



**TRANSPORT WORKERS: BEYOND 2000  
PROGRESS REPORT**

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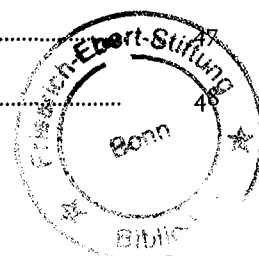
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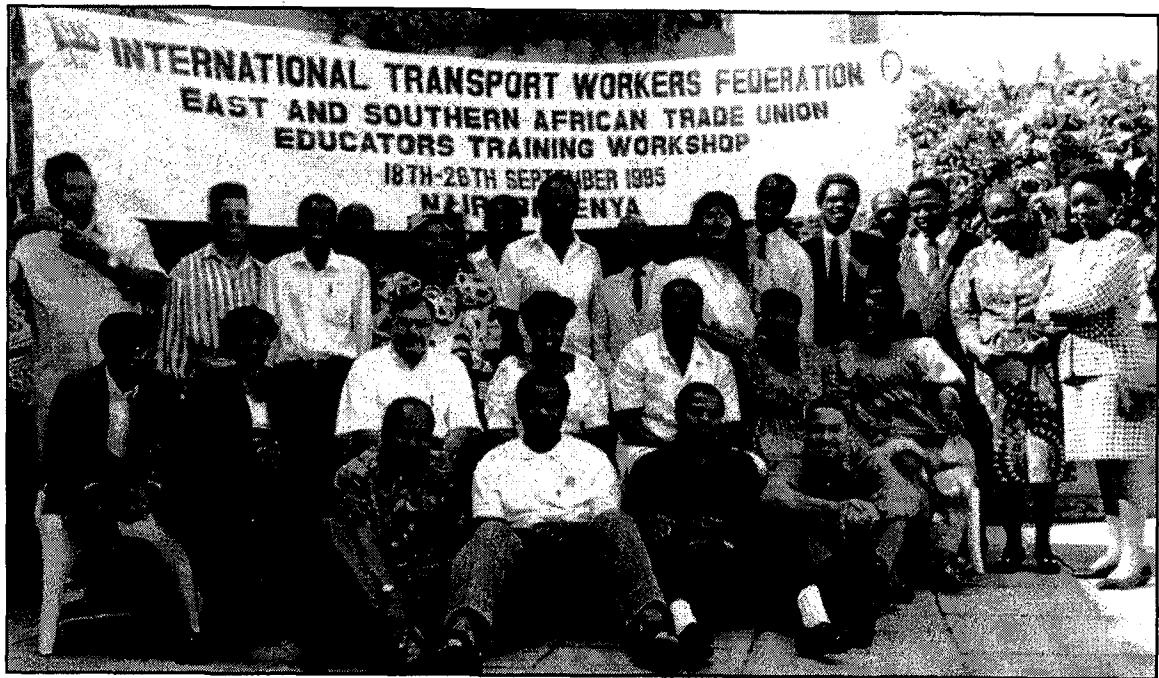
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## TRANSPORT WORKERS: BEYOND 2000 — PROGRESS REPORT

# P r e f a c e

1. The ITF's 37th Congress, held in Geneva in August 1994, adopted the special Congress document and Action Programme "*Transport Workers: Beyond 2000*," which was designed to begin a comprehensive process of review and reform of ITF policies, structures and activities. The final version of the document was distributed widely to affiliated unions early in 1995. At the request of Congress delegates, it also incorporated the conclusions of the Conference of Women Transport Workers held immediately before the Congress.

2. The ITF Executive Board began the "Beyond 2000" review process at its March 1995 meeting by considering follow-up to the Action Programme. It agreed to a number of specific measures. It requested that the item be placed on the agenda of all major ITF sectional and regional meetings. It asked that all ITF affiliates should be invited to contribute their views on current and ITF future activities by means of a questionnaire. It agreed that a special three-day meeting of the Executive Board be held in March 1996 to review progress, and that an interim report be prepared for the ITF Centenary Congress in London in 1996. Finally, it decided that steps should be taken to implement some of the clear recommendations which emerged from the Action Programme, including work related to women transport workers, education activities, Trans-National Corporations (TNCs), coordination between the ITF Sections and closer relations with other International Trade Secretariats. Steps to establish regional activities and international solidarity funds were also agreed.

3. In the reporting period between 1994 and the ITF's Centenary Congress, "*Transport Workers: Beyond 2000*" has been discussed at a series of regional and sectional meetings. In addition, a questionnaire was sent to all affiliates with a copy of the document on 5 June 1995 (Circular N° 139/A. 18 [1995]), inviting responses no later than 1 October 1995. Unfortunately, the questionnaire received a poor response — in total, only nineteen unions replied. A draft was prepared which took into consideration many of the suggestions made during the consultations. The ITF Executive Board which met in Stuttgart from 19 to 21 March 1996 discussed the draft and made additional comments which have been incorporated in this Progress Report to Congress.

4. This document examines progress to date and attempts to identify the most important issues which have arisen so far and the possible approaches to dealing with them. It deals with the same themes as the original document adopted by the Geneva Congress but tries not to repeat its contents. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that this Progress Report should be read in conjunction with the special Congress document and Action Programme "*Transport Workers: Beyond 2000*."

5. In producing this report, the Executive Board also aimed to publish a paper that ITF affiliates could refer to in their own discussions about their own role and the ITF's role in the trade union movement



of tomorrow. In the months following the Centenary Congress, it is hoped that ITF affiliates will refer this document to their own decision-making bodies and, where appropriate, to their membership as a whole.

6. **Chapter One** of this document addresses the crisis facing the trade union movement, nationally and internationally, and looks at opportunities for change and growth. **Chapter Two** briefly analyses the current economic context surrounding this challenge. **Chapter Three** "Preparing for the 21st Century", sets out questions for the future of the ITF's activities and structures. The first part of Chapter Three is entitled "Building Solidarity in the Wider World" and examines the ITF as part of the international trade union movement, and as one of the broader group of organisations seeking to improve the lot of working people. The next part, "Building Solidarity Within: The Future Role of the ITF" examines affiliates' major priorities and the ITF's ability to respond to them. It goes through the ITF's "Services," including documentation, the use of languages, communications, publications and information technology. It then looks at ITF education services and priorities. The Chapter deals next with the issue of integrating transport policy within the ITF and the role and structure of the traditional core activities of the ITF — the work of the industrial sections, together with the growing importance of its regional structures. The final section of Chapter Three deals in some detail with proposals for restructuring and reform of the governing bodies of the ITF. Each section contains roughly the same structure: an **Introduction** highlights the main problems. This is followed by a **Progress Report** explaining what has been done since the Geneva Congress to deal with those problems, and a part entitled **Affiliates' Views** which summarises some of the ideas which have been put forward as a result of the questionnaires which were distributed to all ITF unions. Then there are '**Questions for the Centenary Congress**' — questions and options designed to assist delegates in formulating their views during the debate. Finally, **Chapter Four** examines the relationship between the ITF and its affiliated unions and their members.

