



**FEDERACIÓN SINDICAL MUNDIAL**



**CALL LETTER**

FOUNDING CONGRESS OF THE **TUI**

FROM UNIONS OF THE **WFTU**

**Of Pensioners and Retired**

**"IT WILL BE HELPFUL FOR THE WORKING CLASS**

**JOIN IN A UNION ALL THE PENSIONERS OF THE PLANET "**

INTRODUCTION. -

This letter of call is the result of the acceptance and implementation of decisions of the 16th Congress of the WFTU (April 2011) and its Presidential Council in South Africa (February 2012), concerning the organization of the WFTU Pensioners and Retired Persons (P&R).

This met in Athens on May 9, 2012) a Preparatory Committee agreed: << work now to prepare in Barcelona, Spain, 2013 (later with details of exact dates six months in advance) The First Congress of Trade Unions Class of Pensioners and Retired (P&R) related to WFTU. >>

At the end we are adding a copy of the summary of the decisions taken at this preparatory meeting.

Be sent with this letter of invitation to a survey in each country are collected the basic

data of the reality of pensioners and retirees (see survey project, not yet placed on a table at the end).

The details of the call (dates, visas, documents, etc..) will be specifying in time.

**Confirm your participation in the following emails:**

**WFTU Central Offices:**        [contact@wftucentral.org](mailto:contact@wftucentral.org)

**Quim Boix:**                    [quimboix@quimboix.es](mailto:quimboix@quimboix.es)

MOTIVATION. -

The creation of a TUI (Union International) of the WFTU brings together and coordinates the class unions of Pensioners and Retired Persons (hereafter P&R) from around the world will be a step in the right direction marked by the 16 Congress of the WFTU.

We are in a real and long structural systemic crisis of capitalism. We know that union struggles of the working class have thrived when they have known to be framed within the political objectives and not just purely business goals. Currently, these struggles can be framed as enablers of breaks with the capitalist system with the advance in class consciousness and the enormous and growing productivity. This will also be beneficial for P&R.

In this global reality there are still many countries where workers do not have a minimum of labor rights. Thus the right to a pension and a decent pension (ie decent living) is an outstanding achievement in too many countries. Consequently, in countries where such right exists we must act with proletarian internationalism that characterizes the WFTU and fight for the right to a retirement pension, which can live well above the so-called poverty line, a reality in all places on the planet.

Following a good trade union practice there are many countries around the world in which class unionism is concerned to organize unions, and autonomously and specifically, the P&R. Without this fact the World Congress are calling this letter would not be feasible. Today we have class unions that organize their members P&R on three continents: America, Asia and Europe.

Just keep in mind that there are other countries with long tradition of trade union work and entitled to pension and retirement in the class that unions do not devote much attention to P&R. In most cases P&R we maintain a trade union activity, we are an aid to general union activities an asset specific to P&R unionism.

Also we must remember that we are a collective P&R much more important than we sometimes think. We are a group that can fight without fear of being fired. We are, by country, from 20 to 30% of the population exercises the right to vote (if this right is recognized), we are people with long experience and political union, with leaders trained in many battles, and many people who despite their age are still willing to fight

against capitalism.

As we said in the 16 Congress of the WFTU President of the Federation of P&R of PAME, comrade Takis Mavrodóglu: "We are former employees, veterans, but always keep fighting for our rights, next to our class."

True that age sometimes involves great difficulties, mainly health and mobility, but that should concern us is able to take advantage (for the benefit of the class position of trade unionism) the great potential of the aforementioned group. And so we must organize and coordinate.

They are relatively recent in the long history of the world labor movement, the significant gains that labor rights have been removed for P&R capital. Part of this group reaches this condition health issues that prevent them from working to retirement age, while most retirees have health and ability to enjoy life when we finished to be directly exploited by capitalism.

They were the great achievements of class unionism in the twentieth century around the globe, which determined the right to retire, and that set the age to go to this condition. We cannot forget that the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 helped greatly to these achievements of unions in the capitalist world. The finding that in the USSR, and many other countries, had the right to retire, with 100% of salary after 25 years of work, was a huge jump and stimulus aid to fight European and global union .

This was achieved in many countries the right to universal retirement recognized by bourgeois law, changing from one country to another age and the requirements to live, having worked and contributed a lifetime. The age of 60 years was a landmark, but there were countries where this age varied (decreasing or increasing, depending on their specific history of labor struggle and union). Also started recognizing the right of women to retire earlier than men (up to 5 years earlier) and the right of certain professions (for hardness, see mining and others) to retire up to 10 years before the general age legal for this.

All these rights, which were won and improved with the workers' struggle of the twentieth century, several countries are in outright recession, taking advantage of its structural crisis of capitalism and get the leaders of the world bourgeoisie claudication capital of unionism that is coordinated in the ITUC. Rights are being lost before conquered, both in the number of pay received per year, the amount thereof as well as the criteria to calculate them, and the age to access them.

