

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

“STRENGTHENING PRO-WORKER TRADE UNIONISM, OPPOSE PRIVATISATION”

10-14 Dec. 1994

The International Trade Union Conference on "Strengthen Pro- Worker Trade Unionism, Oppose privatisation" was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 10-14 December 1994. The conference was organised by the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) and Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity Links (APWSL). It was assisted by the Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE).

The conference was attended by 63 participants from 15 countries representing 38 trade unions, centers, international, and other labour organisations.

Taking place in Nepal just days after the electoral victory and the formation of a left Government, committed to the interests of working class, the conference was able to share in the joy and enthusiasm of the Nepalese workers and their trade unions for the new and challenging situation that they face.

Editors : Bishnu Rimal
Umesh Upadhyaya
Po Li Kheng

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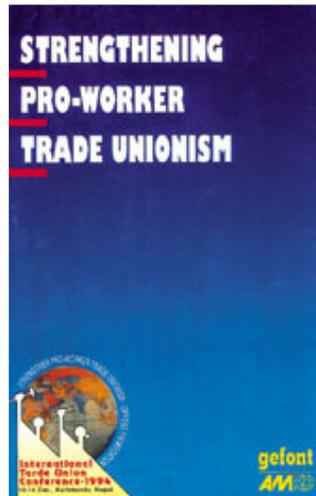
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BACKGROUND

In November 1992, a program called PP-21 (People's Plan For the 21st Century) was organized in Bangkok, where various non-government organizations (NGOs), trade unions and people's organizations (POs) from many centres of the world had been invited. General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)'s representatives were also pre-sent in the Workers' Forum, one of the various PP-21 forums GEFONT actively participated in that program and put forth apropos-alto the participants for a Trade Union Conference of the active trade unions of this region. The proposal was accepted heartily and GEFONT had taken the initiative to make the Conference a success.

And then GEFONT started to disseminate the concepts of this Conference. In this context, worth mentioning are the 10th International Solidarity Affairs (ISA) of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) held in the Philippines in May, our discussion~ with the par-ticipant unions, GEFONT delegation led by its chairman to India in September 1992 and discussions with the various Indian trade unions particularly with CITU, AICCTU, AITUC, FORWARD BLOCK, and with the representative of WFTU. Like wise our discussion with Regional Coordination Team meeting (12-14, Oct1993) of APWSL in Bangkok and the discussion with the various APWSL's National Groups & its network representatives was a part of our preparation.

In addition, on the basis of appeals published in GEFONT's Quarterly News Bulletin, WORKERS' NEWS, we had received the following suggestions from various trade unions:

The Conference-

- i. should be convened under broad issues;
- ii. should be convened with the purpose of motivating world trade union movement to unified goals;
- iii. should focus on one aspect of the present common Issues (although there may be discussions on other different issues);
- iv. should focus on finding "unity under diversity" and the points of agreement rather than on ranking up debates and contention;
- v. should be directed towards independently deciding alternative paths for workers' class rights and benefits rather than supporting or 9pposing a particular international trade union centre;
- vi. shold identify international like-minded partners and try to estab-lish an informal network.

Keeping these suggestions in view, GEFONT put forth that, among other issues, "Pro-worker Trade Unionism and Privatisation" be the main theme of the Conference,

In analysing today's and yesterday's situations what we find is that military imperialism has been defeated and it is not in a position to come fraying with its military might in search of capital profits. That's why they come through the multinational corporations and the World Bank to pressurize and taunt and they are now harping on the privatisation policies. Today, the main vehicle of monopolistic

capitalism is the privatisation and MNCs involved in a campaign to demolish the public sector

What the capitalists are trumpeting today as the privatisation being the panacea of economy is nothing but an illusion and a curse on the mass-Cs. Privatisation can make a few individuals Rockefellers but it will ruin thousands of national industrialists.

So, on the one hand, in the name of free market economy and privatisation, monopolistic capitalism is displacing a lot of labour force. Its effects are being felt everywhere in the globe. The privatisation and the price hikes introduced in the name of free competition have nsen. For the reason, we felt that the Nepalese workers in tandem with the international workers should voice their protests against the economic imperialism, which has come under the guise of privatisation. On the other hand, today's international working class movement is mis-guid-ed by some of the elements who have their vested interests. But all of these Unions claim themselves "genuine". It has created somehow confusion in the trade union movement - what the GTU means? So, to discuss on the direction of the world trade union movement towards independently deciding alternative paths for workers' class rights and benefits, this conference on the mentioned THEME has been relevant to the present necessities.

Agenda of the Conference were:

- i. Privatisation and its effects on the labour movement
 - o its effects on the National Economy
 - o response by the various trade unions
 - o ILO and its policies problems of labour retrenchment and unemployment, Labour in Only Contract (LOC) policy, No Union-No Strike policy and No Work-No Pay policy.
- ii. Discussion on "what is and how to build up a genuine or pro-work-er trade unionism",
- iii. TNC, FTZ, and exploitation of labour
- iv. Labour laws and the Trade Union movement.

As mentioned above, the conference concentrated on opposing Privatisation and Strengthening pro-worker trade unionism was orga-nized successfully during 10-14 December 1994 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

The International Trade Union Conference on " Strengthen Pro- Worker Trade Unionism, Oppose privatisation was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 10-14 December 1994. The conference was organised by the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) and Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity Links (APWSL). It was assisted by the Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE).

The conference was attended by 63 participants from 15 countries representing 38 trade unions, centers, international, and other labour organisations.

Taking place in Nepal just days after the electoral victory and the formation of a left Government, committed to the interests of working class, the conference was able to share in the joy and enthusiasm of the Nepalese workers and their trade unions for the new and challenging situation that they face.

After an exposure visit to a cement factory in the morning, the conference was formally inaugurated by the newly elected Prime Minister of Nepal, Cmde Ma n Mohan Adhikari, himself a former labour organiser and leader. The inauguration took place before more than 3000 thousand Nepalese workers in addition to the foreign participants, distinguished guests and GEFONT leadership.

The second day (11 December) of the conference began with an opening address by Robert Reid, coordinator of APWSL. He reminded participants of the tenth anniversary of the Bhopal tragedy where a TNC was responsible for the deaths of over 2500 people; and the hundreds of worker deaths and injuries that had occurred effort and after this tragedy. Robert commented on the creation of a new world order dominated by the Trans-National Corporations and the international institutions such as the G7, OECD, IMF-World Bank, GATT-WTO and the regional blocs such as the European Union, NAFTA and APEC.

A paper on " Economic Liberalisation and the Labor Movement" was then presented by Riffat Hussain from the Pakistan Institute for Labor Education and Research. It described the IMF-WB conditionalities on economies and labor movements in the sub-region of South Asia.

Kanai Banergee from the center of Indian Trade Unions presented his paper on "The Move to Free Economy in India and the Response of the Labor Movement". The paper gave an historical look at the development of the New Economic Policy in India and the Trade Union Response.

The afternoon of the second day consisted of country Reports by the respective participants. These reports highlighted the economic liberalisation and privatisation policies being pursued by the governments within each country and the strong response of trade unions to these policies. International and regional organisations also reported on their activities presenting a common picture of opposition to the same policies.

The third day (12 December) began with a presentation from Manuel Sarmiento, General Secretary of the KMU, Philippines on "problems of the NIC development Model and the Labor Movement". The paper concluded that it is not this development model which will emancipate both the peasant and the workers, the majority of Asian people, but a genuine and nationalist industrialization.

Following this presentation commentaries were given by participants from the "old NICs", Taiwan and Korea.

A Paper on "Sri Lanka and the Misery of Women Workers" was presented by Anton Marcus Joint Secretary of the Industrial Transport and General Workers Union. This was followed by a personal account of life as a women worker in the Sri Lankan free trade zones by Sujata Nawaratne, President of the Women's center in Sri Lanka.

