

OPENING SPEECH OF THE DEBATES
IN THE SECOND CONGRESS
OF THE P&R TUI OF THE WFTU

Comrades,

We are starting a great and important Congress, much better than our First Congress held in Barcelona 5 years ago.

There are X delegates present here today, who come from Y countries of the 5 continents. Moreover, there are Z delegates who have not been able to attend due to health problems, economic difficulties or visa denials among other causes.

At the last congress in Barcelona, there were 64 delegates coming from 20 countries, also from the 5 continents although there were other 28 delegates more, wished to attend, that they couldn't do it for different reasons too.

But in addition to the leap forward in the figures, we have (as it will be demonstrated by your interventions) a great wealth of experiences and struggles that will serve us to reflect collectively and be able to decide the best way to work from this Second Congress to the next one, the Third Congress that we will celebrate in 5 years.

It has been shown, as it is mentioned in the reports submitted to this Congress, that creating a TUI of P&R, the TUI of the most veteran and expert trade unionists and members of the working class from all over the WFTU, was a success of the XVth Congress of the WFTU.

I am not going to remember, right now, all of the words in the documents that have been presented, but I do recommend their important contents to those who have not read them calmly and completely so that, the comrades who have not studied them thoroughly take advantage of any moment to read them carefully before their intervention with the microphone.

I am referring to:

- the important and clear document presented by our President, the comrade of the PAME of Greece Dimos Koumpouris.
- the document Balance of 5 years of work of the direction chosen in our First Congress that I sign and it was sent to you many months in advance in 4 languages.
- the balance sheet of the Ministry of Finance, the only one that has promoted initiatives (although very little has been followed) among all the Secretariats elected at the First Congress.
- the brief documents that some of the other 24 members of the management have sent as personal contributions, although unfortunately there are many missing documents that we

expected from members of the outgoing management who have been left without being accountable for their work, or without justifying why not they worked for our TUI. Documents all of you have received and have at your disposal, in several languages, on the website of our TUI.

Our International Union of Pensioners and Retirees (P&R), which includes both trade unions and diverse associations (all of them with class positions), remains the only worldwide organization that unites P&R's struggles in the whole planet.

For 4 years we have been the only voice of P&R that has been heard in the ILO. Capitalist governments and yellow unionist have listened to us there; exploiters capitalist governments, who hide themselves from being so and they are called "employers" there in the ILO (to give a positive image of capitalist exploitation), and the yellow ITUC unionists who agree to be called workers instead of representatives of the workers or trade unionists (this other name does not please the ILO, since it reminds us that there is class struggle, and in the ILO the pro capitalists never speak of it). None of them, capitalist governments and yellow ITUC unionists, are willing to do anything to improve the living conditions of the P&R if they are not forced to do so by our struggles and actions.

Struggles and actions that have grown in large number in recent years. For example: in Greece, in France, in Cyprus, in Italy, in Spain (where yellow trade unionism has been surpassed by the popular class movement), in several countries in Africa, in many of America (especially: Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, USA, Mexico, etc.) and in countries of Asia and the Arabian Countries

Actions which we should grow and coordinate better, both within the same continent or region and worldwide. For example, European Union, instrument of the multinationals, is already preparing a PEPP (European Plan for Private Pensions), which really is a Plan for more Privatizations of pensions. We do must respond from the P&R of the 29 countries of the EU to that plan. Improving this coordination is the task of our organizations in Europe.

Among the documents under discussion here you are the two following ones:

1. The intervention proposal of our TUI in the next meeting of the Presidential Council of the WFTU. Collecting your suggestions about this matter will be useful and democratic.
2. The speech proposal that the new General Secretary of our TUI will be able to make next June, in the ILO meeting that will serve to remember its 100 years of existence. And I said to remember, because we, the representatives of the P&R with class positions, do not want to celebrate 100 years of bureaucracy and hypocrisy since the ILO has not played the role that should have played in the class struggle existing on the planet Land.

We will celebrate the existence of international organizations such as the UN, UNESCO, FAO and ILO, organizations where the WFTU is represented, only when these organizations are useful to the working class; when these organisms denounce in truth and act against the real exploitation of man by man; when these international organizations help to end injustice, hunger, lack of drinking water, education and health, existing in too many places on the planet; when these agencies really do something to end the unfair distribution of wealth (for

example, the 7 richest people have the same money as the poorest half, that is, equal to 3.5 billion people. Each of these seven people has the same money as 500 million poor people); when they denounce the imperialists who, with continued and unpunished genocides, plunder the countries that suffered centuries of colonialism.

The P&R will continue to say what our just demands are, in all international forums, in order to continue advancing in the attainment of our demands.

The P&R are approximately, it depends in each country, 20% of the population, but we are almost 30% of the voters in the political elections. Percentage that increases its influence if we consider that veterans can and do influence the decisions of younger generations.

We are going to launch a global campaign so that the P&R do not vote anymore to political parties that support the existence of capitalism in any electoral process.

Capitalism is the worst enemy of Humanity.

As I explained in Africa a few months ago to dozens of union leaders from Burkina Faso in a Trade Union Training Seminar, which they knew how to organize rightly: If we want to eradicate any evil, we must know what is its origin, its cause, where it comes from. And capitalism is the cause of many of the evils that the inhabitants of the planet suffer. Health, food, education, housing, all the basic needs of any person are deficient when they are organized as a business, when they are privatized.