7. In considering the points raised in this document, I would particularly ask delegates to bear in mind the enormous range of different unions from very different backgrounds which are affiliated to the ITF today. The needs and expectations of large, long established well organised and well resourced unions may be very different from those of small single-industry or single occupation unions which may depend entirely on unpaid officers and may struggle to get hold of a telephone or typewriter. The ITF is there for all transport workers' unions, rich or poor, big or small.

8. Finally I want to make clear that it is not intended, in the very short time available, that the Centenary Congress should attempt to take final decisions on the proposals raised here. Many of these ideas will require further development and consultation by the Executive Board, the Sections and Regions or other ITF bodies before they can be implemented. Some will require amendments to the ITF Constitution. What I do hope is that the debate at this Congress will help the Executive Board to identify those ideas for which a large degree of consensus exists and those for which there is no enthusiasm at all. The process of review and renewal will continue after the Centenary Congress up to the next Ordinary ITF Congress in 1998 and beyond the year 2000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Cockcroft".

David Cockcroft,  
General Secretary  
1 May 1996



# Chapter One:

## THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONISM

9. The fact that this is the ITF's Centenary year provides a good opportunity to carry out an in-depth review of what the Federation does and its future development. Even without a Centenary, however, such a review would still be needed.

10. The world today is undergoing a major transformation. Many basic assumptions in the political, economic and social spheres are under challenge. The trade union movement itself, created in response to a different era of change to defend the collective interests of industrial workers, finds itself in the front line of these changes. The basic values of trade unionism, the way in which it operates, sometimes even the need for trade unions at all, are being questioned in almost every region and industry.

11. Transport unions are particularly affected by what can only be described as a structural crisis in the trade union movement. Most sectors of transport are continuing to experience a long term and seemingly unstoppable decline in the number of organised (or organisable) workers. Transport unions are facing falling membership, falling income, combined with, in many cases, a far more complex collective bargaining environment and far greater workloads than they have known in the past. In transport, much of this is due to the trend, already recognised in "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000", towards deregulation and privatisation. The industry continues to bow under the pressure to aban-

don any restrictions on freedom to operate services or other protective legislation. Developing countries, with severely congested cities and massive unemployment and underemployment, are being forced to adopt market-oriented transport policies by the IMF and World Bank (over 70 developing countries are currently implementing structural adjustment programmes). The World Bank philosophy, based on the views of the Western Governments, strongly favours private transport services over public ones and small enterprises over large ones and road transport over rail with obvious implications for transport users, working conditions, and trade union organisation.

12. It is important to remember though, that transport workers have always been the backbone of national trade union movements. This continues to be the case, and is especially true in many developing countries where transport is state-organised or owned, or is one of the few sectors where workers are formally employed. At the same time, structural crisis in the trade unions is accompanied by the transport industry becoming more indispensable in the global economy. Organised transport workers, by the very nature of their work, will never be powerless to change their situation. As company structures develop to answer the requirements of advanced logistics and just-in-time production, transport workers are becoming the strongest organic link between different parts of ever more disparate enterprises. As trade unionists, they have great or-



ganising potential. And, in addition, just as transport workers keep the whole production chain moving, organised transport workers have the potential to stop it.

13. Yet no ITF industrial section is immune from the process of change. **Seafarers** from traditional maritime countries have seen membership drop massively and labour supply country unions, whose growth mirrors this decline, so far lack both the industrial and financial strength to defend their members and are, in fact, highly dependent on the long term success of the ITF Flag of Convenience campaign for their survival. **Railway** unions, long the largest and most powerful of all the ITF's affiliates today face continuing reductions in membership as a result not only of the declining share of rail transport, but also of restructuring and even privatisation of railway operations. In the **ports**, the effects of cargo handling technologies have already cut deeply into the labour force but the past decade has seen a continued and sustained international campaign to deregulate port labour markets and to weaken or destroy the influence of port workers' trade unions, including greater efforts to use ships' crews to move cargo. The **road transport** industry continues to grow in absolute size, but larger, well organised companies in both passenger and freight transport are suffering at the expense of small enterprises and owner-driver operations which have little in common with traditional notions of trade unionism, features which it shares with European **inland navigation**. **Civil aviation**, long an important growth area for trade union membership among a highly skilled workforce in a highly regulated industry also faces pressure from the seemingly inexorable move towards open skies, the end of public service oriented national airlines, and a growing use of sub-contracting and casualisation of labour. The **fishing** industry, largely unorganised except in a few key countries, is facing its own structural crisis as a result of over-fishing and **tourism**, the world's fastest growing industry, has so far resisted serious attempts at trade union organisation in all but a tiny number of countries.

14. It is clear that out of economic adjustment and the search for global labour market flexibility have come profound changes in the world workforce.

There are more women in employment, more non-manual workers, service and administrative jobs, more non-traditional forms of employment (sub-contracting and part-time work) and smaller workplaces. These are areas traditionally difficult to organise and constitute a challenge to trade unionism. In the transport industry, new areas of recruitment are opening. *International integrators* (package courier companies such as DHL, and UPS) occupy an area ripe for trade union recruitment, as does the whole range of service jobs associated with the transport industry in freight forwarding, warehousing and distribution. One way in which unions which have traditionally organised mainly workers engaged in the operation of transport vehicles can face the structural crisis is by raising their sights to "new" types of transport workers. It is clear that in adapting to the diversity of interests among the changing labour force, one of the most important challenges is the increasing participation of women and young people and white collar workers.

15. The crisis affecting national unions also feeds through to the international level and not just in transport. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions — ICFTU and many other ITSs also face the problem of increased pressure on financial and human resources at exactly the same moment that the demands placed upon them due to globalisation are multiplying. The ICFTU has, as a result, been obliged itself to conduct a large scale review of its own programmes and structures in advance of its forthcoming Congress in June 1996.

