

TNC UPDATE #24

03-2016



A regular update of IUF TNC activity exclusively for IUF affiliates. More detail can be requested from the individual IUF staff person identified with each entry.

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AGRICULTURE

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Compagnie Fruitiere

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The 3rd IUF Africa Banana Workers' Network meeting was held in Accra from February 22-24, 2016. The meeting brought together trade unions representing workers from the **Ivorian, Cameroonian and Ghanaian operations** of this Marseille-based TNC.

A field visit to **Golden Exotic Ltd (GEL), the Ghanaian subsidiary of Compagnie Fruitiere** took place on February 22. It provoked discussion about the low number of women employed even in the pack house, the usual place in the banana industry where women work. There was considerable interest in GEL's increased production of organic bananas and the system of composting waste from the plantation both of which were felt to be measures that would improve the occupational health and safety situation of workers. GEL employs about 2,500 workers.

The Cameroonian and Ivorian participants reported on progress that they have made in negotiations with the company since coming together through IUF training activities in trade union platforms. The platform in Plantations du Haut Penja (PHP), Cameroon, brings together 6 unions while the Société de Culture Bananière platform, Ivory Coast, brings together 4 unions. The PHP platform reported that they had managed to reduce significantly the time needed to reach an agreement with PHP in annual pay negotiations.

Participants received research reports produced by the UK based NGO Bananalink on the role of women in the banana export industry of West and Central Africa and analyses of working

conditions in Cameroon and Ghana. Copies are available from the secretariat.

It was agreed that occupational health and safety and women's employment would be the focus of future activities plus preparing the participation of Africa trade unions in the forthcoming **World Banana Forum Conference**.

Sugar: Illovo Sugar

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Two IUF affiliated unions, representing workers in Illovo Sugar operations in **Zambia** (Zambia Sugar) and **Malawi** Illovo Sugar (Malawi), have started negotiations on wages and financial allowances such as Education, Leave and Subsistence for the current year.

These unions are usually the first ones to launch negotiations, from among six that represent workers employed by the company in Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and South Africa – in the latter, negotiations take place under the National Bargaining Council for the Sugar Manufacturing and Refining Industry, where the next round of negotiations is scheduled for the week of February 29, 2016.

Focus on Sexual Harassment in the sugar sector

The **IUF Sugar & Palm Oil project** (2015-2017) held workshops focussing on Sexual Harassment, continuing the long-term work with **IUF's South African affiliate FAWU's** sugar membership.

One of the project's focal points is the FAWU Gender Forum at the Sezela Sugar Estate, owned by Illovo Sugar. While the company has a comprehensive policy on Sexual Harassment, the Gender Forum has an ongoing work to sensitise all employees, independently of their gender or race, about the issue, which is acquiring more prominence as knowledge is shared and workers, especially women, are encouraged to talk about it.

The Sezela Forum actively supports the IUF Sugar & Palm Oil project by sharing their experiences with other FAWU sugar instances, including sugarcane farming operations.

For more information, see: [South Africa: Confronting sexual harassment in the sugar sector: Joint work with FAWU \(Chapter II\)](#).

BEVERAGES

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Coca-Cola

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A number of workers at the Ballina Coca-Cola concentrate plant in **Ireland** have chosen to join IUF affiliate SIPTU. Management responded to SIPTU's request to meet on behalf of those workers by a blanket refusal to meet. The IUF urged its affiliates organized in Coca-Cola to send letters to the Global Workplace Rights Director of the company calling on Coca-Cola to take action and ensure Irish management respects freedom of association and collective bargaining rights of SIPTU members. The IUF thanks those affiliates from France, Japan, Canada, Uruguay, Ghana, USA, Mexico, India, Tunisia, Croatia, Guatemala, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Finland and Tanzania for sending protest letters to Coca-Cola. There have now been recent signs of movement by the company.

Workers at two **Chicago-area Coca-Cola Refreshments (CCR)** plants organized by the IUF-affiliated Teamsters took strike action on December 3, 2015 and stood on the picket line for 27 days. A tentative agreement was reached on December 29. Teamsters Local 727 members voted to overwhelmingly ratify a new three-year contract with Coca-Cola Refreshments in both plants on January 10, 2016. The agreement provides annual wage increases, retroactivity and improved health and welfare benefits for 319 Coca-Cola production and warehouse workers and transport drivers. Read more [here](#).

