of interpreters.

3,780,494 is the number of individual transport workers represented at Congress. They are represented by 630 delegates, including 98 women delegates, and 566 advisers, from 333 unions in 109 different countries. At the 2006 Durban Congress there were 653 delegates and 421 advisers.

10,300 copies of *Congress Daily News* have been circulated among the participants. Seven different issues were published over eight days, six of them in four languages.

45,032 For many participants, attending Congress means embarking on 18 or even 24-hour journeys. This figure is the estimated total number of hours travelled to and from Congress.

272 is the number of newspaper reports published about this Congress around the world, up to midday yesterday. This does not include the extensive radio and TV coverage of Congress. There were 30 accredited press representatives who attended Congress.



ITF staff at Congress. See "117".



Tonia Kerns (left) and Fiona Thomson sign the solidarity flag while collecting for the sacked SME workers.

Shocked MUA duo organise help for sacked electrical workers

Two delegates from the Maritime Union of Australia, shop steward Tonia Kerns and river keeper from Port Hacking Fiona Thomson, are organising a collection for the 44,000 members of the SME electrical workers' union. They were sacked in October last year when the federal government closed down the state-owned LFC electricity-generating company.

Kerns and Thompson were out walking on Avenida Reforma when they came across the SME's protest camp by chance.

The MUA duo were shocked when they found out what had happened to the workers. The SME strongly opposes privatisation of Mexico's energy industries. At LFC, police and military forces evacuated them at gunpoint and occupied all the power stations and substations. The workers had

refused to accept pay-offs in return for relinquishing their trade union membership.

Yesterday, Kerns and Thomson addressed Congress and asked that all participants sign the solidarity flag and contribute to a collection to help the workers and their families to survive the difficult struggle ahead of them. A delegation will return to the camp tomorrow to deliver the flag and the money collected.

The SME has filed a complaint against the Mexican government, arguing that the decree to close the LFC company and sack its entire workforce constitutes a violation of International Labour Organization Conventions 87 and 98. *Members of the SME will be joining the ITF on the march and rally for trade union rights in Mexico later today (see front page for details)..*

What they said...

● **Peter Kennedy, Canadian Auto Workers on climate change:** "Our members are citizens and have families too – they are as concerned about the environment as everyone else. There are tremendous job opportunities in low carbon industries. But green jobs are not precarious – they are well-paid, full time jobs."

● **Wayne Butson, Rail and Maritime Transport Union, New Zealand, on the Organising Globally programme:** "This is another plank that continues the evolution of the ITF into a global organisation. We must strengthen the regions; we must bolster the organising of the ITF."

● **Alex Gordon, RMT, Great Britain, on international trade union rights:** "A series of judgements in the European Court of Human Rights are diverging dramatically from those of the European Court of Justice. It's important to drive a wedge between the ECHR and the ECJ. The ECJ is trying to turn back the clock on workers' rights."

● **Flemming Smidt, 3F, Denmark:** "We want your help to overcome limits on industrial action in Europe. We cannot do it as Europeans alone. The consequences of the Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg cases are violations of international labour conventions and trade union rights. International solidarity is needed."

● **Nasser Younis, General Union for Transport Workers, Palestine:** "Being and living under Israeli occupation for 30 years is not an easy thing. We should all act together to see Palestine free from settlements; all relations with the settlements should stop."

● **Tim Beaty, Teamsters, US:** "In the US, UPS and DHL respect employees' rights; Fedex does not. They are spending millions to oppose the rights of working people in our country."

● **Robert Mashego, SATAWU, South Africa:** "People are employed today and unemployed tomorrow – there's no sustainability in the capitalist system."



ITF 42ND CONGRESS
MEXICO CITY 2010

What's on today

Closing plenary: Don Alberto, 9.30am-1pm.

Executive board meeting: Don Diego 1 & 2, 11.30am-12.30pm.

Press conference: Don Diego 3 & 4, 1pm-2pm.

Demonstration in support of trade union rights in Mexico: assemble from 1.30pm outside the Hilton Reforma for march at 2pm to a rally in Zócalo square; ends 5pm.



Trade unionists in Mexico City demonstrating against the federal government in October last year.