16. Despite these serious problems, there are areas in which international trade unionism is growing in importance, chiefly in relation to the growing number of regional economic groupings, led by the European Union but gradually being joined by bodies such as NAFTA, MERCOSUR and APEC. Such bodies have established new challenges for supranational trade union co-ordination but they do not, by themselves stimulate trade union organisation. The European Union, for example, has established a wide ranging social dialogue and consultation machinery, not least in the transport sector, but these bodies are able to function mainly because EU funding covers much of the administrative and participation costs of meetings.



17. Regional economic integration is the most concrete demonstration of the globalisation process to unions and their members. Effective organisation of trade unions within regional groups must therefore continue to be a top priority. At the same time, however, there are risks involved which have to be guarded against. One is the risk of 'regional nationalism' — of putting the interests of regional institutions above that of workers from other parts of the world. A second is the risk of being absorbed or incorporated into a culture in which the regional institutions themselves take on more importance than the daily interests of trade union members.

18. There is also an additional risk which could arise from excessive concentration on regional economic integration. As unions lose influence at national level, and as money becomes tighter, it is much easier to justify to members expenditure of scarce resources and time on those "international" activities which directly affect their members' jobs and conditions through trade agreements and legislation rather than on "international solidarity" work which does not appear to provide an immediate benefit to the members concerned.

19. Solidarity has always been a basic and fundamental element of national and international trade unionism. One of the important things about solidarity is that it benefits both the giver and the receiver. Workers in a strong position understand that providing assistance to colleagues under attack in other countries today may make it easier for them to receive similar help tomorrow. Equally, unions which have achieved decent standards through trade union struggle naturally have an interest in ensuring that those standards are not undermined by exploitation of unorganised workers. Self interest is not, however, why unions have chosen to organise internationally. Through the ITF and its sister organisations, they have demonstrated a selfless dedication to assisting and developing free and democratic union structures on a global basis. Direct international solidarity action is, of course, most common in those ITF sectors which have always been global in nature, chiefly the maritime and aviation sectors, but road, rail and inland navigation workers' unions have also benefited from international solidarity in many difficult, sometimes critical disputes, over the past 100 years.

20. Of the 460 plus ITF unions, most receive far more in service than they ever contribute in affiliation fees. Just 40 unions contribute over 80% of the ITF's General Fund income. Unions in developing and transition countries which cannot afford to pay fees at the standard rate, smaller unions in industrialised countries, and unions in the internationally mobile sectors (seafarers, aviation, road freight transport) all require a high level of solidarity and service but cannot make equivalent contributions.

21. Many new unions have joined the ITF as a result of the end of the Cold War and the spread of democratic trade unionism to countries previously closed to the ITF. This has brought with it many new problems and challenges, but only modest additional resources. As these unions grow and develop, they will become better able to contribute more to international solidarity, but this will still take some time.

22. This structural problem is not unique to the ITF. It exists in other industries too. Yet the ITF is probably the most severely affected. The global nature of the transport industry, the high degree of national and international regulation of transport, the traditionally high level of commitment of transport workers to international solidarity, and the high technical content of the work of the ITF industrial sections all impose burdens on the ITF Secretariat and sections which are heavier than those found in most other industries. At the same time, however, the size of the ITF's membership base, measured in terms of full fee paying members, is lower than for many other ITs, because transport unions tend to be smaller. Some other ITs receive membership fees from one or two affiliates which are comparable in size to the ITF's total affiliation fee income.

23. Many of the ITF's largest and oldest affiliates have already undergone significant down-sizing in terms of officials and staff. In order to maintain their own viability, they are searching for savings everywhere and international affiliation is one obvious target. Any affiliation system based on membership numbers means that fee income will fall with membership. This has happened throughout the ITF's history. Of more concern is the possibility that some



unions will manipulate their declared membership to the ITF for purely financial reasons. The ITF, like most international organisations, relies on unions themselves to assess their own membership and hence their own financial obligations. If the ITF's membership base were to fall faster than the real membership of its affiliates, this would put at risk not only the maintenance of current ITF activities but even more so the expansion foreseen in many of the decisions already taken by the Executive Board, for example in the field of women's activities and the upgrading of regional offices.

24. A debate on the future financing of the ITF was opened at the ITF Executive Board meeting in March 1996 and many of the questions raised here were debated at length. The Board agreed to convene a meeting of the ITF Management Committee in October 1996 which would devote itself specifically to the questions raised on this issue later in the document.

25. Of course the ITF is in a unique position for another reason compared with other ITFs and that is the existence of the FOC Campaign and the very considerable shipowner contributions which are made to the ITF "Welfare Fund". The ITF Executive Board is constitutionally responsible for the administration of the Welfare Fund, but the Fair Practices Committee is the body charged with supervising the day to day operation of the FOC Campaign.

26. There are, however, legal, moral and political limits to the extent to which Welfare Fund finance can be used to contribute to the ITF's non-maritime work. Legally, the UK Courts have made clear in a number of key decisions that the Fund must be used in ways which benefit the interests of seafarers. It cannot be used directly for the benefit of other categories of transport worker. Morally since the Fund is collected from shipowners who have flagged ships out, depriving seafarers of jobs and incomes, it should be used to benefit seafarers and those who support them directly.

27. Politically there are clear dangers in the ITF becoming dependent on Welfare Fund income. Not only could circumstances change at any moment in the highly volatile shipping industry, but it is hard

for non-maritime unions, which still make up the bulk of the ITF's membership, to appreciate fully how the FOC campaign works, where the funding comes from and how it is spent. The imbalance between the two sides of the ITF's activity also makes precise budgeting for non-FOC activities very complex and there is always a risk of resentment, about the 'favoured treatment' provided to unions which are involved in FOC Campaign related activities, for example in terms of payment of travelling expenses.

28. Lack of understanding on the part of non-maritime unions can partially be improved by better information and education of these unions, and by involving them more in FOC campaign activities. This process has already begun within the Dockers' section. It is vital that all ITF affiliates fully understand and are committed to the principles of the FOC campaign not least because, as "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" makes clear, some of the worst aspects of the FOC system are beginning to infiltrate other transport sectors.

29. Despite the vital and unique role of the ITF FOC Campaign and its major importance in the world of shipping, however, it would be not only unhealthy but in the long term fatal to the ITF's role as a strong independent trade union organisation controlled by its affiliates, if the central operations of the ITF could not be sustained by affiliation fee income.

30. It is obviously unreasonable to discuss the issue of resources without also reviewing the efficiency with which existing resources are used. This means looking at the way the Secretariat is organised, at the way the sections and regions are functioning and at the complex network of committees, working parties and other structures which have been created over the years and which continue to be created. That is the major purpose of this document. In doing so, however, it is vital to avoid the temptation to focus entirely on structures. It is good to review whether we do our work efficiently, but it is also vital to review whether we are doing the right things. Should we stop doing too many things moderately well in order to concentrate on doing fewer things better? Is the work done by the Secretariat, in the committees and working groups really necessary?





