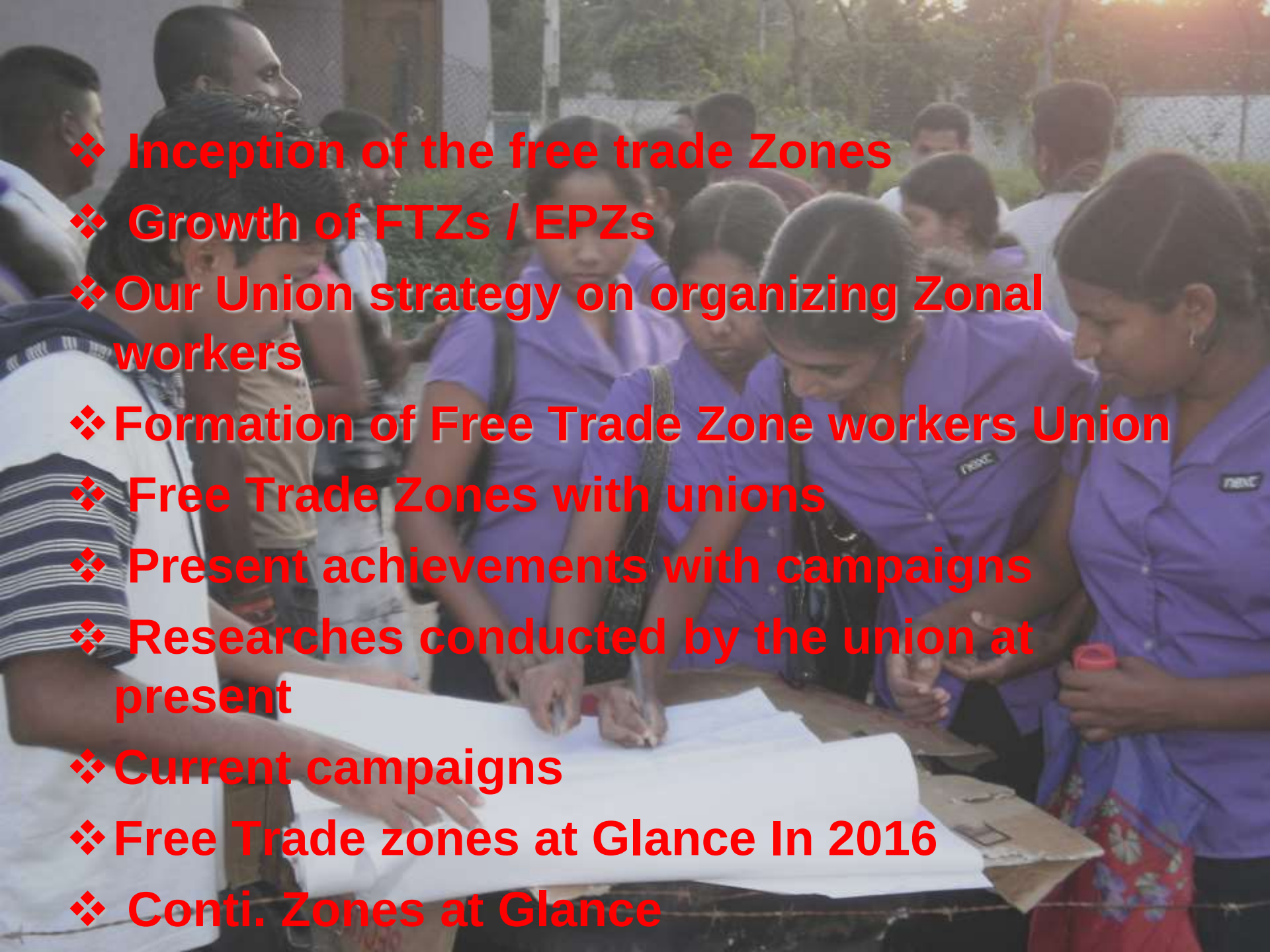


FTZ&GSEU experience of organizing and collective bargaining in EPZs



By
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Joint Secretary
Free Trade Zones & General Services Employees Union

- 
- ❖ Inception of the free trade Zones
 - ❖ Growth of FTZs / EPZs
 - ❖ Our Union strategy on organizing Zonal workers
 - ❖ Formation of Free Trade Zone workers Union
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Inception of the free trade Zones

- **Started at 1978 Under the UNP Government at Katunayake**
- **Joint Consultation Committees**
- **Greater Colombo economic Commission**
- **Local Foreign Collaborations**
- **Free from unions & Electrocute fence**
- **Expand to Biyagama & Koggalla**
- **Formed the Industrial Transport & General workers union**
- **Polytex strike (1st Garment factory strike in 1981)**

A large crowd of people, mostly women, with their arms raised in a gesture of protest or celebration. The image is dark, suggesting it might be at night or in a dimly lit indoor space. The people are wearing various casual clothing, including t-shirts and patterned skirts. The overall mood is one of collective action or demonstration.

