



Governing Body

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Institutional Section

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FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Director-General

Addendum

Obituary

Mr Basile Mahan Gahé

1. The Director-General announces with deep regret the death, on 16 September 2013, of Mr Basile Mahan Gahé (Côte d'Ivoire), former Secretary-General of the Ivorian Confederation of Free Trade Unions "DIGNITE", who was a Worker member of the Governing Body and Workers' delegate to the International Labour Conference.
2. Born in 1953, Mr Mahan Gahé studied law at the Université libre de Bruxelles before returning to Côte d'Ivoire, where he was employed by the Ministry of Labour. He became involved in trade union activity and launched a wide-ranging movement independent of the Government, political parties and religious organizations. This led to the birth of DIGNITE on 1 May 1988. Notwithstanding the obstacles in his path and despite being arrested several times, Mr Mahan Gahé continued to fight for justice and better conditions for workers and remained Secretary-General of DIGNITE until his death. Besides his trade union activities, Mr Mahan Gahé was a member of the National Human Rights Committee of Côte d'Ivoire and Vice-President of the National Labour Council, a tripartite body which he had helped bring into existence.
3. Mr Mahan Gahé was very active not only within his own country but also on the international arena, campaigning, among other things, for a more humane globalization. Among his many offices, he served as chair of the Regional Social Economy Support Programme (PARESOC), founding member in 2001 of the new Democratic Organization of African Workers Trade Unions (DOAWTU) and member of ITUC-Africa.
4. In June 2002, Mr Mahan Gahé was elected Worker member of the Governing Body, a position that he held until May 2005. In 1992, he attended the International Labour Conference for the first time, and went on to attend every session until 2010, returning again in 2013.

5. With the passing of Mr Mahan Gahé, the world has lost an iconic figure in the Ivorian trade union movement, a man committed body and soul to the service of social justice and universally admired for his courage. All those who had the privilege of working with Mr Mahan Gahé, or merely knowing him, will always remember him as a great trade union leader who dedicated his life to upholding the interests of the Ivorian, African and international working class. His death is a great loss to the global trade union movement.
6. ***The Governing Body will no doubt wish to invite the Director-General to convey its condolences to the family of Mr Basile Mahan Gahé and also to the Ivorian Confederation of Free Trade Unions “DIGNITE”.***