31. This can be a very difficult and painful exercise, but it needs to be done. It is hard to persuade the members of a Committee that it no longer serves a useful purpose. But equally it is impossible, faced with the kind of financial and structural problems outlined earlier, simply to pile more and more new structures and activities on to the ITF without also eliminating others.

33. In section meetings, and indeed at Congress and the Executive Board, there is a tendency to avoid these difficult questions. Yet to challenge some of the things which we do today is not a criticism of the work we have done in the past. The ITF and its affiliates are changing. The kind of work which was needed during the 1970s may not always be what is required today. If the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" programme is to be more than an exercise in self-congratulation, then these hard issues of prioritisation will have to be tackled. Tough circumstances require tough decisions.

32. Prioritising our work is an issue which is most important within the sections and on which the sections themselves must be given a great deal of responsibility. In principle the Congress has already pointed us in some new directions — concentrating more on women and non-mobile transport workers, looking more at cooperation with other trade union and sympathetic bodies, greater cooperation and coordination between ITF sections. So far we lack advice on what can be eliminated or at least phased out in order to make way for these new tasks. Do we need to spend all our time attending meetings of international governmental organisations? Can we find new ways of carrying out existing tasks which do not involve such a heavy drain on Secretariat time and resources? Can we afford an industrial section structure which gives in theory equal precedence to sections irrespective of their numerical size within the ITF? How can we get our affiliates to take on a more participative role in the day to day work not just to relieve the load on the Secretariat but also so that they feel more commitment to what is being done?



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# Chapter Two:

## TRANSPORT WORKERS IN THE WIDER WORLD — THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT.

34. Since the adoption of the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" by the 1994 Geneva Congress, the trends in the global economy which were identified then have, if anything, accelerated.

35. While some *industrialised countries* have seen a modest recovery in output and some fall in unemployment, many others, including for the first time Japan, have seen unemployment rise sharply. Thus while OECD unemployment has fallen modestly, the industrialised country governments have failed to make any real impact on long term structural unemployment and some countries, such as Japan, are facing historically very high unemployment levels. Furthermore, there is real concern in these countries about the quality of the new jobs which have been created, many of which are low skilled, low paid service sector jobs. Other trends such as the growth in part-time, temporary jobs and increasing use of sub-contracting also mean that official figures give an increasingly unrealistic measurement of the real jobs crisis.

36. Little has changed either in the *developing world*. Indeed the classification of economies into 'industrialised' and 'developing' is increasingly meaningless in the face of the wildly different growth records of different regions. Africa's average per capita income still remains below that of 1975 and most foreign direct investment into Africa is flowing to post Apartheid South Africa. In Latin America, IMF sponsored stabilisation policies have made impres-

sive inroads into inflation but at a tremendous price in terms of jobs and incomes of public sector workers. The devaluation of the Mexican peso has also shown that these sacrifices do not always produce the promised results. With some exceptions, the transition economies of **Central and Eastern Europe** are making only very slow economic progress, and Russia and other former soviet republics have yet to deliver either political stability or concrete economic benefits from the post-Communist era. Asia remains divided into two sharply different groups - Eastern and South-East Asia continues to grow rapidly and is making significant inroads into poverty and unemployment, while some South Asian countries still face large scale destitution and hunger.

37. Government policies continue to concentrate on so-called *supply side measures* which essentially means deregulation of labour markets, large scale privatisation and swingeing cuts in public spending particularly on social programmes. This has been most obvious in the extreme right wing Republican controlled Congress in the USA which has challenged not only long established social programmes but also the United States' role in international organisations like the ILO.

38. *International trade* continues to grow much faster than world output. The completion of the Uruguay Round and establishment of the WTO has provided a further boost to the process of globalisation of the world economy. So far, at least, attempts by the in-



ternational trade union movement to ensure that freer trade is based on the acceptance by trading nations of basic minimum labour standards have not been distinguished by success, although the debate on trade sanctions has at least stimulated a greater interest by some countries in the enforcement of ILO standards.

39. The globalisation of economic activity is driven by the globalisation of *finance*. Capital markets have increased so much in sophistication that no single government, not even the United States, has the ability to control them and so far efforts at supranational control of capital movements have not been effective. Private financial institutions with their notoriously short time horizons have more influence on economic development than do governments. Foreign direct investment has expanded much faster than world trade and the majority of international trade consists of internal transfers between transnational corporations. While official development institutions remain an important influence in the poorest countries, the vast bulk of investment is by multinational corporations. 75% of foreign direct investment in developing countries in 1994 was from private sources. Five years earlier the ratio was 50:50.

40. The **World Bank** and its sister organisation the IMF continue to preach the doctrine of privatisation, combined with large cuts in public spending and currency devaluation as the solution to all countries' economic ills, and pay little attention to social questions. The publication of the Bank's 'World Development Report' in 1995 did at least for the first time acknowledge the positive role which can be played by democratic trade unions in the process of Structural Adjustment. It remains to be seen whether words will be met with action.

41. The growth in **regional** trade and economic groupings continues to be the most important inter-governmental development. The European Union, having transformed itself from a Community to a Union as a result of the Maastricht Treaty is now in the throes of a further conference designed to unify its institutions and prepare for further enlargement. At the same time, however, economic realities have thrown up a huge question mark about the achieve-

ment of the 1999 deadline for Economic and Monetary Union. Social dialogue occupies a considerable amount of time within the EU although the impact of this dialogue on jobs and working conditions has yet to be demonstrated.

42. In **North America** the effects of the NAFTA agreement appear to have been responsible for a major transfer of jobs from Canada and the United States to low cost non union facilities in Mexico and the labour safeguards negotiated alongside it have been largely ineffective. The MERCOSUR internal market is becoming a reality in South America and like APEC has established a series of working groups designed, amongst other things, to liberalise air and sea transport markets. Trade union representation within these organisations so far lags far behind the EU.

43. Important though these regional organisations are, for multinational corporations they are only part of what has now become a global market. To be successful, trade union strategies must also develop globally. This is the central challenge not just for the ITF but for the entire international trade union movement. Many of the issues raised here are discussed in greater detail in the document "The Global Market - Trade Unionism's Greatest Challenge" prepared for the 16th World Congress of the ICFTU which will take place immediately prior to the ITF's own Centenary Congress. The results of that Congress will also have a powerful impact in shaping the ITF's future strategies.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

44.

