

## **Conference on Trade Union Actions on Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities**

Date: May 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Location: Geneva, Switzerland

### **Background**

Disability is more than ever recognised as a key issue for social justice across the world. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reaffirms its place as a human rights issue and the Sustainable Development Goals explicitly include it as a development issue. The objective of decent work promotes inclusion of, and eliminating discrimination towards, persons with disabilities in all its cross-cutting areas. This paradigm shift in understanding disability has been supported by trade union actions across the world. Effectiveness of decent work institutions for the inclusion of disability issues depends on their integration and their interrelation through a system based on human and social agreements.

Within the ILO, the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) has been working with the Gender, Equality and Diversity (GED) branch to investigate the current status of work undertaken by trade unions, and to strengthen their ability to respond to issues of disability in the future. Research conducted through 2016 on a global overview of trade union action on disability has shown that trade unions are active on this subject in high, mid and low-income countries. Trade Union action has ranged from policy work and inputs to collective bargaining to actively supporting persons with disabilities to enter and stay in work.

Based on this research, the ILO is working to disseminate concepts and methods for trade unions to engage further in disability inclusion. This Experts meeting is an opportunity to develop partnerships and strategies that can build this momentum further.

### **Expert Conference**

This conference serves to address trade union actions on disability in multi-sectoral forum. As well as disseminating research and raising awareness on inclusion of persons with disabilities and the relation between this and decent work, the conference will also identify ways forward for both trade unions and the ILO itself. Working together across ILO units (including ACTRAV and GED), the conference will also closely engage the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and Global Union Federations in design and execution.

Specifically, the objectives of this meeting are:

- Promote and develop trade union alliances and partnerships to guide further actions to implement decent work for PWD;

- Disseminate research and demonstrate practical strategies and actions that trade unions can take on inclusion of disability and decent work for all;
- Identify actions for ACTRAV and ILO on further supporting trade union action on disability and decent work

Participants at the conference will include a range of selected experts and organizations from trade unions and disability organizations. See annex for suggested participant list.

## **Initial Schedule**

### Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup>

#### Morning:

- Opening and introductions
- Global Perspectives:
  - Presentation of research on trade unions and disability
  - Response from Global Union Federations
  - Presentation on disability and work globally

#### Afternoon:

- Sharing Trade Union initiatives on disability and decent work in mobilisation of human social and financial means (strategy organisation capacity building, Norms, social partnerships and governance )
  - Presentation from trade union representatives and discussion
- Challenges and lessons learned
  - Group work discussing initiatives, challenges and lessons learned
  - Sharing of group work in plenary

### Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>

#### Morning

- Dimensions of decent work and their integration for effective inclusion of disability (challenges in provision of public services, labour institutions )
  - Presentations from ILO experts on thematic areas
  - For example: care services, health and education, employment and enterprises – countries in crisis , social protection, etc
- Roles, responsibilities and resources
  - Discussion on roles at international, regional and national levels
  - Role of ILO, GUFs, donors, trade union federations, etc

#### Afternoon

- Action-planning
  - Group work discussing way forward for different stakeholders
- Closing
  - Presentation of group discussion
  - Closing