The TUIs of the WFTU, which brings together Public Services workers, succeeded with its slogan: "No to the privatization of Public Services, because what they want is trying to deprive us of such services".

With public pensions, which should be entitled to any person (has or has not been quoted), the same situation happens, they are also the great objective of the privatizing desire of the leaders of capitalism, and this is how the proclamations of the IMF and the World Bank remind us.

Capitalist leaders know that a new crisis of their system is brewing, and to face it they look for new money from the working class which they can steal from us. They have seen that in the Public Funds or Savings and Social Security Funds of the almost 200 states of the planet there is much more money than in the banks, and they want to seize this great capital to manage it privately. They want to extend to all the capitalist countries Pinochet's anti-worker experience in Chile (aided by the yellow trade unionism of the ICFTU, now ITUC) that has left the P&R of this country in misery.

But our TUI is, and will continue to be, at the head of the global fight against these proposals.

That is why we launched the World Day of Struggle of the P&R, on the year 2016, on the date of October First that the UN has identified as the day of the "elderly person".

We launched this World Day, which, at this Congress, we are deciding to repeat every year, to demonstrate that our struggle as P&R is not an isolated fight country by country, since it is a struggle against the orientations and decisions made by the capitalist governments and that support the unions of class collaboration, also called reformist unions, social democratic unions, social peace unions, unions that deny the existence of class struggle, yellow unions.

This year, 2019, we will hold the fourth World Wrestling Day, on Tuesday October 1st. In each country the trade unions and associations of our TUI must study the best way to participate in this day, either with demonstrations, with rallies, with public events or parties, with assemblies or as in each place it is considered more appropriate, but always following the slogans of our TUI of P&R of the WFTU.

Even the date can be before or after October 1st, if we state clearly that we want to join the World Day of our TUI.

As October 3th is the anniversary of the founding of the WFTU we can also add the two actions in only one act, making clear in this case the double meaning of the struggle.

To prepare better the annual actions of our TUI around October 1st, and last year, in the year 2018, we began the celebration of continental or regional actions during May month. Each continent or region must see each year what date is the best in its territory to highlight and unify the regional, continental struggle of the P&R in their area. This should allow to make the lists of claims of the P&R by continents or regions, to get as close as possible to the different realities.

All these realities and data must be sent to the new address of our TUI, which we will choose tomorrow, February 28, 2019, to serve to reinforce the morale of struggle, and the optimism of our contribution to the class struggle.

But, attention, comrades, this new direction cannot repeat the mistakes made by the previous direction chosen in the First Congress. No one should access this new address if they do not have time to work as a member of it.

In the WFTU people are not elected in the management bodies to accumulate a new responsibility if they will not be able to comply with it later. Those elected to international responsibilities, who are the most important in our structure of class unionism, should devote the best of their time to international responsibility.

I make this reflection from here so that nobody copies the bad of the class collaboration unions, in which accessing an international responsibility means having more paid tourist trips. The international leaders of the WFTU when we travel do not do tourism (sometimes we only see the airports, the hotels and the meeting rooms), because our effort, our trip we do it to improve the necessary international struggle of our class.

I therefore ask that this be considered today when the proposals of people that we must choose tomorrow as the new direction of our TUI are made or confirmed.

I trust that by applying the above we will take a necessary and important step in the work of our TUI, and that each person who assumes a Secretariat or responsibility will devote the necessary time to fulfill the commitment that is acquired before this International Congress.

I also trust that, if we, all the organizations that make up our TUIs, are coherent with what we are saying and approving here, we will know how to comply with our obligation to contribute to TUIs, leaving behind the stage where only 9 organizations have contributed money for our international work to work.

We will look for complementary forms to the necessary, regular and annual contributions, those marked by our statutes, with all kinds of initiatives, such as the dissemination of handicraft products, starting with those of Burkina Faso, which are on display in this room.

We will also commit ourselves to provide all the information of the reality of our struggles so that the advances in a country (for example those of Uruguay or Bolivia) are known and understood by all and serve for new advances in our struggle in more countries. Here the Study and Research Commission has a very important task to perform, but it needs all of us, it needs us to respond to its requirements.

I also trust that we will know how to start up the work in defense of equality of Rights between men and women. Equality now non-existent also in the subject of the claims and achievements of the P&R. For this, in each organization of P&R, the most appropriate partner should be chosen as the person in charge of the woman and we should connect with who we designate tomorrow as the person in charge of the Gender Secretariat of our TUI.

We have spent all our working lives fighting and winning battles as leaders of the working class. Now we must spend the last years of the final stage of our lives continuing the struggle with our class, some active, still exploited, others, us, in a passive situation with direct exploitation, but in active situation really, to continue uprooting the societies capitalists our just claims.

This Second Congress will serve to advance as an organized working class, of which the P&R are a part. It will serve so that we can unite more and better the struggle of active workers (who should not forget that they will be P&R) with that of the ex-exploited who are already P&R.

The WFTU will continue helping us to advance our struggles, it will allow us to be truly internationalists, following the great and historic slogan: "PROLETARIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, WE FIGHT UNITED"

LONG LIVE THE WFTU!

LONG LIVE THE TUI OF P&RJ!

LONG AND WORTHY LIVE THE P&R!

Bogotá, Colombia, on February 27th of 2019.

Quim Boix

General Secretary of the TUI (Trade Union International) of Pensioners and Retirees (P&R) of
the WFTU