A panel of the women participants to the conference then commented on the situation of women workers in their countries and the problems facing women within the trade union movement. This discussion highlighted workplace discrimination, sexual harassment, lack of trade union leadership position, and other problems that workingwomen face.

The paper entitled "Strengthening Pro-worker Trade Unionism" was presented by Bishnu Rimal, General Secretary of GEFONT and dealt comprehensively with the process of the formation of GEFONT and the aspects that make up Pro-Worker Trade Unionism.

Following this presentation the conference broke into workshops to discuss 1) the effects of liberalisation and privatisation in our own countries and 2) What practical steps can we take to advance the position of women in our union and in our country.

The final day of the conference (13 December) began with reporting back from the previous day's workshops. The conference again broke into workshops to discuss 1) the nature of pro-worker trade unionism and 2) action plans as follow up to the conference. The results of these workshops were then reported back to the conference.

In the afternoon the Kathmandu Declaration was debated and adopted by consensus. The results of the Workshops were also formally adopted by the conference as a whole. GEFONT agreed to act as CO-ordinator/secretariat for the network of pro-worker trade unions that arose from the conference.

The conference was then formally closed by the Chairperson of GEFONT Comrade Mukunda Neupane who thanked all the foreign delegates for their participation and expressed his pleasure that the conference was able to take place at a time of great political change in Nepal with the election of a left Government.

Comrade A B Bardhan, General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress, then proposed a vote of thanks to GEFONT for holding the conference and to GEFONT and APWSL as conference organisers. He also expressed the participants pleasure at the recent election of the left Government. He described this as a great victory for the workers and peasants in Nepal.

Following the formal closure of the meeting press conference was held at which Robert Reid and Bishnu Rimal presented the findings of the conference and participants from selected counties answered questions from local press representatives.

On the evening of the final day solidarity night was held at which all participants presented songs and other items from their respective countries. The night began with a special performance from the Swedish delegates celebrating Santa Lucia Night (13 December) the festival, which marks shortest day of their year.

Robert Reid

Coordinator of Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity Links - APWSL

OPENING SPEECH

Just 10 years ago, on 3 December 1984, the world witnessed the worst industrial accident this century. On that horrific night, lethal methyl isocyanate gas leaked from a Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, killing over 2 500 people and injuring and maiming hundreds of thousands of others.

This tragedy echoed the Minamata disaster some 27 years earlier where the Chisso factory poisoned hundreds of citizens of this beautiful Japanese bay through mercury.

And less than 2 years ago, on 10 May 1993, nearly 200 workers were killed in a fire at the Kader toy factory in Thailand. The same year more than 200 workers were killed and hundreds injured in separate accidents in Shenzhen and other parts of China.

These documented industrial accidents are only the tip of the iceberg. In Asia Pacific and the rest of the world everyday workers are killed in the process of production as capitalists reap mega profits from their new world order, a new world order not designed for the workers and peasants of the world, but designed to ensure the wealth and power of those who own and manage capital, a global financial elite.

And it is not just through industrial accidents that workers suffer, but millions of workers in the world die a slow death through inadequate wages, inadequate working conditions and in so many cases not having a job or any means of livelihood at all.

This conference takes place at a crucial time for the international working class, one of the most critical times since the rise of capitalism and industrialisation.

We live in a period of time where capital has now organised itself regionally and globally, rather than on a nation state basis. We live in a period of history where capital has very few fetters or controls over its activities.

The trade unions of the world are probably at their weakest point this century. Some have been co-opted by capital or the government and military that serve capital. Many others have been smashed or weakened by these same agents of capital.

Throughout the world, labour laws and worker rights protections are being eroded or swept away.

Whether we characterise them as socialist or not the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern European states not only removed the fetters to the globalisation of capital but also delivered a mighty blow to the ideological strength of the working

class movement, and removed " actually existing" alternatives for the working classes to strive towards.

Of course this dramatic shift in global power to international capital did not just " happen ". It did not just " drop from the sky ".

It is the result of the continuing developed and maturity of capitalism on a global scale. It is the result of the development of a global hegemony of " new right " and " free market " ideology of capitalism within the ruling classes, government officials, international agencies, intelligentsia and sadly within parts of the workers and trade union movement itself.

It is the result of the 40-year multi-billion dollar " cold war " lead by the United States against any nation, government or people or class that stood up for its right to independence, self-determination or non-capitalist economic development.

And it is also the result of the mistakes, errors, bureaucratic and anti-democratic trends within the workers movement itself which has lead may workers (with the help of capitalist propoganda) to equate the " free market " with democracy and capitalism with liberation.

The tragedy is, as workers in Eastern Europe have found, that by the time workers have realised the falsehood of this ideology, they have also lost their power to rectify the situation.

Of course international capital has worked at a number of levels and through a number of institutions to achieve its global domination.

The basic economic unit has been the TNCs (or MNCs) which span the world locating production where labour is the cheapest and penetrating all markets that can afford to buy their product. The TNCs are not only involved in manufacture of course but in agribusiness, services, communication, transport, financial services etc. It is estimated that one-third of the world's trade is controlled by the TNCs.

There are then a raft of organisations created (or subverted) by international capital to see that their interests are protected and promoted. These include the super-rich club of the G-7 nations and the rich club of the OECD.

The IMF and World Bank, created 50 years ago now serve to dictate policies that are in the interests of the global elite to the indebted developing countries of the world, countries indebted in the first place because of policies pursued by the imperialist and colonial powers and their servants in the form of local elites.

This conference will discuss many times the nature of the criminal Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of the IMF / World Bank and their disastrous effects on the workers and other basic masses of our countries.

Not content with the power of these 2 financial institutions, the global elite has now created a third pillar in the form of World Trade Organisation (WTO) that arose from the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Under the guise of " free trade", the GATT/WTO seeks to reduce still further the role of nation states in determining their own economic and trading policies, thus giving the TNCs and international financial institutions even greater power.

And in addition to the globalisation of the economy, regionalisation is also taking place. In Europe, the European Union (EU) is strengthening and expanding. The US, Canada and Mexico have established the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has established the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA). South Asian countries here have established the South Asian Agreement for Regional Co-operation (SAARC). Australia and New Zealand have Closer Economic Relations (CER).

And in addition to these arrangements we have seen the development of a supra-regional bloc in the form of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) which brings together the giant economies of the US and Japan together with the growth economies of the East Asian Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) and new NICs and other Pacific Rim nations. Interestingly there is yet no place for South or West Asia in this Asia-Pacific grouping.

APEC has its own contradictions between North America and Asia, between developing and industrialised countries and between " free market " liberals and the East Asian state-control development approach.

However APEC is unified in its desire to see capitalist economic expansion in the Asia Pacific region and is unified in refusing to address any issues for the upliftment of workers, peasants or other oppressed people in the region.

There are so many issues that representatives from pro-worker trade unions from different countries need to discuss. How do we oppose the IMF-WB plans, the GATT/APEC and other so-called " free trade " proposals, the SAPs including the privatisation programme?

How do we organise workers in the new industries, especially young women workers in the garment and light manufacturing industries? How do we maintain unionisation in the traditional industrial sectors? How do we organise the unorganised and informal sector? Are there any new and creative forms of organising that we can learn from?

We will agree on many things. We will also disagree. But we can also learn from our disagreements and increase our understanding of other and different points of view.

One area we will discuss is how we relate to the various trade union internationals. Most of us are independent from the international. Some of us are members of the WFTU. Some of us are members of or are applying to join the ICFTU.

Another major debate will be around the attitude of the " social clause " in GATT.

This " social clause " has been promoted by the ICFTU and the ILO to link labour standards to trade. It was proposed at the end of the GATT round by the US and French Governments. It was opposed by other governments of the North and all of the South. Trade unions throughout the world are split on the issue of whether or not to support this " social clause " .

So given this backdrop what can a conference such as this achieve?