- *Congress delegates are invited to advise the Executive Board on the analysis contained in the above two chapters, and to comment on any changes which should be made.*



# Chapter Three:

## THE ITF'S ACTIVITIES AND STRUCTURES — PREPARING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

45. "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" identified a number of key areas in which the ITF needs to develop its structures, activities and policies in order to provide a trade union organisation fully adapted to the needs of its affiliates. A thorough examination of existing sectional and regional structures has already been set in motion and will continue in the coming months. As explained in the Preface, this document is designed to provide for Congress a summary of current problems, a Progress Report on implementing the Geneva Programme, and a list of options for further change. This Chapter and Chapter Four cover the same subject headings as "Chapter Five — Action Programme" in the document "Transport Workers Beyond 2000."

### BUILDING SOLIDARITY IN THE WIDER WORLD

#### INTRODUCTION

46. "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" concluded that the ITF should play a more active role in the wider political and industrial world and that closer links needed to be forged with the international trade union movement as well as with interest groups sympathetic to trade union issues.

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##### ICFTU

47. The need to improve links between the different organisations which together make up the International Trade Union Movement has been clearly recognised by the ICFTU General Secretary who has proposed a 'new partnership' between the ICFTU and the ITSs, to be discussed at the ICFTU's forthcoming Congress in June 1996. That Congress will also take a critical look at the way in which the ICFTU itself works.

48. The ITF Secretariat has recently stepped up considerably its participation in ICFTU activities. The General Secretary normally attends Executive Board meetings and the ITF regional secretaries attend many of the meetings held by the ICFTU's regional bodies (AFRO, APRO and ORIT). The ITF regularly attends the ICFTU's Human and Trade Union Rights Committee and submits reports to the ICFTU for inclusion in its annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations. ILO complaints on seafarers' rights against Burma and China in 1994 and 1995 were co-ordinated with the ICFTU. In August 1995 the General Secretary participated in an ICFTU/ITS mission to Turkey, organised at the ITF's instigation. The ITF has also continued to lend support to the ICFTU's campaign for the inclusion of a Social Clause in international trade agreements.



49. The ITF Secretariat also regularly participates in other meetings such as the Multinationals Working Party, the Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Working Party and the ICFTU's Women's Committee. The joint ICFTU/ITS Washington office, designed to advance trade union concerns to the staff of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, opened late in 1994.

50. The so called 'Milan Agreement' which governs general relations between the ICFTU and the ITSs was originally adopted in 1951 and revised in 1969 and 1989. It lays down the principle that the ITSs are independent and self governing but provides that the ITSs should respect the position of the ICFTU on general policy matters while being totally free to deal with industrial questions affecting their own sectors. The agreement also provides for ITS representation at meetings of the ICFTU Executive Board and certain other ICFTU bodies. In general the agreement has worked well although a few ITSs have proposed changing the relationship even to the extent of ICFTU membership.

51. One area where closer cooperation is urgently needed is that of relations between the respective regional structures. Communications between the ITF's regional offices and the ICFTU's regional organisations are improving, but the development of a similar working relationship to that which exists internationally is vital to ensure coherent policy-making and to avoid duplication of work. In Europe the ICFTU has no regional structure. Here it faces real structural problems in defining its role as the European Trade Union Confederation — ETUC, grows in importance. The absence of a formal structural link between the ICFTU and the ETUC risks marginalising the ICFTU amongst many of its European affiliates as the European Union, on which the ETUC's strength is based, continues to grow in importance. Strengthening the ICFTU is very important if we are to avoid the real risk of fragmentation of the international trade union movement into competing regional groupings.

52. The ITF has, however, a considerable number of affiliates which are not members of an ICFTU affiliated national centre and the relative importance of ITSs and national trade union centres may well

be changing in response to the globalised economy. For this reason, it is worth evaluating current ITF/ICFTU relations as well as those with related organisations such as the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD to ensure that the ITF's contribution to and return from the wider international trade union movement fully meets its affiliates' priorities.

53. Building good relations between the ITF and its affiliates and national trade union centres is also of great importance, particularly in dealing with country specific problems, while recalling that the ITF and its affiliates retain full independence in relation to any other trade union body, whether it be international regional or national.

54. An illustration of the importance of ICFTU cooperation to ITF section work is its influence on the ILO. The ILO itself is in a major financial crisis and tremendous pressure has been exerted on it to cut back on sectoral activities, particularly in the maritime field. With the strong assistance of the ICFTU's Geneva Office and the active support of the Chairman of the ILO Workers' Group, Bill Brett, the ITF was able to defeat attempts by the ILO Office to cut the ILO's specialised maritime standard setting machinery and to ensure that transport sectors retain an important share of the overall sectoral activities programme.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS

55. It is important to realise that the ITF is only one of a number of international trade union federations functioning at the international level. As a part of the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" programme, the ITF Secretariat has been actively pursuing new areas for more formal cooperation with other ITSs. The General Secretary introduced a paper on 'Strengthening practical international solidarity' during the interim meeting of International Trade Secretariats in Geneva in June 1995 and this was followed up by a more detailed discussion at the ITS General Conference in January 1996.



56. The Secretariat met with the **International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM — formerly International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers' Unions - ICEF)** in October 1995. The ITF and ICEM agreed to work together to target areas of joint cooperation on trade union rights, and to seek to ensure that chemicals and other bulk loads are carried whenever possible on national flag ships. Where such loads are carried on Flag of Convenience ships, the two organisations will cooperate to make sure these meet ITF standards and that chemical, coal and refinery workers who carry out loading and unloading operations and who are members of ICEM unions are better informed about the ITF FOC Campaign.

57. A meeting took place in March 1996 with the **International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF)** to define common interests in shipbuilding and safe ship construction and to discuss the transport of bulk iron and steel cargoes, cars and other metal products on Flag of Convenience vessels. The ITF's political campaign against FOC shipping could, by eliminating substandard tonnage, also have a major impact on the shipbuilding industry organised by the IMF.

58. **The Public Services International (PSI)** met with the ITF Secretariat on 4 April 1996 to discuss current cooperation in fields such as air traffic control and urban transport and other areas of joint concern, for example in dealing with World Bank privatisation programmes. The two ITSs thus agreed to examine areas of cooperation on research and education projects. For example, it was agreed to investigate the possibilities for shared use of labour-friendly consultancies to develop alternative trade union strategies.