Growth of FTZs / EPZs

- All island as a free trade zone & 1992 Declaration
- 300 Garment factory project
- FTZs / EPZs / IPZs
- Abolish the JCC and introduced the Employees Councils
- Repressive conditions in the Zonal Workers

Our Union strategy on organizing Zonal workers

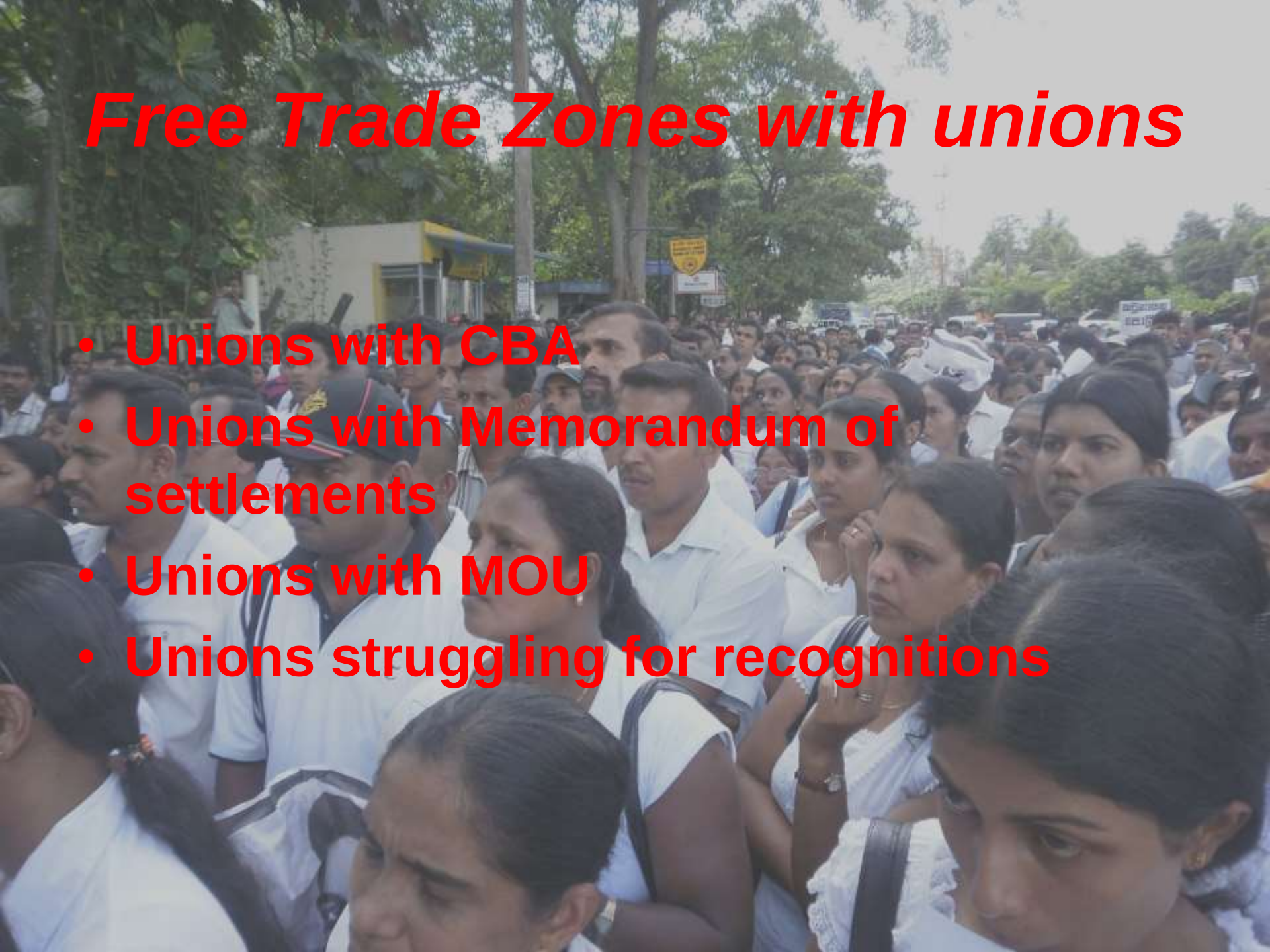
- Formation of the Joint Committee of the Employees Council
- Expand the Joint Committee into the Joint association of the Employees Council
- Intervention of the labor disputes in the zone
- International Solidarity action
- Intervention in the Presidential election in 1991
- Enactment of ID act of No 56 of 1999

Formation of Free Trade Zone workers Union (Year 2000)

- Land mark case of Jaqalanka on FOA
- Complain to the EU GSP on labor rights violation
- Complain to ILO on labor rights violations
- Granting of EU GSP with a road map
- Extension of GSP + benefits
- Global unions intervention on GSP + and US GSP



Free Trade Zones with unions

- **Unions with CBA**
 - **Unions with Memorandum of settlements**
 - **Unions with MOU**
 - **Unions struggling for recognitions**
- 
- A large crowd of people, mostly in white uniforms, gathered outdoors for a protest or demonstration. The crowd is dense, with many individuals looking towards the camera or slightly to the side. The background shows trees and a building, suggesting an urban setting. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Present achievements with campaigns