In the **Philippines** members of the IUF-affiliated FCCU SENTRO voted overwhelmingly for strike action to stop wage theft on the first week of February 2016. Over the past 12 months workers at Coca-Cola FEMSA bottling plants and distribution centres across the Philippines suffered significant wage losses due to payroll errors including miscalculation of hours worked, unfair deductions and unpaid overtime. Read more [here](#).

Women break through employment barriers in Pakistan

A big breakthrough for women saw 3 women employed as fork lift operators in **Coca-Cola Pakistan** in 2016. They are the first women to ever operate forklifts in Pakistan. This achievement by the IUF-affiliated Pakistan Food Workers' Federation sets an important precedent overcoming many of the arguments that used to

explain a lack of hiring of more women in bottling facility jobs. Read more [here](#).

The recent consultation meetings on the restructuring plan between **Coca-Cola Belgium management and the IUF-affiliated FGTB-Horval** included management requests for more flexibility. IUF affiliates are calling on Coca-Cola to withdraw its unreasonable demands for labour flexibility, respect the work/life balance needs of its workforce and ensure that the existing rights and benefits of Coca-Cola workers remain accessible to all. Read more [here](#).

Through the Atlanta process and pressure on the company, Coca-Cola **Cambodia** management has recognized the IUF-affiliated Cambodia Food and Service Workers' Federation and started discussions about the transfer of jobs from the existing plant to the plant under development.

In **South Africa** Gutsche Family Investments, Coca-Cola Co. KO 0.50 % and SABMiller agreed to combine soft-drink bottling operations in November 2014, but the local Competition Commission held up the deal for more than a year, eventually agreeing only under the condition the merging parties lay off no more than 250 people. The merger deal will be closed in about 18 months following its announcement.

The next **IUF-TCCC meeting (the "Atlanta Process")** is scheduled for May 12, 2016 at Coca-Cola's headquarters. Please inform the secretariat any labour rights issue/s and updates/follow-ups you would wish to have raised by the contact group at the meeting with the company by writing to burcu.ayan@iuf.org no later than March 31, 2016.

PepsiCo

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The IUF has over two years demanded the reinstatement of workers at a warehouse in **West Bengal, India** run by Radhakrishna Foodland Pvt. Ltd (RFKL) that exclusively supplies PepsiCo, as well as full restoration and guarantees of their rights.

IUF/PepsiCo discussions in 2015, the submission of a formal OECD Guidelines complaint to the US National Contact Point and mediation in Washington DC held under the auspices of the US National Contact Point following this complaint have failed to resolve the conflict that exists between the IUF and PepsiCo over this issue.

The IUF will continue to hold PepsiCo fully and directly complicit in these human rights violations in their supply chain in West Bengal, India until a fair and just remedy is provided to these workers.

International trade union support at home and abroad continues to build for the struggle for workers at warehouses in West Bengal, India contracted to PepsiCo who were sacked after forming a union in 2013. Korea Food union members and migrant workers, Nestle unions in Russia, Asia Pacific young workers, IUF affiliates and women's committee in Ukraine and unions organized in Heineken recently showed their solidarity with the unfairly dismissed workers.

The IUF-affiliated FGTB HORVAL in a meeting for its West-Flanders region informed shop stewards about the ongoing fight in India and had its members sign the postcards in support of "STOP PepsiSqueeze!" international campaign. Find the details of these actions at www.pepsisqueeze.org.

Site delegates from FIRST Union and E Tu met with the senior management of Pepsico New Zealand (Bluebird Foods) in a regular meeting of the Consultative Committee and raised the ongoing violations in India and asked the company to reinstate these workers with guarantees that they can exercise their right to form or join a union without fear of reprisal.

UNIFOR representatives raised the issues in India with PepsiCo Canada management during their bargaining negotiations along with copying them on the letter UNIFOR has sent to Indra Nooyi. The Company committed to raising it with their New York offices.