We have come together as representatives of unions who are pro-worker in our outlook. We believe that unions must take a strong and independent position

against the forces of international capital and we strive to defend and promote the interests of our members and the working class.

We are aware that there are some unions that are pro-management and pro-capitalist government, and do not act in the interests of workers.

We are aware that millions of workers in our region and across the globe are not organised at all, especially in the informal sector.

We are aware that the international trade union movement is still split, even a decade after the end of the cold war.

The theme of this conference " support pro-worker trade unionism, oppose privatisation " is a crucial issue to be addressed by unions with a genuine concern for the welfare of their members and the working class as a whole.

For although the international situation for workers is very gloomy. There is light, there is hope, there are communities, social organizations, unions and other working class organisations developing the struggle, looking for and creating alternatives for the emancipation of the working class, the liberation of all people and the development of a society that lives in harmony with the planet. We are further encouraged by the election of left government here in Nepal.

Workers and all oppressed people of the world unite. We do have a world to win!

Mukunda Neupane

Chairperson, General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions

INAUGURAL SPEECH

Comrades!

I feel honoured to have the opportunity to address you all on this happily occasion of International Trade Union Conference. But before going on to discuss on our next concrete programs, it is contextual to have brief discussion on contemporary national and international situation on this occasion of International Trade Union Conference which aims to move forward with the objectives of manifesting protest against privatisation launched for the welfare of capitalists, discussing on strengthening workers trade union movement and of establishing absolute solidarity among the workers.

Comrades!

The most exploited class in the history is the working class and this class has been fighting courageously against suppression and exploitation since hundreds of years. The emergence of workers rule in various countries of the world is the outcome of the active participation and free and organised movement of the working class. The socialist system of government in former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and in China, North Korea and in Vietnam could be enlisted here as the example. But the incidents taken place in former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe during 80s have damaged the achievements attained through the workers struggle.

The Russian Socialism declined and Eastern Europe demolished. No one is unaware with the fact that the dissolution of workers' rule and reestablishment of capitalism was the outcome of bourgeoisie attitude and the activities of ignoring the interest of the working class in Soviet Communist Party which had also ignored the participation of working class in state rule. This has created unipolarization of the world and has encouraged the imperialist-capitalist to come to be more aggressive. The working class has learnt a lot with this painful incident. The class interest should be taken for granted as the core point by the working class either in the course of movement or in the course of ruling. They are for their sake rather than to others. On the basis of this experience the trade union movement, freeing from the tradition of power politics, has driven itself toward worker-based politics.

It is not only the workers of few countries but of many countries of Europe, America and Asia who have been disgusted by groupism exercised by political parties and by the antiworkers activities exercised by the so-called rule of the workers and therefore keeping away from that type of thinking and activities they have been organizing themselves consciously to invent free workers movement unitedly for the liberation of their class.

The dissolution of the workers rule in one part of the world has discovered a great loss. Still due to the growing contradiction among capitalist countries, and due to the growing public opinion in favour of national liberation movement and against imperialism, the growing wave of democratic movement and the growth of the united workers movement have created favourable situation for the workers based

trade union movement. Right at this moment the attitude of the slogan: one class, one organization, one factory, one union - forwarded by General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT), has become immense and this attitude has been strengthening along with the wave of time.

Regarding our political situation, I would like to mention that we have already experienced four years in multi party system. It was the outcome of the people's movement 1990, which could throw out the then anti-human rights and autocratic Panchayat regime, which prevailed in here for thirty years. The Nepalese workers had played eminent role actively and whole-heartedly in the movement. The working class, abstained entirely from political, economic, social and cultural rights, had high expectation while fighting against the autocratic regime. The four years of multiparty system under NC rule in reality could provide nothing to the workers. The workers' expectation was shattered. The capitalists suppression still existed in the factories and institutions. The workers strongly raised voice for the benefit and facility of them, the workers representatives consequently demanded in the parliament to constitute laws relating to workers. The NC government, representing capitalists interest, ignored the workers interest and voice. It neither formulated laws relating to workers nor did anything in their favour. The workers, suppressed during 30 years long regime of autocratic Panchayat System, had to continue their struggles during four years, NC rule. They, therefore, involved actively in the lawful movement jointly with the suppressed people of other sectors.

A distinct situation emerged in the country. The NC government continued anti-people activities. The market was uncontrolled, people's interest was unprotected, security measures were shattered, series of political murder started. Everybody's life, including that of workers, went into crisis. The people, anguished by these activities united against NC government. Attached with power and turned into groupism, the Nepali Congress people did split mentally.

The power-mongering attitude within the party overtook national interest and people's benefit. Therefore the people started to seek an alternative force. The wave of alteration went in favour of left forces in due course of time. The NC government entrusted to rule for 5 years, could hardly complete even three years of tenure and as a result the mid-term poll was declared.

The people have entrusted the responsibility of the government to the left force. The contribution of the workers to create left wave in the country is noteworthy here in this context.

This is the distinct situation arisen in the country during past few years. The minority government of the left force is the product of distinct situation emerged by left wave in the series of forged activities of NC, disintegrated mentality of NC in power and alternative seeking.

It is to be mentioned here that this is also not a condition for the overall transformation that seeks for the benefit of the workers. The government, within the present structure, may move for some progressive reforms. It can do no entire reform in worker's favour simply by its will. It is because no change in the way and nature of worker based Trade Union Movement has been experienced. Therefore, as usual, it is still essential to continue the worker based Trade Union Movement centralising on the workers benefit.

So far our opinion is concerned our focal point is the workers' benefit. We mean to say that our support and dissidence depends not on the basis of the party or the individual as such in the government but on the basis of its function directed toward the interest of the workers. We support the government favouring workers interest and oppose in otherwise context. Workers movement is free and autonomous which therefore cannot be a part of anybody's self interest. This is the opinion of the workers regarding the ruling party, which we have learnt through history.

We can determine our future programmes on the basis of the above-mentioned condition and opinion. I do hope that the next International Workers' Movement shall be driven toward this direction.

Workers of the world - Unite !

Long live - Working Class Solidarity !!

Thank you!

KATHMANDU DECLARATION

13 December 1994

We, 63 participants from 38 Trade Unions and Labour Organisations from 15 countries met in Kathmandu Nepal from 10 - 13 December at the International Trade Union conference on "Strengthen Pro-worker Trade Unionism - Oppose Privatisation".

In Asia Pacific and the rest of the world every day workers are killed in the process of production as capitalists reap mega profits from their new world order, a new world order not designed for the workers and peasants of the world, but designed to ensure the growth in wealth and power of those who own and manage capital, a global financial elite.

And it is not just through industrial accidents that workers suffer, but millions of workers in the world die a slow death through inadequate wages, inadequate working conditions, unemployment and lack of job security.

Capital has organised itself regionally and globally rather than on a nation state basis, where capital has very few fetters or controls over its activities.

We meet at a crucial time for the international working class, one of the most critical times since the rise of capitalism and industrialisation.

Throughout the world labour laws and worker rights protections are being eroded or swept away. Trade Unions have been forced into fighting a defensive battle to keep the conditions that they have already achieved.

Of course this dramatic shift in global power to international capital did not just happen. It did not just "drop from the sky".

It is the result of the continuing development and maturity of capitalism on a global scale. It is the result of the development of a global hegemony of "new right" and "free market" ideology of capitalism within the ruling classes, government officials, international agencies, and intelligentsia and sadly within parts of the workers and trade union movement itself.

It is the result of the 40-year multi-billion dollar "cold war" lead by the United States against any nation, government, people or class that stood up for its right to independence, self-determination or non-capitalist economic development.

And it is also the result of the mistakes, errors, bureaucratic and anti-democratic trends within the workers movement itself, which has lead many workers (with the help of capitalist propaganda) to equate the "free market" with democracy and capitalism with liberation.

International capital has worked at a number of levels and through a number of institutions to achieve its global domination.