Congress website

Visit the ITF's Congress website – www.itfcongress2010.org – for all the news and background to proceedings in Mexico City, plus links to the Congress blog and ITF Flickr and YouTube sites.

Congress blog

Visit the lively Congress blog at www.itfglobal.org/congress2010blog/ Contributions and comments are welcome. Email: anderson_jeremy@itf.org.uk

DAILY NEWS

No.7

Thursday 12 August 2010



ITF: uniting the world's transport workers

Congress ends today with delegates concluding the final business and awarding gold badges to individuals who have served the ITF with great distinction. The executive board will also meet to elect a new ITF president for the next four years, before placing its recommendation before Congress.

This afternoon we will march shoulder to shoulder with Mexican workers to show support for their fight to achieve basic rights to

democratic trade unionism and dignity at work.

Most important of all, the hope of delegates is that we will leave Mexico City in unity and that we will be determined to organise to build strong unions and act in solidarity with transport workers around the world.

Our thanks to Congress Daily News photographers José García Morales, Sergio Salazar Hernández and Mac Urata, who took the photos above.

Key decisions

The following is a summary of the resolutions agreed yesterday by Congress. For the full text, refer to the official Congress documentation.

● **Responding to climate change:** Sets out a new policy for the ITF which addresses climate change, calls for the development of sustainable transport measures and underlines the need for democratic control of the economy, whilst rejecting increased unemployment and the undermining of transport workers' wages and conditions; also calls for an in-depth study on the impact of climate change policies on transport employment.

● **Reducing carbon emissions from the road transport sector:** Calls for an international agreement on climate change as well as strategies to promote fuel-efficient driving, maintenance and service techniques, promotion of upgrades to vehicles, and training.

● **Trade union unification and national coordinating committees:** Calls for closer cooperation between transport unions including the formation and strengthening of national coordinating committees and for an active role for the ITF in fostering coordination.

● **ITF regional and subregional organisation:** Emphasises the importance of ITF regional programmes, policies and structures and lays down a plan for regional activity.

● **Communications:** Calls for a report on how unions are using new communication tools and calls for the use of new technology to allow unions to participate in the ITF to an improved and greater degree.

● **Encouraging ITF affiliates and office holders:** Calls for the compilation and dissemination of best practice experiences, and for the executive board to examine a system to encourage union organising and member communication.

● **Organising Globally programme:** Calls for the ongoing development of the Organising Globally programme via planning, monitoring, delivery and evaluation carried out by the strategic coordination team.

● **Young transport workers:** Lays down a programme of increased activity for young people in the ITF and calls for amendments to the ITF constitution to create a young workers' committee and conference; constitutional amendments implement these decisions.

● **Rejection of all forms of violence, femicide and violation of human rights, and support for the labour unions of the workers in Mexico:** Deplores the situation for women workers in Mexico and calls for a statement to be issued to president Calderón Hinojosa demanding that basic workers' rights and gender rights be respected.

● **Workers' rights in Mexico:** Rejects the system of protection agreements, recognises the ongoing work by the ITF in the offshore sector to defend workers' rights and by other global unions across Mexico's industries, and calls for lobbying of Mexican politicians as well as the launching of an international campaign to end the abuse of workers' rights.

● **Working for international trade union rights:** Focuses on the need to reverse judgements of the European Court of Justice which have attacked the most fundamental trade union rights, and calls for provisions in the European Convention on Human Rights to be binding upon the ECJ;

supports the campaign by the RMT Great Britain on this issue.

● **Motion to take a united stand against the infringement of trade union rights:** Calls for a robust ITF framework of global solidarity to provide support for workers and unions under attack from the authorities, and to ensure they can exercise their trade union rights.

● **Palestine:** Calls for an international campaign of solidarity with the Palestinian people by the ITF and all affiliates and supports humanitarian efforts to assist the people of Gaza, while recognising Israel's right to exist alongside an independent, viable Palestinian state.

● **Responding to globalisation after the global financial crisis:** Lays down a programme of activity for the ITF within the global unions' group to respond to WTO developments, to challenge the international financial institutions, address globalisation and defend the role that transport plays in the public interest.

● **Trade union response to transport privatisation and liberalisation:** Analyses the negative effects of liberalisation and calls on the ITF to circulate regular information on privatisation and on successes in retaining public ownership; welcomes ITF strategies in the maritime industry whilst calling for enhanced training and employment opportunities for developed economy ratings.