BREWERIES

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ABInBev

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In **South Africa** a broader public focus, including issues such as employment rights for black South Africans, could see ABInBev waiting a minimum of 12 months and possibly 18 months or longer for the green light for its SAB acquisition in the country; a slower and tougher process than the regulatory process in the U.S., Europe and China.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) together with the IUF-affiliated FAWU plan to employ a strategy mobilizing not just employees but also SABMiller suppliers. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

As part of the \$105 billion deal of ABInBev acquiring SABMiller, SABMiller is selling its stake

in MillerCoors to Molson Coors. On September 2015, MillerCoors announced plans to close its **Eden, North Carolina**, brewery organized by the IUF-affiliated Teamsters, effective September 2016. This plan would result in the loss of about 520 jobs.

The IUF urged affiliates organized in SABMiller, MillerCoors and Molson Coors to send protest letters to the CEOs of these 3 companies and call on MillerCoors to reverse its decision to close the award-winning Eden, N.C., brewery. IBT thanked the IUF affiliates in Argentina, Russia, Colombia, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Japan, the US, and the Latin America region on behalf of affiliates in South America for showing their solidarity.

The IUF Secretariat is collecting information from affiliates organized in ABInBev and SABMiller about the possible impact of ABInBev's acquisition of SABMiller on the workforce in different countries. Affiliates should inform burcu.ayan@iuf.org about any issues that arise locally as a result of this acquisition.

Asahi

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Asahi made a binding offer to acquire the Peroni, Grolsch and Meantime business from SAB Miller. ABI has not made any official decision yet on whether to accept Asahi's offer.

Asahi Brewery Labour Union in Japan is a member of IUF-affiliated Food Rengo.

Heineken

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The IUF organized the **1st Heineken Unions International meeting** on February 16-17, 2016 in the UK. The meeting discussed plans to strengthen union membership in Heineken and to advance a common strategy to build and secure full trade union rights and union bargaining rights for IUF affiliates within Heineken. Please write to burcu.ayan@iuf.org for further details of the meeting's outcome and decisions.

Four contract workers at the Heineken plant in **Sao Paulo, Brazil** were killed and another injured when a boiler under repair exploded on January 28, 2016. Despite the fact that work at the plant resumed eight days after the accident, the IUF-affiliated National Confederation of Food and Allied Workers (CNTA) is still waiting to receive the company-commissioned report and the reports from the Ministry of Labor, the fire and police departments. Read more in English [here](#), in Spanish [here](#) and in French [here](#).

The IUF will continue to raise the issues in Haiti with senior corporate management of Heineken in the Netherlands as we seek to resolve outstanding rights issues. The company remains resistant to discussions with IUF communicating only via emails. Management's failure to engage is likely to lead to further public action.

CATERING

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Sodexo

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IUF and Sodexo delegations participated in a joint mission to Sodexo workplaces in Tamil Nadu, India from February 21-24 to ensure access to the rights guaranteed in the IUF/Sodexo International Framework Agreement.

Worksites visited were Sodexo contracts with Flextronics, Renault Nissan and Nokia. IUF representatives were also able to visit migrant workers employed by Sodexo at their accommodation and after being introduced by Sodexo management were able to spend time with these workers without management present. Sodexo workers employed at Apollo Tires also met IUF representatives at the workers' accommodation.

Sodexo and the IUF will work on a joint report which details responses given to the questions asked of both management and workers. Based on the responses from workers a number of important issues will need to be dealt with and changes agreed to ensure that Sodexo employees in India can fully access the rights spelled out in the IUF/Sodexo agreement.

DAIRY DIVISION

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The Dairy Division is focused on building and strengthening organization within major dairy TNCs tracking on a regular basis the progress of unionization site by site.

As part of this broader strategy affiliates are working together to establish international union alliances within selected companies to share information about collective bargaining strategies, fight precarious work and provide mutual support to union organizing activities. Recently, union alliances have been established in Saputo and Arla.

With the assistance of our Australian affiliate, the NUW, the IUF is establishing a shared web space where dairy affiliates can source information on collective bargaining agreements,

ask questions of each other and respond to queries.

The **4th IUF International Dairy Division Conference** will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, May 24-26, 2016. There, participants will hear progress reports on organizing within major TNCs and their supply chains and plan ways to strengthen that organization through targeted work and mutual concrete solidarity and support.

Arla

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On February 2, 2016 a meeting of affiliates with members in Arla was hosted by IUF's Danish affiliate 3F. Participants agreed to establish an **International Arla Union Alliance** to share information, coordinate activities in defense of union rights and provide practical support to union organizing efforts.