Capitalism, to keep consistent with the essence of operator, constantly attacking the workers' gains, and in this sense creates the Private Pension Funds (PPF) first supplement the state pension, and then as a major financial business powered by the big banks (aided by leaders of organized labor union pacts, docile to the capital, such as the ITUC International Trade Union Confederation), all to undermine workers' rights won.

In recent years there has been serious loss of rights of P&R. For example in Portugal and Greece were extra payments have been abolished in Spain, France and other countries have delayed the retirement age and has reduced the amount of pension paid. This has happened mainly in countries where the large unions, given their loss of class

consciousness, have been subjected to the wishes of big business. The same is happening in countries that failed to build socialism and were implanted capitalist plunder. The latest information about the rejection, by referendum, the Slovenian pass to 65 retirement age, they had to preserve as a socialist country, which was 57 to 58 years.

But then there are countries that have increased in recent years these rights, the P&R. Especially in Latin America are still significant achievements in the advancement of anti-imperialist positions. In addition to Cuba, which maintains its status as a socialist country and proves to be the working class is in power and governs today in Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador and others have made and are making significant progress that the bourgeois press mute or attacks. A notable example is Bolivia, where a few months ago has lowered the retirement age to 60 years for men and 55 for women (down to 49 if they have 3 or more children).

To complete this brief analysis, we will use the responses to the survey that goes to the end, to draft documents that will inform the debates of Congress that convened here

#### DECISIONS. -

To defend the rights of P&R we trust not only trade unionists in the active working class (who are also interested in these wins, because you can enjoy on reaching the retirement age) continue to struggle, as it did in to start your day capitalism the right to a dignified retirement, if we are to maintain, as people no longer farmed, not in active labor, our ability to intervene, to fight, and we claim to know:

#### A) In the least developed countries in the union struggle:

- Recognition of the right, after a certain age (maximum age 60) to a decent pension, which can live above the poverty threshold (its value should never be less than minimum wage).
- Coverage of all publicly funded health needs and free care for the needs of the age, without these funds (once collected) can be used for other expenditures.

#### B) In countries with a tradition of union struggle:

- Keep to the gains already acquired P&R and expand, with more extensive coverage free quality of the needs of the age: health, care, leisure, transport, training, legal advice, etc..
- Extend P&R intervention in decisions that affect them.

To achieve this we will create a TUI of P&R, equipped Statutes, linked to the WFTU, with their bodies and with minimal financial means for its operation.

Knowing just fight for these claims (preventing the implementation of the proposals of the IMF and EU, who value the aging of the population as a cost to the system instead of valuing it as an advancement of humanity), expand your list and impact is what the new TUI will P&R around the planet. Our ability class and internationalist depend also extends to the entire planet the right to a dignified old age and quality.

TUI sure you know this new coordinate the good experiences of struggle that we now have the kind of P&R unions around the world. The class struggle is not retirement age. "The union will fight to the last class day of our lives" as we said Comrade Mavrodóglu Takis.

This will gain the ability to intervene WFTU and struggle for ending the exploitation of man by man. Only in society without exploiters, not capitalism, socialism, workers' achievements will be guaranteed.

Signed (July 2012):



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Quim Boix".



George Mavrikos  
Secretary General of the WFTU

Quim Boix  
President of the Preparatory Committee  
Gral. Sec. of CSU (P&R) Spain

**Agreements of the first meeting**  
**to prepare the World Congress of class Trade Unions of**  
**Pensioners and Retired People (P&RP)**  
**in order to create the TUI of P&RP of the WFTU**

Athens, May 9, 2012

At the headquarters of PAME's Pensioners Federation.

ATTENDANTS:

Valentín Pacho, of the WFTU Secretariat

Dimos Kuburis, President, PAME's Pensioners Federation

Manolis Kalakis, Secretary General, PAME's Pensioners Federation

Other comrades in the leadership of PAME's Pensioners Federation

Costas Skarparis, Secretary General of PEO's Pensioners Federation

Mohan Bahadur K.C., President of Nepal's ENSAN

Quim Boix, Secretary General of the Spanish CSU (P&R)

Pieris Pieri, President of WFTU's European Regional Office

Ramón Cardona, President of WFTU's Latin American Regional Office

Justified absence of the representative of Hungary's pensioners

AGREEMENTS:

1.- To accept the decisions of WFTU's 16 Congress (April, 2011) and of its Presidential Council held in South Africa (February, 2012), and to work, from now on, to prepare, in Barcelona (Spain), in 2013, the first Congress of the P&RP class trade unions associated to WFTU (later on, six months in advance, the exact dates will be set).

2.- To create and join the Preparatory Committee of the above-mentioned Congress, with the addition of a representative of Brazil's pensioners, electing comrade Quim Boix as president of the said Committee. A comrade of the P&RP European Secretariat, elected in the Canary Islands (Spain) in 2008, is also invited to this Preparatory Committee. We will also try to have a representative of the African continent and another one of the Middle East join the Committee, the WFTU's Secretariat being in charge of carrying out the necessary procedures.