59. In addition to the ICFTU/ITS Washington office, examples of pooling ITS resources include the European Tourism Liaison Committee, which now employs a part-time assistant, and to which the ITF contributes together with the CTWUEC, FIET and IUF. A provisional arrangement has been made to share resources in the ITF's new headquarters in London with **Labour and Society International**, an organisation which has worked with other ITSs in-

cluding ICEM and which will provide consultancy services to the ITF on design and funding of education projects.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

60. In the questionnaire replies, most affiliates felt that questions of human and trade union rights were of great importance. Some were keen to deal with all violations of basic rights but most endorsed the stance of prioritising questions affecting the transport industry. On questions of less direct importance to transport workers, they supported joint action first collectively with the ICFTU and other ITSs.

61. There was little specific comment on the social clause debate, however most respondents clearly felt that the principles upheld by the ILO were critical to trade union organisation.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

62.

- *How should the ITF develop its relations with the ICFTU and with national trade union centres? Does the Congress have any views on how a 'new partnership' with the ICFTU might develop?*
- *What is the Congress's assessment of the initiatives taken so far in relation to other ITSs?*
- *Should efforts be made to develop formal cooperation agreements with other ITSs?*
- *If so, which are the most important ITSs and in which areas should cooperation take place?*
- *What other trade union bodies should the ITF develop relations with?*



## BUILDING WIDER COALITIONS

### INTRODUCTION

63. "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" stressed that trade unions around the world are recognising the importance of building alliances with community organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and even business interests where they are sympathetic to trade union aims and recommended the ITF to follow this path.

### PROGRESS REPORT

64. The ITF has so far made only modest progress on this subject. Discussions have been held with Amnesty International on issues such as human rights violations involving the right to self-expression, including the right to complain about working conditions. Contacts with Greenpeace have concentrated mainly on issues such as marine pollution and transport of hazardous materials. A more formal meeting with Greenpeace officials is under active consideration. In the maritime sector, the ITF has very close relations with seafarer welfare organisations, including those linked to the Christian Church. These have improved drastically in recent years and a strong delegation from the International Christian Maritime Association attended the recent ITF Inspectors' seminar in London.

65. Some of the ITF's recent safety campaigns in civil aviation and road transport have included an element which is aimed at transport consumers, however, no formal link has been explored with consumer organisations, some of which have a tendency to be rather pro-deregulation and anti-union. Relations with employers' organisations continue as a part of sectional activities. In the context of the ITF FOC campaign, meetings take place from time to time with the International Shipping Federation (ISF) and for the first time an information meeting for shipowners was held in July 1995 following the Fair Practices Committee. Although boycotted by the ISF, this meeting attracted over 80 shipowner and ship manager representatives and was generally considered a positive initiative.

### AFFILIATES' VIEWS

66. Unions which replied to the questionnaire generally felt that environmental issues were a good area for cooperation. Others recommended closer links with bodies such as Greenpeace and increased attention to peace issues such as the conflict in Bosnia and nuclear arms testing. Cooperation with Amnesty International was viewed very favourably. Affiliates stressed, however, that not all NGOs are sympathetic to the trade union movement and any national level contacts with them should be undertaken in consultation with the ITF affiliates concerned.

### QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

67.

- *What priority does the Congress believe should be attached to contacts with NGOs?*
- *What kinds of organisations would be appropriate campaign partners e. g. women's organisations, young people's organisations, welfare organisations, others?*
- *Which specific organisations could be appropriate targets for cooperation? E. g. Amnesty, Human Rights Watch?*
- *How can the ITF best work for peace, disarmament and the abolition of all nuclear weapons?*
- *What issues and what campaigns could be tackled jointly?*
- *Are there any other questions which need to be addressed on these issues?*





## BUILDING SOLIDARITY WITHIN : THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE ITF

### INTRODUCTION

68. The most important objective of the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" exercise is to ensure that the ITF is an organisation which meets the current and future needs of its affiliates. This means examining every activity and service to ensure that there is real demand for it from ITF unions. It also means looking at the way the ITF is financed and the operation of the ITF Secretariat to see whether any changes need to be made. Additional points on documentation, language and information services are made later on in the document; it is important however to identify and tackle the most pressing priorities of affiliates. For this reason, the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" questionnaire asked affiliates to identify their distinct major priorities. This part of the document, under the heading: "The Future Role of the ITF" gives an overview of those priorities.

69. The three key areas of ITF activity are : coordinating international solidarity; dealing with intergovernmental organisations; and providing services to affiliated unions. One issue which needs addressing is the balance between these three activities. Solidarity is central to the ITF's existence. The only question is whether it can be more efficiently delivered. Dealing with intergovernmental organisations takes up a large amount of time and money. Sometimes this investment pays off over the long term through the regulations and standards which are of major benefit to transport workers. Sometimes it does not. The number of international and regional bodies with some impact on transport is huge and constantly increasing. All ITF representation must therefore be examined critically, both to see whether it is necessary and, if it is, whether there are better ways of organising it.

70. One way to know if we are doing the right things is to improve the communications between the ITF and its affiliates. It is important that we communicate effectively with the right people in our unions and that we cater properly for newer affiliates whose needs and priorities may be different from older ones. ITF visits to national trade unions, and attend-

ance at union conferences, for example, can effectively increase both members' understanding of international issues and the ITF's knowledge of its affiliates, but can be expensive and time consuming. It is neither physically nor financially possible to send a Secretariat representative to every ITF affiliate's conference. Nevertheless for many unions an ITF presence at their Conference or Congress is a powerful demonstration of international solidarity and support. The task of representation must therefore be spread more widely.

71. The ITF's workload has increased massively in recent years. The Flag of Convenience system's burgeoning share of the shipping industry has meant that the ITF been forced to take on many tasks formerly carried out by trade union officials from traditional maritime countries. It has been estimated that around 400 trade union officials positions from those countries have been lost and there has certainly not been a compensatory growth in union officials from labour supply countries. In addition, most of the ITF's affiliates have been facing large-scale structural changes which have required international action more than ever before. Not just the maritime, but also the civil aviation sector is becoming increasingly globalised, meaning that the ITF is faced with dealing with international questions which may in the past have been dealt with at national level. Road and even rail unions are having to face multinational employers for the first time and need international help to deal with them. In addition, the end of the Cold War has meant a massive influx of new affiliates into the ITF, most of which have very little in the way of trade union experience. At the Geneva Congress, the ITF had just under 400 affiliates. As we approach the London Centenary Congress, the figure is almost 500, a 25% increase in two years. Yet the size of an affiliate is in no way related to the amount of service required. In fact the newer and smaller unions often require more service than the older and larger ones. For many new ITF affiliates, international contacts are the only way of learning how to do the job of representing their members prop-