Preliminary meetings with Arla have established recognition of the IUF by the company. The IUF Secretariat and a representative group of affiliates will meet Arla Foods in regular structured formal meetings, the first of which is scheduled for April 14, 2016. The excessive use of precarious work, particularly in the UK and Finland, will be one item for the agenda.

Danone

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Negotiations between Danone and a small team from the IUF Secretariat which began in March of 2015, have resulted in an international agreement on decent employment enhancing protection for permanent jobs, limiting the use of non-permanent workers and strengthening access to rights.

The text, after being reviewed and amended by the team of IUF affiliates that meets Danone within the framework of our twice-yearly union-management meetings, was then circulated to all IUF affiliates with membership at Danone for their endorsement. The agreement was signed in Paris on 15 March, 2016. The IUF considers this agreement to be a significant advance in our struggle to limit and reverse the growth of precarious forms of employment.

Monitoring existing IUF/Danone agreements

A joint IUF/Danone visit to **Russia** in December 1-2, 2015 focused on two factories: Petmol in St. Petersburg, a former Unimilk factory acquired by Danone in 2010 and organized by the AIWU; and the Chekhov factory near Moscow organized by Novoprof. Danone Russia management presented a self-

assessment of the application of the agreements which highlighted areas that needed improvement. Discussions based on this built a good basis for future union-management engagement. The IUF/Danone monitoring team, Danone Russia management and the trade unions agreed that it would be useful to organize a follow-up visit in 2016.

The follow-up visit to Russia has now been scheduled for November 2016. The timetable of visits for 2016 also includes **Brazil** in April (postponed from November 2015), **Ireland** in July and **India** in September 2016.

To raise awareness of rights under the IUF/Danone agreements, the IUF is preparing a leaflet for circulation amongst affiliates with membership at Danone. Additionally, the IUF and Danone are working jointly on a series of posters about the agreements which will eventually be displayed in Danone offices and factories world-wide.

Saputo

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The second conference call of the Saputo union alliance is scheduled for March 23, 2016 when affiliates will report on collective bargaining progress, highlight any company trends with relation to workplace issues and discuss any opportunities provided by the forthcoming International Dairy Division conference to coordinate and enhance work within Saputo.

FAST FOOD

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McDonalds

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In December 2015, the **Korean Arbeit Workers Union** released a survey revealing that wage theft at McDonald's Korea could total as much as \$ 7.2 million. The McDonald's workers surveyed reported regularly performing unpaid overtime averaging twenty minutes per shift. The union is demanding that time required for changing in and out of uniforms be treated as working time.

Earlier this year, management of the McDonald's restaurant in central **Milan, Italy** informed on-duty employees that the restaurant would be closing the following day and that 46 of the 50 workers would be transferred. The remaining 4, 2 union members and 2 union representatives, were dismissed. The IUF-affiliated Italian unions Filcams-Cgil, Fiascat-Cisl and Uiltucs-Uil fought back with a series of demonstrations and filed a lawsuit against McDonald's Italy for illegal anti-union activities and unlawful dismissal of the four

trade unionists. On November 12, 2015 the Labour Tribunal confirmed these violations and ordered McDonald's to immediately reinstate the 4 union workers dismissed on July 20.

Sbarro

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IUF-affiliated Novoprof is supporting and organizing workers at the **Moscow** restaurants of the international fast food chain Sbarro, where workers have not been paid since July 2015.

On December 24, 2015 workers formed a union that joined Novoprof and submitted their demands for payment of arrears, union recognition and permanent employment contracts to the Russian holding company Hospitality Planet, which holds the franchise for the US-based chain in Russia and the CIS, the Baltic states and Central and Eastern Europe. When their demands were rejected, Novoprof held a picket at the holding company and supported a work stoppage on January 7, 2016. The union has filed a complaint with the General Prosecutor's office.

3rd International Fast Food Workers' Day, April 14, 2016

Since 2014, fast food workers in over 30 countries have joined forces in a growing international campaign in support of fast food workers everywhere. This has involved organizing work in different regions tackling issues including wage theft, zero-hour contracts, low wages, precarious employment and the right to join or form a union. In support of these campaigns and to show support for fast food workers fighting and organizing in many countries, the IUF is again asking all affiliated unions, particularly those with members in the fast food sector, to join the **3rd International Fast Food Workers' Day** and to take action to draw attention to the generally poor conditions of fast food workers on April 14, 2016 through demonstrations and protests, preferably outside local national or international fast food restaurants.