The basic economic unit has been the TNCs (or MNCs) which span the world locating production where labour is the cheapest and penetrating all markets that can afford to buy their product. The TNCs are not only involved in manufacturing but also in agribusiness, services, communication, transport and financial services.

There are rafts of organisations created (or subverted) by international capital to see that their interests are protected and promoted. These include the super-rich club of the G-7 nations and the rich club of the OECD.

The IMF and World Bank, created 50 years ago, now serve to dictate policies that are in the interests of the global elite to the indebted developing countries of the world, countries indebted in the first place because of policies pursued by the imperialist and colonial powers and their servants in the form of local elites.

The Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of the IMF-World Bank and their disastrous effects on the workers and other basic masses of our countries are well documented.

Not content with the power of these two financial institutions, the global elite has now created a third pillar in the form of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that arose from the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Under the guise of "free trade", the GATT/WTO seeks to reduce still further the role of nation states in determining their own economic and trading policies, thus giving the TNCs and international financial institutions even greater power.

So what is to be done?

If the working class is to survive against this international domination of capital then it must have the organisational strength through broad based unity, action and international solidarity, and the clarity of vision to achieve this task.

It is essential that the trend of pro-worker trade unionism is strengthened throughout the world.

Pro-worker trade unionism means unionism that defends the interests of the working class. It is unionism that is independent, mass based, democratic and militant. It is unionism that opposes the economic liberalisation and privatisation policies forced on the world by the institutions representing the global financial elite. Trade unionism is in itself political as its aim is to empower workers.

Pro-worker trade unionism recognises the double oppression of women, the rapidly increasing proportion of women in the new global workforce and the difficulty that women have in gaining leadership positions in trade unions. It strives to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment, trafficking of women and other anti-women aspects of society.

Pro-worker trade unionism organises for the abolition of child and bonded labour. It must also be involved in organising the informal or un-organised sector, which consists of more than 90% of the workforce in some countries.

We note that although we live in a time when the working class and the trade union movement has suffered setbacks, we also live in a time when we see evidence of

trade unions and working class organisations able to stand up to the power of the capitalists and the ruling elites.

We address our declaration to workers and their organisations throughout the world. We call on the international trade union organisations to unite around a programme of defending the interests of the international working class against the anti-worker policies imposed by the IMF-World Bank, the GATT/WTO, the G7, OECD and the host of regional and supra regional trading blocks.

We commit ourselves to work tirelessly to strengthen pro-worker trade unionism in our own organisations, to seek the broadest possible unity with other unions, working class and peoples organisations to defend and extend the interests of workers throughout the world and to oppose the anti-worker, anti-people policies promoted by the global elite.

On the principle of worker internationalism we commit ourselves to work together across national boundaries, across religious, cultural and ethnic divides and equally as women and men.

We commit ourselves to maintaining an ongoing network of trade unions committed to pro-worker trade unionism and to actively oppose the economic liberalisation and privatisation policies.

We entrust GEFONT and give it our full support to act as the coordinating centre for our network. We commit ourselves to resourcing GEFONT to take on this role.

In Kathmandu we have celebrated the electoral victories of the Nepali left against all international odds. We have also heard from each other of the gains that workers and their organisations are having throughout the world. There are communities, social organisations, trade unions and other peoples organisations developing the struggle, looking for and creating alternatives for the emancipation of the working class, the liberation of all people and the development of a society that lives in harmony with the planet.

Workers and all oppressed people of the world unite!

We do have a world to win!

ACTION PLAN

Arising from two sets of workshops convened at the International Trade Union conference held in Kathmandu, Nepal December 10-13, the following points were endorsed as action plans and follow up to the conference.

The action plans fell broadly into three areas. 1. Action opposing economic liberalisation and privatisation. 2. Action to promote pro-worker trade unionism. 3. Action to promote the interests of working women and increase the participation of women in trade unions. 4. Post conference organisation and follow up action. The following is a compilation and summary of the action plans and recommendations from these workshops.

Action opposing economic liberalisation and privatisation

1. As economic liberalisation, privatisation and other structural adjustment policies of the IMF / WB and other international institutions are not in the interests of working people we commit ourselves to work much more closely together nationally and internationally to oppose these policies.
2. We will undertake education and other awareness raising campaigns to motivate trade union members and other people against the nature of these policies.
3. We commit ourselves to mobilising still further our members and other sectors of the population against these policies. In this regard we specifically propose.
 - i. An international signature campaign against privatisation and economic liberalisation.
 - ii. To organise a strike and action day on 1 May 1955 against the economic liberalisation and privatisation policies.
4. We will seek co-operation and joint action with other worker's movement and the broader anti imperialist movement in our opposition to the economic liberalisation and privatisation policies.
5. We will seek co-operation and joint action with other worker's organisations specifically concentration on different sectors of the workers movement such as migrant workers, the informal/unorganised sector, women workers, bonded labour and child labour.
6. We will organise links between workers within different branches of transnational corporations. We will endeavor to produce education materials including videos on the lives of workers in the free trade zones for workers in countries where TNC's are head quartered. (See Taiwan ICLE proposal.)
7. We will publicise breeches to ILO conventions and also target the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for actions it may take against the interests of workers and trade unions.
8. We will highlight environmental degradation, in particular the actions of TNC's in polluting workers inside the factory gates and communities outside of them.

Action to promote pro-worker trade unionism

1. Although we may use different such as genuine, democratic, militant or independent to describe pro-worker trade unionism, we commit ourselves to strive to promote his form of unionism as opposed to unionism controlled by capitalists and governments.
2. Pro-worker trade unionism must offer a determined resistance to the ongoing global offensive of capital and should practice a line of consistent anti-imperialism informed by a socialist perspective or vision.
3. Pro-worker trade unionism must develop the broadest possible working class unity and solidarity and should be the positive core within such unity.
4. Building on the contacts made at this conference the coordination and networking of pro-worker trade unions should be strengthened through newsletters and other communication, organisation of international solidarity actions and sectoral, national, regional and international gatherings.

Action to promote the interests of women

1. We acknowledge the double burden that workingwomen face, oppressed both as workers and women in our societies. We also acknowledge that modern industrialisation is hugely increasing the proportion of women in industrial service and other forms of employment. We recognise that the economic liberalisation and privatisation policy have specific effects on women workers, which must be taken up by the trade union movement.
2. In order to address this situation and to strengthen the participation of women in trade unions we specifically agree to :
 - i. Create or strengthen women's department in our respective unions and centres.
 - ii. Develop education and awareness campaigns specifically for women workers.
 - iii. Educate male trade unionists, husbands and family members to assist in greater participation of women in trade unions by taking responsibility for household and other family work.
 - iv. Build the confidence of, encourage and train workingwomen to take higher responsibilities in trade union leadership positions.
 - v. Encourage the involvement of working women in other social and political activities.
3. We specifically agree to campaign on issues that affect workingwomen:
 - i. Equal wages and job opportunities for women.
 - ii. Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
 - iii. Free childcare for workers.
 - iv. Paid parental leave.
 - v. Eliminate sexual harassment at work and in society.
 - vi. Ensure decent residential and housing facilities.
 - vii. Guarantee social security
 - viii. Defeat oppressive fundamentalist forces.
 - ix. Fight patriarchal values and the gender division of labor.
4. Promote international networking, organisation and female leadership of garment workers given the very high proportion of women in this industry in each country.

5. Strengthen the celebration of 8 March as international workingwomen's day by using this day to organise joint union action to call attention to the long neglected plight of female workers.

Post conference organisation follow-up

1. From this conference a network of pro-worker trade unions shall be established.
2. GEFONT is asked to become the secretariat/coordinator for this network (agreed by GEFONT).
3. The trade unions present commit themselves to resourcing GEFONT to carry out this task.
4. The trade unions present commit themselves to carry out the action plans and to publicise and promote the Kathmandu Declaration.

