

## PLENARY 5: PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Tuesday 17th January

This Session was designed to take notice of the voices of the regional bodies of the Labour movement, as well as other sustainable development stakeholders. Willy Thys, General Secretary of the World Confederation of Labour (WLC) chaired this session.

### Trade Union regional bodies:

*Lawrence Egulu* spoke on behalf of the African Regional Organisation (ICFTU-AFRO), *Iván Gonzalez* on behalf of the Interamerican Regional Organization of Workers (ICFTU-ORIT), *Govindasamy Rjasakaran* on behalf of the Regional Organisation for Asia Pacific (ICFTU-APRO), and *Joel Decaillon* on behalf of the European Trade Unions Confederation (ETUC).

The three ICFTU regional bodies' (AFRO, ORIT, and APRO) presentations highlighted three recurring themes:

- A demand for coherence and interaction between the three pillars of sustainable development;
- A present lack of sufficient Trade Union involvement in sustainable development policy, contrasting with a will to become involved at all levels; and
- Opposition to the privatisation of essential goods such as waters.

Joel Decaillon on behalf of ETUC (a regional organisation not affiliated internationally, either with the ICFTU or with the WLC) outlined the action of his organisation in the area of the environment. The work of Trade Unions in Europe can have an influence on the whole world. He insisted on the necessity of democracy at all levels in the sustainable development policy. ETUC is currently considering becoming a member as part of the current development of a new international Trade Union organisation. This would constitute a powerful element for the development of the sustainable development policy of the new organisation.

### Other Stakeholders:

Brent Wilson, Deputy Director of the International Employers' Organisation outlined the need to seek the involvement of social partners in the design of sustainable development policies.

Ms. Mary Ann Forbes, representative of AFL-CIO's East African Regional Solidarity Center, read a message from Irene Dankelman on behalf of Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO). She drew the meeting's attention to the fact that women in weak workplace positions were the first victims of inadequate policies and of poor working conditions.

Clif Curtis, Director of the Global Toxics Programme of WWF International, shared with the Assembly several anecdotes and success stories to show that on a number of occasions Trade Unions have played a critical and positive role on environmental issues, often in partnership with environmental organizations. Curtis expressed the willingness of his, and other environmental organisations, to establish bridges with Trade Unions, and to find forms of concrete co-operation.