● **Capitalism in crisis:** Calls for measures to boost the economy that would put people first; including banking and financial sector restructuring, public control and accountability in transport, housing, social provision, energy, as well as investment in green jobs.

● **Global social minimum standards:** Calls for ITF campaigns for permanent social minimum standards for unprotected workers, contract workers and those working for labour agencies via the implementation of social protection measures, including international framework agreements and corporate social responsibility instruments.

● **Transportation safety and anti-terrorism:** Condemns terrorist attacks on transport and calls for proportionate measures to improve transport safety as well as to guarantee civil and human rights.

● **Transport infrastructure:** Calls for investment in better transport infrastructure, integrated in both freight and passenger areas and employing a cross-modal approach; suggests new financing measures to deliver improvements.

● **Life/health safety in the workplace is the employers' obligation and responsibility:** Condemns inadequate transport safety and irresponsible employers, appealing to governments to improve safety monitoring, safety standards and worker rehabilitation.

● **Global delivery network:** Lays down a programme for the ITF's global delivery work including organising, communications, research and strategic campaigning as well as encouraging ongoing coordination with UNI.

● **Malvinas/Falkland Islands:** Urges the ITF executive board to approach the UN secretary general asking for his intervention to help resolve this sovereignty dispute in the South Atlantic.

● **Venezuela:** Supports the advances in democracy and social progress in Venezuela and the country's right to determine its future free from foreign interference.

My Congress

Delegates look back and give their thoughts on Congress.

Ed Watt, Transport Workers' Union of America (US)



It's been great to see so many delegates attending the conferences. As director of health and safety for my union, I've been to as many

meetings as I can: urban transport, rail, road and women's conference.

But one major highlight has been the discussions we've had on health and safety. There is actually a proud tradition in the ITF of internationally co-ordinated studies of health and safety. One of these led to the recognition of psycho-social stressors. You saw how real this problem is today when a shop steward jumped out the door with the plane still on the tarmac. I think he'd probably just had enough. It's an honour to be starting up this work again. In road transport we are going to build an international database of health and safety research, bringing together academics and union experts. I had a very positive response from other unions.

With health and safety it's easy sometimes: it's an issue for everyone. I'm really looking forward to getting started on this work when I get back.



Mchafu Chakoma, Tanzania Seafarers' Union

Congress demonstrates that as workers we have to show solidarity across borders. I think it's very important that we back each other. We have heard about the problems in Costa Rica, the case of Osanloo in Iran and the difficulties here in Mexico. We must support each other.

This is my first Congress, but I've been to seafarers' section meetings before and it's not that different really, although it would be good to have more education on some of the protocols, for example with the

criteria for electing members of the fair practices committee. For the next Congress I would like to see more focus on the challenges facing African workers. Many of our governments do not support trade unions. But it is difficult for them because they are reliant on foreign investment and Europeans don't like unions.

We have so many challenges in Africa. Getting work for Tanzanian seafarers is becoming very hard. We have big companies like Maersk and MSC sailing in our waters all the time, but they don't have even one Tanzanian seafarer on board. And now there is a Chinese-Tanzanian shipping line, which is under the Tanzanian flag, but with all-Chinese crews. So there are big issues for African workers.



Micaela Sol Ruiz, SOMU (Argentina)

This is my first time at Congress and it's been a fantastic experience for me. I was really

happy to be elected at the young transport workers' conference as the rep for fisheries. I really enjoyed the climate change conference. My union is very active on environmental issues. We have a foundation for the environment, a training ship and even a radio programme that we use to try and educate and raise awareness about the environment, especially where it relates to fisheries.

I also really enjoyed meeting women from the maritime unions at the dinner on Monday evening. It was really interesting talking to women delegates from different parts of the maritime industry: stevedores, seafarers, everybody. Our delegation – there are six of us here – will take a lot back to our union. There is a lot of information we can share with our colleagues and members. And we can tell our members how much respect their union has on an international stage, which I think will make them feel very proud.

Malene Volkers, Ver.di (Germany)

This is my first Congress, so I wasn't sure what to expect. But it's made a big impression on me. I think the Organising Globally workshops were particularly good for bringing people together and challenging them to think beyond their own situations.