Vote of thanks

The trade unions and other labour organisations present at the International Trade Union conference held in Kathmandu, Nepal from December 10-13 1994 express their sincere thanks to GEFONT for hosting the conference, to GEFONT and APWSL as conference organisers and to APWSL and ASPBAE for helping fund the conference. The participants also express their congratulations to CPN-UML, representing as it does the interests of workers, peasants and other oppressed people in Nepal, for its recent electoral success and its formation of the new Government of Nepal.

List of the Participants

AOTEAROA (NEW ZEALAND)

Maxine Gay
General Secretary
N Z Trade Union Federation
P O Box 11891
Wellington
New Zealand
Tel: 64-4-389 8963
Fax: 64-4-389 5399

BANGLADESH

Amirul Haque Amin
General Secretary
National Garments Workers Federation
22/A Topkhana Road
Dhaka-1000,
Bangladesh
Tel: 24414 (Request)
Fax: 880-2-863535

H A Khan Rano
Vice President
Jatio Sramik Federation
667 Dhanmondi Rd 32 (old)
Dhaka, Bangladesh
Tel: 880-2-326537

Tafazzul Hussain
President
Bangladesh Jatiya sramik Federation
961/3 Outer Circular Road
Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217
Bangladesh
Tel: 880-2-832358
Fax: 880-2-831917

Abul Bashar
President
Jatio Sramik Federation
(National Workers Federation)
31F Topkhana Road
Dhaka-1000,
Bangladesh
Tel: 880-2-247975

Iqbal Mazumder
General Secretary
Bangladesh National Worker's Federation
Sub-Regional Coordinator (APWSL)
2, Hatkhola Road (1st Floor)
Tikatuli, Dhaka
Bangladesh
Fax: 880-2-831917

Shahidulla Chowdary
Secretariate Member Central Committee
Trade Union Center
23/2-Topkhana Road
(4th Floor) Dhaka

Bangladesh
Tel: 237416, 238612

Nurul Anowar
General Secretary
Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labour Federation (BAFLF)
G P O Box 935
Dhaka - 1000, Bangladesh
Tel: 880-2-247975
Fax: 880-2-833983, 864288

Mushrefa Mishu
President
Bangladesh Garments Labour Unity
48, Green Corner
2nd Floor
Green Road
Dhaka-1205
Bangladesh

Shirin Akhter
Executive President
Jatio Sramik Jote, Bangladesh
35/36 B B Avn. Dhaka-1000
Bangladesh
Tel: 239972 (O) / 317770 (R)
Fax: 88-02-862740

GERMANY

Grosche, Monika
Intern. Secr. of Fau
IWA + FAU
FAU c/o Buchlader Lesabot
BreiteStr. 76 53113 Bonn
Germany
Tel: (0049) 228 638930
Fax: (0049) 2281 695193

HOLLAND

Peter Custers
Secretary
BPSC
P O Box 40066
Looq BB Amsterdam
Holland
Tel: 00 31 20 6937681
Fax: 00 31 20 6937681

INDIA

Dipankar Bhattacharya
General Secretary
All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU)
J3/335 DDA Flats
Kalkaji
New Delhi 110019
India
Tel: 91-11-6483416

Ambarish Rai
Member of National Committee
All India Central Council of Trade Unionx (AICCTU)
82/38, Guru govind Singh Marg
Lal Kuon, Lucknow, UP
Pin 226001

India
Tel: 91 522 212906

Kanai Banerjee
Secretary
Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU)
15, Tal Katora Road
New Delhi 110 001
India
Tel: 371 4071 / 372 3825
Fax: 335 5856

A B Bardhan
General Secretary
All India Trade Unions Congress
24 Canning Lane,
Delhi 110 001
Tel: 387320
Fax: 386427

Kuldip Kaur
General Secretary of HCL Employees Union
HMS / APWSL
Flat No. 6, CPWD
Pandara Road
New Delhi 110 003
India

Yadav Ram Darsh
National Facilitator
APWSL / HMS
H No. 1139, Sector 18
Faridabad, Haryana - 121 002
India
Tel: 91-129-295644
Fax: 91-129-212596, 213586

Makender Kumar
Vice President
All Escorts Employees Unions
H No. 1107, Sector 18
Faridabad Haryana
Tel: 91-129-284911 Ext. 3471

JAPAN

Kitahata Yoshihide
APWSL Japan (General Union)
1-5-6, Mitejima
Nishi-Yodogawa-ku, Osaka
Japan
Tel: 81-6-4741167
Fax: 81-6-4741354

KOREA, SOUTH

Oh Jong Soae
Charger of Planning Dept.
Hyundai Trade Union Federation (Korea)
606-11 Chunha 2-Dong, Dong Gu
Ulsan City, Kyungnam, 682-062
Korea
Tel: 82 522 36 0771
Fax: 82-522 36 0772

Hwang Deok Soon
Researcher
KSI (Korea Social Science Institute)

Chugong Apt 1115-1211
Sangyeo Dong, Nowon Gu, Seoul
Korea
Tel: 822-363-1177
Fax: 822-365-2608

MALAYSIA

Mahadi Md Desa
Asst. Gen. Sec.
National Union of Employee
in Manifaltorin Rubbe Produci (NUEMRP)
Lot: 7132 N15 Floor, Jalan Utase 15/c
Shah Alam, Selangor,
Malaysia
Tel: 6-03 5501640
Fax: 6-03 5501170

NEPAL

Mukunda Neupane
Member of Parliament
Chairperson
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Bishnu Rimal
Secretary General
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

J B Rai
Vice-Chairman
GEFONT
Biratnagar
Nepal
Tel: 977-21-27321

Chudamani "Jangali"
Vice President, GEFONT
President, ITWAN
P O Box 160 Patan
Nepal
Tel: 411880
Fax: 411880

Bharat Pahari
GEFONT
Post Box 100
Pokhara, Nepal
Tel: 21934 (R), 21414 (O)
Fax: 411880

Hem Raj Regmi
Vice-Chairman
GEFONT
Nepgunj, Nepal
Tel: 977-81-20728 (Nepalgunj)
Tel: 977-1-411880 (Ktm)

Madhav Neupane
Member, GEFONT

Chairman, NIHWU
P O Box 160, Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Lalit Basnet
Vice-Chairman
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Bidya Bhandary
Member of Parliament
Coordinator
Central Women Workers Dept.
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Om Koirala
Vice Chairman
NIWU
Sunsari, Itahari
Nepal
Tel: 977-25-60222 / 80418

PAKISTAN

Riffat Husain
Coordinator
Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research
141-D/2, Annexe
P.E.C.H.S., Karachi - 75400
Pakistan
Tel: 4557009 / Fax: 4548115

Gulzar Ahmad Chudhary
General Secretary
All Pakistan Trade Unions Federation
114-Gulberg Road,
Industrial Area,
P Code No. 54660, Lahore
Pakistan
Tel: 374636 / 5712511

Rubina Jamil
President (WWO)
Chairperson (APTUF)
All Pakistan Trade Union Federation (APTUF)
114-Industrial Area,
Gulberg Road, Gulberg
Lahore - Pakistan
Tel: 92-42 571251/5712512/5712516/5712517
Fax: 92-42-5712682

PHILIPPINES

Joel B Maglunsod
Vice Chairman for Mindanao
Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)
24-B, Second Floor
AALA Bldg, Anda St.,
Davao City, 8000

Philippines
Tel: 62256

Manuel L Sarmiento
Secretary General
Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)
Rm. 301 Herald Bldg.
60-61 Muralla St.
Intramuros, Manila
Philippines
Tel: 632 480021 local 21, 482688
Fax: 632 587919

Daisy S Arago
International Dept.
Kilusang Mayo Uno
Rm.301 Herald Bldg.
60-61 Muralla St.
Intramuros, Manila
Philippines
Tel: 632 482688, 969151
Fax: 632 587919