FISHERIES

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The **1st International Meeting of Fishing Industry and Aquaculture Workers' Unions** was hosted in Oslo by the Norwegian Food Workers union NNN on November 23-24, 2015. The participants discussed possible approaches to campaigning and organizing workers in major top companies in the sector. The meeting established a working group to

develop coordination of campaigns in this sector and place freedom of association in the center of the debate on human rights violations and labour exploitation in the sector. The meeting contributed to the solidarity fund for the workers struggling for rights and reinstatement at **Citra Mina** in the Philippines and adopted a resolution to support their fight.

Citra Mina / Philfresh

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On November 13, 2015 union members and their families marked the second anniversary of their struggle by [marching 18 kilometers from the Citra Mina factory to City Hall in General Santos](#).

The two-year dispute has made Citra Mina a much publicized example of a socially destructive company. Its behavior was also the subject of discussion at the ILO tripartite meeting of experts on labour exploitation in the fishing sector (Oslo November 25-26, 2015), where a representative of SENTRO, Emilio Pana, highlighted the long-standing abuse of the workers' rights. After coordinated interventions of the joint IUF and ITF delegation, the meeting concluded that the main problem in the sector is a deficit of Freedom of Association rights and the first step towards "decent work" should be the enforcement of workers' right to form trade unions.

Phillips Seafood

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US-based company Phillips Seafood has reacted to the international campaign calling for the reinstatement of unfairly terminated workers and union recognition by introducing a management-manufactured union in their factory in Lampung, Indonesia.

Almost 7000 messages were sent in support of the workers through the urgent action platform, set up by the IUF Secretariat. The campaign is still active and you can add your voice [here](#).

Les Conserveries Marocaines – DOHA

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Over 500 workers in the Moroccan city of Agadir have been on strike since March 2015 at DOHA, part of the wealthy BICHA Group. DOHA workers, nearly 95% of whom are women, produce tinned fish and other products for worldwide export.

The company retaliated by hiring 500 new workers, in violation of the labour code, seeking punitive financial damages against 51 active union members and claiming MAD 3,000,000 (EUR 278,000) in damages from union leader

Rahmoun Abdellah. Since Abdellah cannot pay the fine, the court ordered 'precautionary confiscation' of his apartment. The union has held solidarity sit-ins and protest marches as Abdellah's case has moved through the appeals process and the courts have outrageously upheld the confiscatory penalty.

On March 23, 2016 the IUF Seafood coordinator joined the members of CDT at the court hearings in Inezgane. In the presence of international observers the judge decided to postpone the final hearings to April 15. International solidarity can have a big impact in this case. The IUF will be calling on affiliates to engage local Moroccan diplomatic facilities and send a formal letter of protest to the authorities.

To read more and take part in the on-line campaign in support of the members of CDT please click [here](#).

Human rights in global fish and seafood industry: a workers' report

At the mandate of the IUF meeting in Oslo the Secretariat started to draft a human rights report for the seafood industry. The report will list the ongoing violations of freedom of association and workers' rights in the seafood companies. It will be presented to the ILO, FAO and European Union to initiate discussion of the deficit of regulatory mechanisms protecting labour rights at companies operating in this fast growing segment of the food industry. Affiliates wishing to share information for this report should contact kirill.buketov@iuf.org.

FOOD PROCESSING

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Mondelez (ex-Kraft)

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Affiliates around the world are fighting continuous restructuring, outsourcing and relocation of production lines, in a relentless drive by Mondelez to reduce costs and, as a consequence, destroy decent unionized jobs.

At the initiative of a group of affiliates, the IUF circulated a statement to affirm affiliate solidarity and to pledge to take all practical measures to provide mutual support to protect the rights and welfare of our members.

IUF affiliates have pledged support to our **U.S. affiliate, the BCTGM**, in a protracted fight with Mondelez concerning the transfer of 600 union jobs from Chicago to Salinas in Mexico. The BCTGM has launched a major campaign to stop the destruction and transfer of these union

jobs involving, along with the IUF, U.S. unions affiliated to the AFLCIO, local and national politicians, community groups, religious leaders and consumers.