When we are at home we have our own interests and concerns, but the workshops give us an opportunity to break down the barriers. It's given me a

really good feeling actually. For me the situation with UPS in Turkey is really important. We absolutely must support TÜMTIS in their struggle to win union recognition. We have a presence at UPS in Germany but it could be better. If we tolerate what is happening in Turkey, then where will that leave the rest of us? I think the Congress has been very well prepared. It's perhaps not the easiest place to hold it, but it's very important that the ITF shows that it is a truly global organisation. We have heard about the dismal situation for trade union rights in Mexico, so it's important that we make a real statement that the ITF supports Mexican trade unionists.



Taihaku Yamamoto, Japan Federation of Aviation Industry Unions (Koku Rengo)

I came to this Congress to express my appreciation to the many ITF unions who have been supporting us. Our union is in a very difficult situation at the moment following the Japan Airlines bankruptcy in January. The airline is still running. It is negotiating a rehabilitation deal with the government. We are part of the process and I will be able to go back to Japan and tell our members that we have a lot of support from aviation unions all over the world, from unions in countries like Australia, Nigeria, Brazil and Argentina.

Of course Mexicana is in a very similar situation – the unions here have our full support as well. The discussion about low cost carriers has also struck a chord. We have a number of new airlines in our region. We organised workers at one of them, Air Do, four years ago. But there is still more work to do.

In brief

Make those bags lighter, urge civil aviation unions



With Congress delegates beginning to pack for trips home or to other destinations, civil aviation unions are urging support for the

joint campaign by the European Transport Workers' Federation and the ITF to limit baggage weights on airline journeys. Campaigners point out that heavy loads cause injury to check-in staff and baggage handlers. Routinely they have to load them while working on their knees because conditions on aircraft are cramped. Unlike in other industries, there are no weight limits for airlines. This means that baggage handlers may be more likely to be injured than other workers. Packing too much can hurt a passenger's wallet too. Most airlines charge extra for luggage over 23kg. But there is no standard fee for excess baggage weight, so they can charge what they like. And it hurts the environment: lighter baggage means lighter planes, lower fuel consumption and fewer carbon emissions.

See: www.packless.org

Bus driver training in Ghana is a breakthrough for women

News has emerged at Congress of an initiative in Ghana that puts equal opportunities firmly on the agenda in the road transport sector. A driver training programme for women is being jointly run by the General Transport, Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Union (GTPCHWU) and transport company Metro Mass Transit. The six-month bus driver training programme took place in Accra in Ghana and Abidjan in the Ivory Coast. Twenty-four women successfully completed the course in June and all the women are now working as bus drivers. Congress



Graduates of the jointly union-run training scheme for bus drivers in Ghana.

delegate Emmanuel Mensah, from the GTPCHWU, said: "We gave the women encouragement and we supported Metro Mass Transit. The women's male counterparts dominate bus driving. We are trying to promote equality. The company employs a lot of women in ticketing and as bus conductors; we realised that their skills should be developed to the next level – handling a bus."

Evaluating Congress

Don't forget to fill out an ITF Congress evaluation form in which you can give feedback on how Congress was structured and organised – and what you thought of the various parts of the past 10 days. Forms will be handed out today or they can be picked up from the document tables in the Don Alberto lobby. Return completed forms to the information desk, also in the Don Alberto lobby. This is the second time that a Congress evaluation exercise has been carried out. It was as a result of comments made at the end of the 2006 Congress in Durban that the audio-visual elements and panel discussion were incorporated into the proceedings of this Congress.

From the Congress blog...

Abdulgani Serang, national secretary of the National Union of Seafarers of India, writes: *When we heard about disputes with British Airways, Air France and Jet Airways, we immediately contacted our members and asked them to avoid flying with those airlines. It certainly hit the headlines. At half past midnight I sent an SMS message to the press. By 9am the story was being reported by 50 different websites. Jet Airways and Air France in India panicked and rushed back to the negotiating table. Our members came out in droves to show support with BA cabin crew. They wore t-shirts and Gandhi-style caps and congregated at Mumbai airport to greet strike-breakers* – For more Congress blogs, see www.itfglobal.org/congress2010blog