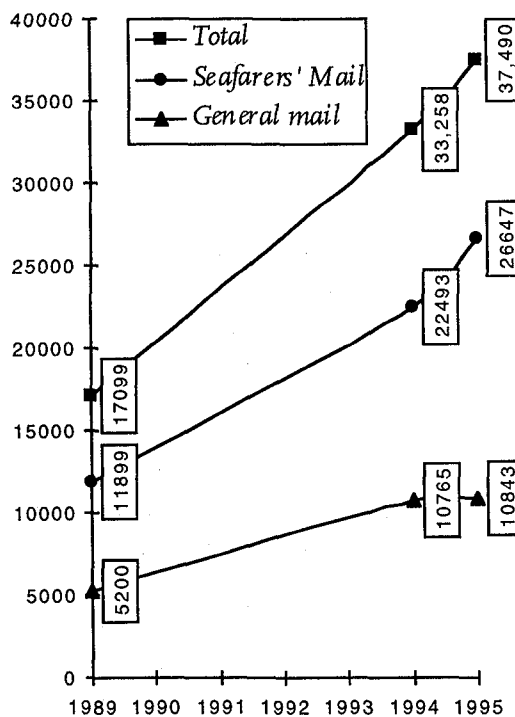
erly. New affiliation does not stem solely from the ex-Soviet bloc countries of Central and Eastern Europe but also from unions from developing countries which were formerly reluctant to join the ITF for ideological reasons. These are not necessarily negative trends: the ITF exists to fulfil such a role, and the increased need for an efficient international organisation has led to a less diplomatic, and more proactive and practical role for the organisation. But these pressures have resulted in a considerable increase in the volume of work, which can be illustrated in various ways:

72. The volume of **communications** the Secretariat receives continues to rise dramatically. In 1989 the Secretariat, excluding the Seafarers' Section and SSD received 5,200 pieces of correspondence. In 1993 this had risen to 8,950, an increase of 72%. By 1994 it had grown to 10,765 and in 1995, 10,843 (108% since 1989 and 21% since 1993). Seafarers' Section and SSD correspondence is recorded separately. In 1989, the Secretariat received 11,899 pieces of mail for these sections. In 1994, 22,493 pieces were received. In 1995, Seafarers' Section and SSD mail came to 26,647 (see table below). Total correspondence can be summarised as follows: 1989 — 17,099 pieces received; 1994 — 33,258 pieces; 1995: 37,490 pieces; a total increase of 119% since 1989 and an increase of twelve per cent in only one year. Equally the number of ITF Circulars sent to affiliates has increased; in 1990 the ITF sent out 165 official circulars, by 1993 the figure had grown to 254, and by 1995, to 320 (93%).

73. Like most other trade union organisations, the ITF spends a lot of time organising **meetings**. The number of meetings has expanded at an extraordinary rate in the past ten years. "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000," reported that in October 1988 the Seafarers Section/SSD itemised the outcome of 9 ITF meetings (excluding meetings where the Secretariat represented the ITF) to the Executive Board. In October 1992 the equivalent report contained 19 ITF meetings, an increase of 111%. The October 1995 report shows that this momentum is being maintained, with the major ITF meetings list detailing 24 ITF seafarers' meetings. In 1996 we have provisionally scheduled 85 meetings in all the sections (including 39 in the maritime sectors) and the final total will probably be much higher. Despite

improvements in telecommunications technologies, it is unlikely that this function will ever cease to be a major part of the ITF's work, but it is worth questioning whether all these meetings are really necessary. To be productive, each meeting needs to be properly prepared and documented. Many require expensive and complex language services to make them function properly. Increasing the number of meetings can affect their quality.

74. Meetings not only consume scarce resources from the ITF's own budget, but also cost time and money to the unions who send representatives to them. In fact the financial commitment of affiliates to ITF work in general goes far beyond the simple question of affiliation fees. It is therefore vital that the number of meetings is kept within reasonable bounds, and that the maximum benefit is extracted from each meeting. This could mean, amongst other things, streamlining or amalgamating working groups, committees etc. , as well as holding longer but less frequent meetings of those bodies deemed most important. Holding meetings in a single language speeds up the work and reduces costs enormously but at the expense of making it more difficult for many affiliates to participate fully.



Correspondence dealt with by the Secretariat 1989-1995



## PROGRESS REPORT

75. "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" itself has stimulated the process of questioning affiliates about the ITF's role. Each section has been asked to carry out a review of its structure and activities including relations with intergovernmental organisations and its meetings programme. To assist in communications with affiliates, a new system of sending out "General Circulars" with information on recent developments has been instigated with the aim of giving all affiliates a broader picture of the ITF's daily work. The Report on Activities to the Executive Board and a summary of the Executive Board's decisions is now circulated to all affiliates, as opposed to being sent only to Executive Board members.

76. *ITF News* has been redesigned and modernised and language coverage has been improved. More regular sectional bulletins are being produced to disseminate information on sectional questions more widely. Increasing use is being made of modern communications technologies including fax and the Internet to speed up contacts with affiliates for example when solidarity action is required.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

77. Some affiliates felt that they could benefit from information about other unions' organisational structures, communications and membership strategies. They thought the ITF could play a crucial role in information exchange and shared research. Some felt the ITF should provide, and share experiences of, modern communications and information technology, whilst others proposed a centralised database system.

78. Public and media relations together with information to membership were essential. Unorganised transport workers should have the impression that they were joining a comprehensive framework of solidarity when they signed up with the union. Activists should understand the significance of cross-border trade union representation of their interests. Materials should be produced for grass-roots members in their own languages, because many workers still regarded international relations as a perk of trade union leadership.

79. Exchanges between officials and activists were identified as a way to build relationships between unions and boost practical solidarity. This could be especially encouraged where a union in need of support could foster a relationship with a strong union, perhaps in an adjacent country, or in one with historical links.

80. Solidarity was seen as a central aspect of ITF work. One proposal was the production of a *solidarity manual* and the creation of some kind of ITF support mechanism, including model procedures for affiliates in disputes and practical examples of solidarity action. Some unions also believed the ITF should establish relations with a firm of international lawyers to support affiliates in dispute and provide legal assistance for transport workers abroad, for example, through an insurance company contracted by the ITF<sup>1</sup>.