Meanwhile negotiations between Mondelez and the BCTGM over the master collective bargaining agreement have stalled over company proposals to replace the current pension plan to the detriment of employees.

On March 3, 2016 in **Ireland** members of IUF affiliates SIPTU and Unite went on strike at the Mondelez owned Cadbury production plant in Coolock, Ireland in a dispute concerning the outsourcing of jobs. The company is determined to outsource 17 directly employed warehouse workers and 350 union members at the site are striking until the company reverses this decision. At the time of writing the Irish Workplace Relations Board has brought the Company and the unions together for further talks.

The IUF plans to convene a meeting of Mondelez unions in the 4th quarter of 2016.

Nestlé

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Representatives of the IUF Secretariat and the IUF Moscow office met with Corporate and Russian Nestlé management in Moscow on February 17, 2016 to ensure union rights in Russia are respected and to foster good faith industrial relations.

The IUF delegation demanded the company recognize that Nestlé unions in Russia are legitimate representatives of their members for all workplace issues and that Nestlé must engage in negotiations, including over wages through a process of collective bargaining.

Nestlé unions had consistently been referred from local management to national management and then back to local management in their attempts to enter into wage bargaining.

As reported in TNC Update #23, Nestlé announced in 2015 that it would comply with ILO Convention 183 on **Maternity Protection** which allows paid maternity leave of 14 weeks. The implementation of this policy in the United States has thus far not complied with the Convention as our affiliates' members have been told they must use outstanding annual leave and sick leave before extra paid leave can be used to top up to 14 weeks. The IUF has intervened at corporate level to clarify the policy and demand consistent implementation.

To advance the work on gender equality at Nestlé, the IUF presented a draft text of an

agreement at a meeting of a **joint working group on gender equality** on January 14, 2016. The draft agreement would formalize the joint commitment to promoting a work environment that enhances gender equality and is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Supported by engagement between the IUF and Nestlé at regional level Nestlé **Hong Kong** and the Nestlé Hong Kong workers union signed a recognition agreement on January 20, 2016. It is only the second agreement of its kind in Hong Kong and follows a similar agreement won by IUF members in Coca-Cola.

In **Indonesia**, the leadership of all 5 Nestlé unions met for 3 days in January 22-24, 2016 to prepare for a discussion with the company on a national agreement to include a national wage scale, pension plan, medical coverage, and political provisions. The target is to have a national framework in place by the first week of July 2016.

As reported in the last TNC update, **Nestlé Japan** has interfered in the internal operations of the Nestlé Japan union resulting in most members voting to disband the organization to form an employee association. However there were many members opposed to the dissolution and Food Rengo is seeking access to speak with these workers with a view to re-establishing a union. Nestlé Japan has been blocking access and the IUF has pledged to find a resolution to this denial of access to allow workers to freely exercise their rights. The issue will be an agenda item at the next **IUF/Nestlé meeting to be held on June 3, 2016**.

At the meeting of the **Nestlé European Works Council in Lausanne**, November 26-27, 2015 union delegates adopted a statement on the refugee crisis in Europe and committed to giving it wide publicity through workplace and union communications channels. The statement underlined the values of unity, solidarity and compassion which underpin the trade union movement and the central role of trade unions in promoting equity, fairness and inclusiveness.

Unilever

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Agreement preventing sexual harassment at the workplace

On January 26, 2016 the IUF, together with IndustriAll, signed an agreement with Unilever on preventing sexual harassment at the workplace. The text is available online [here](#).

The agreement with Unilever is the second international union agreement on sexual harassment the IUF has negotiated, following the 2013 agreement with banana producer Chiquita.

The joint commitment recognizes that sexual harassment is a universal problem, in and outside the workplace. While the International Labour Organisation defines sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination and it is illegal in many countries, it remains difficult to tackle effectively.

The agreement gives a clear, comprehensive definition of sexual harassment to ensure that Unilever management at every level and all employees, including employees provided by third party labour suppliers, are fully aware of what constitutes sexual harassment; sets out procedures through which employees know how to raise a potential issue and can feel confident to report any abuses; specifies the concrete measures the company must follow in the event of a complaint; and gives detailed guidelines for jointly implementing the commitment at every Unilever workplace and for evaluating progress.