- Tripartite Mechanism for FTZs
- Right to access to the Zones & setting up of facilitation centers
- Compelled the government to withdraw the so called Private Sector Pension Fund Bill
- Published a book on the experience on the struggle against the pension fund bill and produced the Doc. Film on same
- Salary campaign and minimum wage for private sector

Researches conducted by the union at present

- Research to calculate the Living Wage for the apparel sector
- Research on Work Wear suppliers to Europe
- Research on Sports Wear for Olympic 2012
- Research on health conditions of the zonal workers
- Research of gender discrimination



Current campaigns

- G.S.P Campaign
- Campaign against precarious work
- Counter campaign to employers' campaign of union mafia



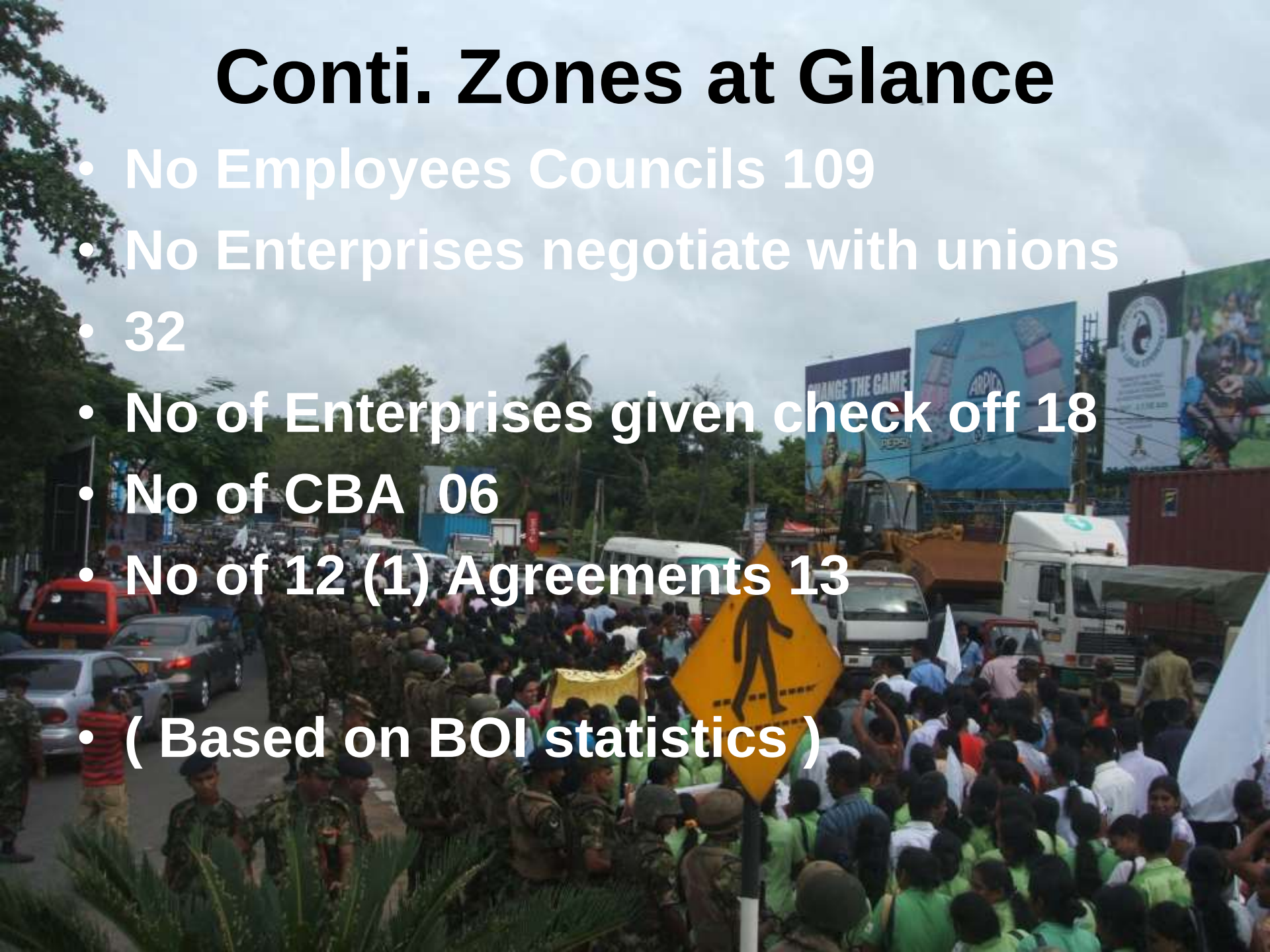
Free Trade zones at Glance In 2016

- 13 Zones in Island wide
- 134956 Employees
- 266 Enterprises
- 70 % are female workers
- Majority of them are migrants from far villages



Conti. Zones at Glance

- No Employees Councils 109
- No Enterprises negotiate with unions 32
- No of Enterprises given check off 18
- No of CBA 06
- No of 12 (1) Agreements 13
- (Based on BOI statistics)



Thanks