SRI LANKA

Gamini Jayaweera
Deputy General Secretary
United Plantation Services Employees Union
143 KEW Road
Colombo 2
Sri Lanka
&
No. 693 Peradeniya Road, Kandy
Sri Lanka
Tel: 941 421573 / 320901-4
Fax: 941 32053

Sujatha Nawaratne
President
Women's Centre
15/28 Amandoluwa, Seeduwa,
Sri Lanka

Anton Marcus
Joint Secretary
Industrial Transport and General Workers Union
235-1/1, Olcott Mawatha
Colombo-11
Sri Lanka
Tel: 94-1-421542
Fax: 94-1-328111

SWEDEN

Ulf B Andersson
Journalist, Arbetdren
SAC, Central Organization of Swedish Workers
P O Box 6507
S-113 83 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel: +46 8 160890
Fax: +46 8 6730345

Dirk Grosjean
Member of International Committee
SAC - the Syndicalists Central Organization of Swedish Workers
Box 6507
S-113 83 Stockholm

Sweden
Tel: +46 8 6735272
Fax: +46 8 6730345

Mattias Gardell
International Department
Central Organization of Swedish Workers (SAC)
Box 6507
S-113 83 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel: +46 8 6735272
Fax: +46 8 6730345

Anna-Klara Bratt
ed. of SAC Newsletter
SAC-Syndikalisterna
Box 6507
11383 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel: +46 8 6735272
Fax: +46 8 6730345

Christina Dagberger
Member of the Executive Committee
SAC
Box 6507
S-113 83 Sweden
Tel: +46 8 673 3559
Fax: +46 8 673 0345

TAIWAN

Tsuen-Chyi Jeng
Director
Information Centre for Labour Education in Taiwan (ICLE)
5th Fl. #97-1, Jean-Ai Rd.
Sec. II, Taipei
Taiwan
Tel: (02)-392-8777, (02)-392-3670
Fax: (02)-351-7580

Lin-Ching Hsia
Director
Solidarity Front of Women Workers (SFWW) and Pink Collar Solidarity
4th Fl. #97-1 Jean-Ai Rd.
Sec. 2, Taipei, Taiwan
Tel: (02) 392-8777, (02) 392-3670
Fax: (02) 351-7580

Tsai, Chien-Jen
Labor Rights Association
3F-2, No. 76 Sec.3
Roosevelt Rd. Taipei
Taiwan
Tel: 886-2-3681599
Fax: 886-2-3681799

Chang Tseng-Jong
General Secretary
Taiwan Labor Right Association
3F No. 76 Sec.3
Roosevelt Rd. Taipei
Taiwan, China
Tel: 886-2-3681599/3681799 (off)
886-2-7211990 (Res)
Fax: 886-2-7113783 (Res)

REGIONAL (ASIA-PACIFIC) ORGANISATIONS

Robert Reid
Coordinator
Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity Links (APWSL)
P O Box 11 123
Wellington
New Zealand
Tel: 64-4-3848963
Fax: 64-4-3895399

Debkumar Ganguli
Secretary
World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)
Asian-Pacific Regional Office
2 School Lane,
New Delhi 110 001
India
Tel: 91-11-3322714
Fax: 91-11-3755419

Rex Marlo Varona
Research & Information
Asia Monitor Resource Center
444 Nathan Road, 8/F, Flat B
Kowloon, Hongkong
Tel: 852-2332-1346 / Fax: 852-2385-5319
email: AMRC@HK.SUPER.NET

Cha Mi Kyung (Serapina)
Information Service Coordinator
Asia Monitor Resource Center
444-446
8-B/F, Nathan Road
Kowloon, HongKong
Tel: 852-2332-1346 / Fax: 852-2385-5319
email: AMRC@HK.SUPER.NET

Prem Prasad Dangal
Intern
Asian Migrant Centre
4 Jordan Road
Kowloon, Hongkong
Tel: 852-2312-0031 / Fax: 852-2367-7355

SECRETARIATE

Binod Shrestha
Treasurer
General Federation of Nepalese Unions (FEFONT)
P O Box 160, Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Buddi Ram Acharya
Accountant
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Elizabeth Wong
Intern
Rural Reconstruction Nepal
P O Box 8130 Lazimpat
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-415418
Fax: 977-1-418296

Kiran Mali
Documentalist
Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)
P O Box 2726, Kathmandu
Nepal
Tel: 977-1-270770/271587
Fax: 977-1-226820/271587

Som Rai
Office Secretary
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Sunil Poudyal
Advisor
GEFONT
418 408 Dillibazar
P O Box 6511
Tel: 977-1-418408

Rajendra Mainaly
Member, Central Committee
Nepal Independent Electro Worker's Union
Post Box 160, Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel / Fax: 977-1-411880 (Gefont)

Ramsaran Pyakurel
Member, Health and Safety Dept.
GEFONT
P O Box 160, Patan
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

Jeetendra Shrestha
Member / Chairman
GEFONT / NIEWU
P O Box 160 Patan Gate
Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-411880
Fax: 977-1-411880

A GEFONT paper for International Trade Union Conference

Kathmandu, Nepal, December 10-14, 1994

1. Introduction

Today, under the direction of the western capitalist countries and international multilateral agencies like World Bank and the IMF, reactionary governments of the developing countries are implementing the economic liberalization and privatisation policies more vigorously. In the course of pursuing such policies it is wrongly argued that compared to Countries adapting west type liberal policies, Countries following state intervention policies have been unable to promote economic growth, enhance social welfare and ensure equitable income distribution in the society. Under the the liberalization policies predominant emphasis is given on the deregulation in all type of markets including labour market for facilitating the additional exploitation by monopoly capitalists. Since these policies completely ignore the deepening unemployment problems prevailing in the developing countries, they make tremendous negative impact on the earning and employment conditions of the workers. Yet, in the name of economic efficiency and productivity enhancement, the liberal policies are directed to replace exiting job guarantee and minimum wage policies by the policies of labour contract and labour mobility. The policies of privatisation and labour retrenchment embodied in the reforms have additionally threatened the very existence of labour union movement in the third world countries.

The present Conference on Strengthening Pro-worker Trade Unionism, therefore, is taking place at a time when the various policies pursued in the line noted above are working objectively against the interest of the working class. By taking advantages of the unipolar world and weakening people's movement in the third world specially after the down fall of the socialist system in the Eastern European countries and then Soviet Union, the capitalist and imperialist forces are engaged in concentrating capital in few hands of the western capitalists through whatever inhuman means. It is, therefore, obvious that unless this trend is checked, the survival of the working class will be more difficult in the days to come. In this context, we attach greater importance to this Conference. The way the international monopoly capitalist class is using capital as a weapon for the exploitation of the labour force and concentration of capital in few hands, it becomes the duty of labourers and working people to organize themselves in unions and strengthen movements against the liberalization and privatisation policies. We are confident that this Conference will be able to provide a new direction for exposing anti-labour policies popularised by Western Capitalist countries and multilateral agencies like World Bank and the IMF and strengthening national and international workers' movements.

In this paper below, at first, a brief examination of the general impact of liberalization and privatisation policies on the Nepalese economy in general and workers in particular is made. This is followed by the discussion on the history of labour movement in Nepal with special focus on the role of GEFONT for the cause of unionism and pro-workers movement. Last section examines the problems and

prospects of the international labour movement taking new challenges created by the liberalization and privatisation policies into account.

2. Impact of Economic Liberalization and Privation Policies on the Nepalese Economy and Workers

In Nepal, the liberalization and privatisation policies were initiated with the implementation of economic stabilization and structural adjustment programmes in 1985/86 and 1986/87 respectively. But these policies have been perused more vigorously after the formation of Nepali Congress Government in 1991.