3.- To write, well ahead of time so they can be translated, distributed and discussed by all trade unions interested in participating in the first Congress of the WFTU's P&RP,

all the documents to be used in order to hold the Congress: A) Announcement Letter (one month after the draft was presented by comrade Quim Boix), B) Document which analyses the real conditions in which the class trade unions of the P&RP are struggling, C) Statutes draft of the new TUIU of the WFTU.

4.- The official languages will be Spanish, French and English.

5.- The WFTU's Secretariat will make available the documents which, in the last few years, have been used to create other TTUI, in order to have a reference for the documents of the new TUI of the WFTU.

6.- The trade union goals and aims of the said Congress will be stated and set in the Announcement Letter.

7.- To complete the analyses of the real conditions in which the class trade unions of the P&RP are struggling which have already been dealt with at the meeting (with data for Greece, Cyprus, Nepal and Spain), by means of a survey which will be sent out in writing, before next August, to all WFTU organizations which may be able to complete it.

8.- To invite all P&RP from the five continents to prepare specific actions as pensioners on the World Action Day of the WFTU, on October 3.

9.- PAME's Pensioners Federation offers to help with the administrative work involved in the whole process.

10.- Spain's CSU (P&R) is starting a wide fund-raising campaign to fund the Congress, starting on May 26 in Zaragoza (Spain), at the next meeting of Spanish class trade unions.

11.- To capture the words of the senior Greek trade unionist, comrade Takis Mavrodóglu: "We are senior former workers, but we will always keep on struggling for our rights, along with our class."

## **PENSIONERS' RIGHTS**

### **WORLD SURVEY**

HERE WE ONLY REFER TO STATE PENSIONS

“P&R” are the initials of “Pensioners and Retired people”, meaning both those who started receiving a state pension after retiring from work at a certain legal age, and those who receive any other state pension for any other legal reason: ex. widows, handicapped people, etc..

The requested information refers to the year 2012, unless otherwise stated.

In those questions which have an \* at the end, a possible answer is N/A –not available, not applicable, or N/E non-existent.

In case of any doubts when interpreting a certain question, please, before answering it, consult the authors of the survey, so that the answer can be correct.

### **QUESTIONS:**

- 1.- Name of continent
- 2.- Name of country
- 3.- The country's inhabitants (figure)
- 4.- Total number of P&R pensioners in the country
- 5.- Percentage of total voters in the country which is made up by P&R pensioners
- 6.- The country's life expectancy
- 7.- Current legal retirement age in order to be able to receive the maximum state pension \*
- 8.- Minimum retirement age in order to be able to receive a pension (even if it is a reduced one) \*



9.- Lower age of legal retirement that has existed in the country (indicate age and year)  
\*

10.- Minimum number of years of work and pension contributions needed to be able to receive a pension \*

11.- Minimum number of years of work and pension contributions needed to receive the maximum pension \*

12.- Number of years of work and pension contributions currently needed to calculate a pension, based on the official, declared salary \*

13.- Number of years of work and pension contributions needed to calculate a pension, based on the official, declared salary, when that number of years was the lowest \*

14.- Number of years of work and pension contributions needed to calculate a pension, based on the official, declared salary, when that number of years was the highest \*

15.- Lowest legal retirement age that has existed in the country's history (indicate the age and the year) \*

16.- Highest legal retirement age that has existed in the country's history (indicate the age and the year) \*

17.- Are there different retirement ages for women and men, and/or for difficult or distressful jobs? (Please, explain) \*

18.- Are there different types of pension contribution systems (ex. farming, mining, public service, military, etc.), or do all workers contribute to the same pension plan? (Please, explain) \*

19.- Monthly amount of the lowest possible pension \*

20.- Percentage of all pensioners that receive that monthly lowest pension \*

21.- Monthly amount of the highest possible pension \*

22.- Percentage of all pensioners that receive that monthly highest pension \*

23.- Monthly amount of the average pension \*

24.- Number of times a year that that pension is received \*

25.- The amount of the pension, is it increased, indexed or updated annually? \*

26.- If so, with what criteria? \*

27.- Monthly income figure below which the country's official poverty level is established

28.- Monthly income figure considered (by unions) necessary for decent living

Additional official benefits **for P&R** -please provide details:

29.- Transportation \*

30.- Health and medical care \*

31.- Medicines \*

32.- Various other aids (food, house cleaning, personal care, etc.) \*

33.- Entertainment and leisure time activities and venues \*

34.- Legal aid and support \*

35.- Senior citizens' field trips and vacations \*

36.- Subsidies or total coverage for old folks' residences \*

37.- Home caregivers' subsidies or total coverage \*

38.- Remote monitoring services (by phone, etc.) \*

**FINAL OBSERVATION:**

Please add any other consideration which may be relevant but missing in this survey.