The agreement states that local discussions on implementation should have begun following the January 26 signing and should be completed by the end of this year. The IUF plans to produce training and other material to accompany the implementation process, to work with affiliates on implementation and to jointly monitor progress through the regular meetings and communication between the IUF, IndustriAll and Unilever.

The IUF encourages affiliates at Unilever to contact local management with the goal of establishing agreed implementation measures as set out in the agreement, and to inform the Secretariat of developments in this regard. Please contact the IUF Secretariat for any further information and/or assistance.

HOTEL CHAINS

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IUF International Housekeepers' Campaign

“Make my workplace safe – Dignity for Hotel Housekeepers!”

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The IUF took part in a Global Hotel Housekeepers Initiative workshop held in **Brazil** on January 21-22, 2016. The first part was focused on health and safety at the workplace while the second part addressed trade union

activity in this area: how to improve working conditions in the workplace through collective bargaining with companies. The workshop was organized by Brazilian affiliate CONTRACTS with the support of the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center and IUF-affiliated Unite Here.

As a direct result of Global Housekeeping Campaign activities in the **Philippines**, IUF-affiliated NUWHRAIN won a government administrative order for the inspection of hotels for non-compliance with national labour and health and safety regulations. Last year NUWHRAIN held a dialogue with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) on the abusive working conditions faced by housekeepers in hotels throughout the country.

In response DOLE issued an Administrative Order to conduct unannounced inspections of 10 hotels in Manila. This is the first time that a Special Assessment of Visit Establishments (SAVE) will be conducted in any industry in the Philippines. The compliance inspection will be conducted jointly by DOLE, the Bureau of Working Conditions, the National Conciliation and Mediation Board and the Occupational Safety and Health Centre and will focus on the abuse of precarious employment and the health and safety conditions of housekeepers.

As one of the main goals of the initiative is to engage hotel companies in developing new policies, the IUF and the **Spanish hotel chain Melia** have agreed to set up a working group to cooperate on this issue, whose first meeting will likely be in March 2016.

The latest issue of the UK workplace health and safety publication [Hazards](#) features the IUF global hotel housekeeping campaign from a health and safety angle, stressing that "improving workers' health and safety was the best way for hotel unions to recruit more members, become better organised and to empower members to negotiate better working conditions".

Accor

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In July 2015, Accor sold both the Novotel Mississauga and the Novotel North York, **Canada**, to Vrancor, a local company which refused to respect the voluntary recognition agreement for Novotel North York that Unite Here Local 75 signed with Accor earlier that year.

Initially, the pressure that the IUF had put on Accor corporate management and the complaint the union filed in December 2015 led

to what seemed like a positive solution of the case.

The Canadian Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that the voluntary recognition agreement signed between Accor and Unite Here Local 75 was valid despite the fact that Accor had sold the hotel to Vrancor and that Vrancor had violated Ontario Labour Law and committed unfair labour practices. The OLRB also ordered Vrancor to schedule at least three negotiating sessions with the union prior to the end of January 2016.

In recent weeks however, everything has unravelled. After local management and the new owner had a meeting with Accor's Vice-President for Novotel North America on February 3, 2016 Vrancor refused to bargain again arguing, among other things, that the Accor representative had suggested to them that the union did not have the support of the workers!

Novotel North York management has again refused to bargain and the case is now scheduled to be back at the Ontario Labour Board. The union has filed further unfair labour practice charges against the Novotel North York as management is again refusing to bargain with the union.

None of this would have happened had Accor secured a legal commitment from the new owner to respect their agreement with the union at the point of sale — something that is standard and easily done under Canadian law. It is also worth mentioning that Accor chose to sell these hotels to a company — Vrancor — with one of the worst labour relations records in the Toronto region.

Late last year another hotel owned by Vrancor and represented by the union went through an 11 week strike as Vrancor was the only company in the region that refused to meet the Toronto-area union standard agreement after some 40 hotels across the region had already agreed to it.

Accor international organizing project

A two-day workshop organized by the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center took place in **Brazil** on January 21-22, 2016 focused on International Framework Agreements in hotel chains with Brazilian affiliates CONTRACTS and CONTRATUH. Union officials agreed on a working plan and a list of demands was presented to the company to start negotiations.

Discussions are ongoing with affiliates in other countries that will lead to an expansion of this Accor international union organizing project.