It is now an established fact that the conditional programmes of economic stabilisation are imposed on the developing countries with a view to eliminate the deficits in the balance of payments and public accounts only through internal austerity measures in spite of worsening terms of trade, declining foreign aid and rising debt servicing problems playing critical role for such budgetary and payment problems. The structural adjustment programmes are imposed in the developing countries with the objective of removing the economic distortions created in the economy by the government's intervention in the time of implementing some social welfare and distributional programmes. The conditionalities in the structural adjustment programme include, among others, freeing of exchange and interest rate mechanism, removal of price controls and subsidies, reduction of tariffs and quantitative controls on imports and removal of export subsidies, introduction of de-licensing system in industries, removal of all type of barriers for foreign investors, privatisation of public enterprises, deregulation of markets, including the labour market and reduction in the level of public expenditure curtailing projects and programmes associated with even social sector development.

It is worth mentioning that the so called the structural adjustment programmes prescribed for the developing countries are not structural in true sense when they are compared with the structural problems prevailing in the developing countries. The structural problems of the developing countries have emanated due to the existence of feudal agrarian structure, worsening of terms of trade in the international markets, underdevelopment and exploitation of the productive forces, persistence of limited domestic market due to low level of purchasing power of the working class, institutional barriers so on and so forth. Interestingly, the programmes prescribed under the SAP for all the developing countries are the same without any reference to the unique problems of a particular country. Also every one can question the credibility of the programme since the whole burden of the adjustment is put on the borrowing country without any consideration to the adverse international economic environment. Thus, unlike the past, the multilateral agencies have succeeded to legitimate the exploitation of developing countries by the developed countries. The question again arises, why; in spite of this, most of the governments of the developing countries are carrying out these programmes? One attraction of the SAP is that the loans provided through this programme are non-tied to the projects and, therefore, they can be used on the wishes of the governments so long as the conditionality included in the SAP are implemented. Similarly, despite major benefits directed to the multinationals and international monopoly capitalist class, the class interest of the reactionary governments of the developing countries are also partly protected by the policies included in this programme. The export orientation, freeing of exchange rate system, elimination of input subsidies and deregulation of all kinds of market including labour market are some of the policies that ensure some benefits to the feudal, comprador and bureaucratic capitalists. Today, after succeeding to implement such programmes in

the developing countries, western countries and multilateral agencies are jointly advocating for the necessity of implementing the liberal and price dictated market policies so that the process of neo-economic colonization in the developing countries could be further strengthened. The recent decision to establish WTO has further circumscribed the scope of enjoying the limited economic sovereignty by the developing countries. The GATT negotiation has guaranteed the free movement of only capital not labour, thus preventing income and employment opportunities of the working class of the third world countries in the west.

In Nepal's context, if policies implemented during the period 1986 to 1990 are examined, it is found that the policies adopted were entirely based on the World Bank and the IMF conditionality included in the SAP. A momentum of enormous rise in debt outstanding and rapid increase in prices started in this period in Nepal. Similarly, a massive increase in poverty took place during this period. During the period 1986 to 1990 the rise in prices was more than 12 percent on the average compared to 5 to 6 percent during the period 1980 to 1985. The debt outstanding which was just 22 percent of GDP in 1985 reached as high as 53 percent of GDP in 1990. The economic growth rate remained around 4 percent during this period in spite of agricultural production increasing markedly due to good weather conditions. The poverty level went up to as high as 71 percent in 1990 from just 42.55 percent in 1985. Thus, a polarization process in the Nepalese society manifested during the SAP period with further marginalization of the workers and disadvantaged people.

The policies of the Nepali Congress government have made more pervasive negative impact on the socio-economic development of Nepal. As noted above also, after coming to the power in 1991, it has implemented the economic reform programmes more forcefully with predominant emphasis on economic liberalization, privatization and other price dictated market policies in the line suggested by the World Bank and the IMF. With the initiation of more drastic reforms, first of all, partial convertibility in the exchange rate system was introduced. This was followed by the adaptation of the full convertibility system in the current account. Also new industrial policy was formulated by abolishing licensing system which gives priority on the promotion of the export oriented industries. For strengthening price dictated market led system, subsidy on fertilizer, essential goods and services were reduced drastically. The tariff rates have also been reduced markedly without considering the likely adverse effect on import substituting and small scale industries. Similarly, during the last three years period, prices of several public utility services and petroleum products have been increased many times with sharp rise in the prices of both inputs and essential goods and services. To accentuate the privatization process, six public enterprises have been already sold to the individuals (including foreign individual) in spite of the fact that most of these enterprises were operating in profits. Since a new monopoly power has been granted to these sold enterprises, some of them have already raised the prices of their products massively with additional burden to the consumers and common people. Similarly, in the name of raising efficiency and productivity of the labourers, labour retrenchment policy has been adopted without any adequate facilities to the workers who have been forcefully ousted from the job. It is interesting to note that those who argue government failures due to certain welfare, job guarantee and minimum wage policy do not see any harm with deepening unemployment and poverty problems resulting from the liberalization and privatization policies. Nepalese experience clearly shows that whatever additional production or profitability ratio of the privatized enterprises has increased, it is primarily due to curtailment of various facilities to the workers and sharp increase in the prices of products as pointed out earlier also.

Despite too much propaganda made both nationally and internationally by arguing that the adverse effect of the new market oriented system is a temporary phenomenon, no positive impact on the development of productive forces is witnessed in all third world countries. Nepal is not exception of that. Yet, being one of the poorest Countries, these policies have made more pervasive negative impact on the Nepalese economy in general and workers in particular.

A sharp rise in relative prices in the commodity market, decline in real wages and other facilities of the workers have led to make unemployment and poverty problems very serious in Nepal. Like in many developing countries, Nepalese experience supports the view that when the SAP and other stabilization programmes are pursued in a situation where there is persistence of a slow growth rate in the economy, the overall effect becomes extremely painful. In such a recessionary situation when prices are sticky due to monopoly of capitalist in both factor and labour market, the economic hardship by the workers and faced by common people becomes intolerable. This is exactly happening in Nepal since 1991/92. The rate of inflation was highest in Nepal's history in 1991/92 which stood about 21 percent. The available information indicate that the pressures on prices is continuing every day. What inferences can we draw from the experience of these three years? The market dictated policies perused under foreign aid conditionalities can not only be painful for the majority of the people but also they can be harmful for even overall macro economic management particularly when they are implemented without considering the economic and social structure, market conditions and stage of the country's development into account.

In Nepal, available data show that marginal farmers, general labourers, production workers and other low paid workers living in both rural and urban areas constitute the predominant share in the total population. The manifestation of poverty and income concentration process started in Nepal specially after the implementation of privatization and liberalization policies. The available information additionally supports such a trend.

The World Bank estimates and other studies based on land distribution pattern and economic status of various socio-economic groups indicate that poverty level reached more than 71 percent in 1989/90 from 42.55 percent in 1984/85. More importantly, a recent study undertaken to examine the impact of the liberalization on the poverty has indicated that during the three years period of 1991/92 to 1993/94, the poverty went up to 76 percent.

The policies adopted to consolidate the land concentration process in a situation of more than 70 percent farmers holding less than 1 hectare of land and the policies executed in the industrial sector indicate that the the reform process will have no any positive impact on the poverty alleviations even in the long run. There is an additional danger of small scale and cottage industries collapsing every year due to their inability to survive in the competition. The encouragement given to the capital intensive techniques of production, disappearance of import substitution industries due to competition with multinational companies and policies of labour retrenchment will have more adverse impact on the employment conditions unless such policies are checked. Likewise, new Labour Act which permits equal employment facilities to the foreign labourers will accentuate a process of replacing Nepalese workers by foreign labourers. This will have more adverse effect not only on poverty and unemployment conditions but also on political stability and social harmony. Based on more than three years experience it has become clear that the present capitalist model imposed on developing countries like Nepal which the

objective of creating a new economic colony is completely against the national interest and development of the productive forces of our society.

3. Trade Union Movement in Nepal and GEFONT

The history of trade union movement in Nepal goes back to 1947 when workers of Biratnagar Jute and Cotton Mills went on strike for the rights of the workers. But due to division among union leaders, the strike did not continue for long. Also, the split among the union leaders prevented an opportunity of establishing a strong workers organization in the country. Only after the inception of democratic system in 1951, various workers unions came into existence in Nepal. In spite of limited rights enjoyed by the workers during the period 1951 to 1960, various unions operated freely during this period. However, the dark days prevailed in the history of workers movement in Nepal for almost three decades (1960 to 1990) as a result of imposition of autocratic system by the King by dissolving Parliamentary system in 1960. Despite the suppression of fundamental rights of the workers, labourers were organizing themselves secretly with a view to explore an opportunity of launching movements. Consequently, in 1978 labourers went on strike in Balaju Industrial Estate with some demands. In deed, this was the first strike of its kind after the imposition of party less system in the country. This strike encouraged workers to establish a preparatory committee in a way to create an independent Workers Union. Ultimately, a formal union was established in January, 1979. Along with this, other unions carried out also various activities and movement during the period 1978 to 1990 for the cause of the workers rights and facilities. During the same period, some other pro-worker and anti-worker unions were also established.

In order to consolidate the power of the workers and make the workers organizations more effective, General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) was established by bringing four major workers unions within one umbrella in 20th July, 1989. This Federation which is representing this Conference played a leading role in overthrowing the autocratic system in 1990. Although with the restoration of multiparty system in 1990, unions like Nepal Trade Union Congress, All Nepal Trade Union Congress, All Nepal Trade Union and Nepal Revolutionary Workers Union have been established, they are functioning in a limited scale due to weak base among the workers. Hence, GEFONT has been the main stream of workers movement in Nepal today. It opposes anti-worker unions because our experience shows that it serves the interest of the capitalists as well as management at the same time, GEFONT follows the principle of pro-workers unionism in which both legal and other means are practised for preventing the exploitation of the workers by the owners of the industries. Our experience suggests that there is always a danger from anti-workers unions because they work as agents of the factory owners. Therefore, GEFONT is marching ahead cautiously to bring about the workers union in the right path. Consequently, its strength has increased day by day and it has now become the hope of the workers as its membership strength and popularity among the workers indicates.

GEFONT is continuously opposing the the liberalization and privatization policies of the Nepali Congress government from the days they were initiated. GEFONT is aware with these policies which are essentially directed to create polarization process in the society by proving additional facilities to the capitalist class through allowing more and more exploitation of the workers. The experience of all most all Countries practising such policies indicates that they have benefited only wealthy people having access to resources and control of factors of production. In almost all such countries where such policies have been launched, not only the real wage

rates are declining but also the rate of unemployment is increasing. Similarly, the policy thrust on labour mobility and contractual arrangements is either trying to destroy the concept of unionism or facilitating more exploitation of the workers by the capitalists. In order to prevent the imposition of such anti-labourers policies, our union is fighting continuously. We are opposing privatization and labour retrenchment policies of the government vigorously. Likewise, we are launching movements regularly for ensuring higher salaries and other facilities to the workers

Immediately after the restoration of multiparty system, strikes and other type of movements were launched by the workers demanding higher salary and wages. This was quite natural to do so in view of all the voices of the labourers suppressed for more than three decades. As a result, factory, hotel and transport workers, who were on strike, were sacked by the management. However, in most of the cases GEFONT has been able to force management to withdraw such harsh actions. GEFONT is fully aware that unless the process of liberalization and privatization is halt more problems will be faced by pro-workers unions tomorrow. Not only Nepalese labourers have been increasingly displaced by the foreign labourers after the implementation of liberalization policies but also with the expansion in foreign investment, the factor share of the labourers in total value added is decreasing enormously in Nepal. One study based on manufacturing census data shows that the labourer's wage share in total value added in foreign joint venture industries has reduced to just 6 percent in 1991/92 from 18 percent in 1986/87. Similar pattern has started to emerge even in local factories as a result of new anti-labour policies embodied in the liberalization policies. GEFONT believes that only with the strengthening of pro-workers movement at both national and international level, we will be able to protect the fundamental rights and interest of the workers.

4. Problems and Prospects of Strengthening International Pro-Workers Movement

The the liberalization and privatization policies which pursue following major workers related policies have created serious problems from the standpoint of strengthening pro-workers movement:

- a. No Work - No Pay
- b. Free Trade Zone
- c. Labour Contract
- d. Labour Mobility
- e. Labour Retrenchment

In order to check strikes and discourage workers movements no work-no pay policy has been increasingly followed in the world today. Similarly, in the name of encouraging export oriented industries and promoting exports, the developing countries are encouraged to establish free trade zones. In such zones, free mobility of capital and labour is allowed which leads to either displace local labour force by the external labour force or local workers are compelled to accept low wage rate in the midst of rising unemployment problems. The policy of labour contract is more dangerous since it aims to abolish the workers traditional employment guarantee rights. Likewise, the policies encouraging labour mobility have been increasingly practised to ensure competition among the workers and prevent the possibilities of formation of workers unions in factories. In countries where unemployment problem is serious and majority of the work force is unskilled, this policy has created too much problems to those who were employed on a permanent basis or to those who have been unable to increase their productive capacities through

training and other means. In societies where all type of facilities including education and training are enjoyed by the upper class, this policy tries to further marginalize the say of the workers. The labour retrenchment policy has been equally dangerous from the point of view of strengthening workers' movement. In the name of increasing efficiency and raising productivity of the economy, a policy of workers retrenchment in government departments, factories and privatised enterprises have been implemented. This policy directly undermines the job guarantee rights of the workers and, at the same time, makes the job of the workers highly insecure. This policy also intends to eliminate the role of the workers unions.

In such a difficult situation, the responsibility of the workers union to fight for the cause of workers has tremendously increased. For the successes, it also becomes necessary to launch movement against those unions which always in the name of unions work against the interest of the workers.

As noted above also that the policies of liberalization and privatization by accentuating polarization process in the societies have led to create enormous unemployment and poverty problems in the developing countries. Therefore, nationalist and progressive forces of the developing countries are increasingly realising that unless these policies are opposed strongly in a collective way they will eventually lead to finish even the limited economic sovereignty enjoyed by the people of the developing countries. As a result of this, various movements in different forms are mounting in many developing countries. We believe that this will help to forge a broad based alliance nationally and internationally in opposing the anti-people and anti-workers policies in the days to come. It also seems that the way international monopoly capitalist class is concentrating capital in few hands, it will not be able to protect and sustain global economy through these policies. At the same time, the confrontation among capitalist countries is growing for the markets in the developing countries. The impoverishment of the majority of the people in developing countries will additionally limit the size of the market in the developing countries. In addition, there is a trend at the global level that some parallel forces will emerge very soon in the international arena which will be able to destroy the global monopoly enjoyed by the imperialist forces so far. These are some of the positive developments taking place in the global economy which will contribute positively toward launching pro-workers union movement more effectively at the global level in the days to come.

Nevertheless, we are of the view that some initiatives are needed immediately toward strengthening the pro-workers movement at the national and international level. First of all, it is necessary to create a networking among the pro-workers unions at national, regional, sub-regional and international level. In the beginning, such a networking can be informal. This should help disseminate the information within the pro-workers unions. Such a networking, in the beginning, can be utilized to support pro-workers movements going on in the different parts of the world and express solidarity. However, we are of the view that such a network should work without any political biases. For strengthening such a movement, simultaneous initiatives will also be needed to organize discussion and exchange of views and pro-workers trade unions on vital issues in a continuous manner so that broad consensus could be created in important matters of international concern. Likewise, the net working of pro-workers unions should be expanded based on equal footing and mutual respect rather than on the criteria of small, big, rich and poor. If we could devise some norms and modalities in the line noted above, we believe that we will be able to fight jointly against pro-rich and anti-workers policies practised

by the reactionary governments of the developing Countries for serving the interest of the capitalist and imperialist forces of the world.