KMA Hotels

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On March 7, 2015 management of the Bagan Hotel River View in **Myanmar**, part of the KMA Hotels group summoned the union executive to a closed meeting in a private hotel room guarded by hotel security and instructed them to disband the union and to sign resignation letters. Five union leaders who refused were immediately terminated. The Bagan Hotel River View union is one of the three hotel unions that formed the independent Hotel Chitthu Township Level Labour Organization, Bagan-Nyaung Oo (HLOB).

The IUF wrote to corporate management and an urgent action initiative was launched which resulted in 6,500 protest emails.

Management has now started screening job applicants to identify potential union supporters.

The local authorities have twice issued reinstatement orders for the 5 dismissed union leaders. However management has only agreed to “formally” reinstate them while forbidding them access to their jobs and their members at the hotel.

A second international protest action was launched in July, 2015 with over 7,700 emails sent in support of these workers. On November 16, 2015 the IUF filed an ILO complaint against the government of Myanmar for violation of ILO Conventions 87 & 98. Labour Ministry officials at national and local level in Myanmar immediately responded in November to questions raised by the ILO regarding the complaint, went to Bagan and met with the union to ask for more information about the unfair dismissals.

Affiliates will be informed about further developments.

Melia Hotels

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On February 15, 2016 a meeting between the IUF, its British affiliate Unite the Union and Melia management was held in London to discuss and seek solutions to the conflict in the UK, where local management denies union officials access to meet workers. The IUF has reiterated the clear demand for a quick and effective solution, reaffirming that this situation is clearly in contradiction with the **IUF/Melia International Workers Rights Agreement**. It was agreed that discussions would continue.

The second part of the workshop held in Brazil on January 21-22, 2016 (see Accor) was focused on Melia. Delegates were updated on current developments within affiliates and agreement was reached on the need for a specific Melia workplan.

MEAT

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Meat sector TNCs

Following the establishment of the **IUF Meat Division**, the IUF Secretariat has requested affiliates provide information on numbers of organized and unorganized sites operated by the major meat TNCs in their countries. Once the information is received and the current map of unionization established, the Meat Division will develop a strategy aimed at increasing the number of unionized sites and strengthening union presence within these TNCs. Progress will be monitored between meat division conferences by a steering group which will be established and hold its first meeting before the end of 2016.

Talleys/AFFCO

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The IUF is supporting its New Zealand affiliate, the NZ Meat Workers Union (NZMWU) in its long fight with the serial rights abuser Talleys Ltd and its meat subsidiaries AFFCO and South Pacific Meats. Workers at the North Island AFFCO plant in Wairoa were locked out for more than 5 months after they refused to exit their collective bargaining agreement and sign on to company determined individual employment agreements.

The lockout ended only when the NZ Court ruled it was illegal and the workers must be re-employed on the terms of the expired CBA. The NZ employment authority provided for interim reinstatement to the dismissed union leaders pending a substantive hearing of their case.

Union shop stewards in another plant were fired under bogus health and safety charges after visiting their workplace after their normal working hours to assist union members.

One worker was refused immediate transport to medical facilities after his arm was sliced open and another worker had his head impaled on a meat hook. The New Zealand health and safety authorities have brought successful prosecutions against the company in both cases.

IUF support has included an urgent action initiative to end the lockout and reinstate union leaders and the publicizing of the company's cavalier disregard for workers' health and safety.

The rights abuses have been brought to the attention of 3 retailers (Sainsburys, Marks & Spencer and COOP) who are members of the Ethical Trading Initiative in the UK as well as the French retailer Carrefour with a request for these companies to directly intervene with their supplier in this case to put an end to these ongoing rights abuses.

TNC UPDATE

"TNC UPDATE" is a publication exclusively for IUF affiliates and governing bodies. It is not available to a broader audience.

"TNC UPDATE" is available to affiliates on the members-only **TNC UPDATES** section of the IUF's web site. Password is ch1213.

The publication regularly brings brief reports of IUF Secretariat activities in relation to the major TNCs which feature in the Secretariat's work. More detail can be obtained from the respective IUF staff person identified for each company.

The secretariat hopes this publication helps to inform affiliates of the work in this specific area undertaken on their behalf and adds to our ability to build union strength inside these companies.

Comments and suggestions about this from affiliates are welcome. They should be sent to iuf@iuf.org

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