81. A campaign on new ways to deal with non-direct employment such as subcontracting and owner-operators, was suggested alongside more training seminars and Secretariat exchanges between unions and the ITF.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Road Transport Workers' Section has been seeking for some time to establish a scheme covering legal and medical assistance for international drivers. A proposal was offered by Minet Insurance/Europ Assistance covering most countries in Europe. The proposal was on the basis of agreed schemes being negotiated with individual unions as premiums would depend on numbers of drivers involved and the countries for which they would require coverage, etc. Three affiliates are in discussions with Minet, but do not seem to have progressed very far. The question of ITF involvement as suggested by the term "contracted by the ITF" was in fact ruled out at an early stage since no contractual relationship would exist between the ITF and the other parties and the ITF would not have undertaken the administrative work which could have been linked with such an arrangement — for example, keeping records and forwarding details of drivers names and addresses, employers, etc. and keeping such lists up to date.*



## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

82.

- *What do Congress delegates see as the main strengths and weaknesses of the ITF's current way of doing business?*
- *Are we meeting the needs of affiliates? If not, where are the major deficiencies?*
- *Are there activities which are of limited use to affiliates which the ITF could stop doing altogether?*
- *Have we struck the right balance between the organisation of international meetings and other types of work?*
- *How could the conduct of ITF meetings be made more efficient?*
- *How could affiliates become more involved in the ITF's work, e. g. by assisting with representation at intergovernmental level?*
- *How can the ITF encourage greater interchange of personnel and contacts between affiliated unions?*

## SERVICES TO AFFILIATES

### DOCUMENTATION AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

#### INTRODUCTION

83. One of the ITF's principal functions is to supply information on international developments on a regular basis to affiliated unions and to organise meetings which are of direct benefit to them. To meet affiliates' needs, this information needs to be timely, accurate, relevant and, as far as possible, available in a language which can be understood. Unfortunately translation and interpretation are extremely expensive and it is both practically and financially impossible for the ITF to make all its

materials available in all the national languages of its affiliated unions.

#### PROGRESS REPORT

84. The Introduction of the "General circular" system has led to an improvement in information to affiliates, but there may still be a need to monitor the quantity and quality of documentation distributed by the Secretariat. As far as languages are concerned, many materials are being translated into Russian, and virtually all ITF documentation is now translated into Japanese.

#### AFFILIATES' VIEWS

85. Many felt that the ITF needed to produce higher quality materials, and more specialist services, possibly distributing them on a "user-pays" basis, or by seeking the assistance of the financially-sound affiliates in carrying out such specific projects. Document output was acceptable although it could be cut, it was felt, as the amount of material often meant delays in translation. The number of questionnaires and surveys should be critically monitored to ensure their relevance.

86. On questions relating to translation and interpretation, most unions expressed the willingness to fund their own translation costs when necessary. They did however stress the need for ITF material in the language of their members, and added that national co-ordinating committees could have a role in co-ordinating and funding translations. Additional support from the ITF, e. g. by providing translation booths for simultaneous translation, may be needed; further languages would have to be examined in the future.

87. Other suggestions included a directory of ITF services, a loose leaf manual for collection of key documents and an annual summary of articles and document published in each section. Staff exchanges were popular, as was the idea of bilateral activities between unions as well as with the ITF. Social, cultural and educational exchanges would be very useful.



## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

88.

- *Does the ITF produce too much documentation, or too little?*
- *Would a manual detailing ITF services be a good idea?*
- *How can we extend the languages in which ITF material is available? How far can we involve national affiliates in co-operating to provide services, and to what extent should these efforts be supported by the ITF?*
- *What other general services should the ITF be providing?*

## COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLICATIONS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### INTRODUCTION

89. The ITF already provides many services such as publications and information about disputes to its affiliates. Modern technologies, which make such services easier to deliver, can also expand the demand for them. The Secretariat is beginning to make greater use of information technology to speed up its existing services by using faxes, electronic mail and electronic "bulletin boards", and is now publishing an Internet home page.

90. Possible new areas for ITF services identified in "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" include consultancy services on new technology, together with improved ways of presenting information and getting it from the ITF to the direct 'consumers' within unions. Cooperation between the ITF and its affiliates in relation to press and media relations is (with a few exceptions) the exception rather than the rule: it may be that the ITF could develop its press strategy and services further, to make them more relevant to national unions.

## PROGRESS REPORT

91. *ITF News* has been redesigned, and includes a regular item featuring news from affiliates' own journals. Several new publications have been launched — the *Railway Bulletin*, the *Urban Transport Bulletin* and the *Road Transport Bulletin*, as well as a new magazine, *ITF Women*. A European Bulletin is scheduled for production. Electronic communications have advanced and are being widely used in communication with regional offices and in the FOC campaign; ITF information, including protest letter appeals and press releases, is now displayed on the Internet. Following the relocation of the headquarters to a new building, the ITF library is being re-launched and in the future will be able to provide a service to affiliates. It is hoped that some of these resources can be shared with other ITSs — ICEM, for example, has promised the use of the database services it subscribes to.

92. With a few honourable exceptions, national coverage in union newspapers and magazines of ITF activities and international questions in general is not good. Since this is a fundamental method of improving communications with union members, the reasons for this apparent lack of interest need to be examined closely.

### AFFILIATES' VIEWS

93. Most affiliates had not written articles for *ITF News*. Whilst some distributed ITF information from circulars and publications amongst union officials and trade union members, others made this information available to officials only. Very few had been involved in ITF press work, and cited language difficulties as a partial explanation for this. It was felt that the "news" distributed by the ITF was too old to be really useful in press work, that special interest publications were useful and that current projects should be consolidated before new projects are taken on.

94. Unions were interested in the use of electronic communication and of the Internet; the idea of an ITF-coordinated consultancy network providing education and information about the technologies available and the success of existing trade union



information systems was also popular. Small communications groups in unions could share information, it was felt. Concerns about the accessibility of electronic systems were expressed (cost of hardware, need for training). A close study of the feasibility of a regular new service long-term may be needed.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

95.

- *What does the Congress think about the level of success of the ITF's existing publications? (E. g. Seafarers' Bulletin, ITF News, Sectional Bulletins). What new issues should publications tackle?*
- *Should the ITF pursue an information strategy based on the use of new communications technology? And if so, how should the necessary resources be made universally available?*
- *What are the needs of unions for press and media relations? Are press releases useful? Who should receive them?*
- *Why is it so difficult to get information about the ITF's work into national union newspapers? How can the situation be improved?*
- *Would the formation of an ITF communications network or groups within the unions serve a useful purpose?*
- *How should the ITF library develop its role? What kind of information could it provide to affiliates?*

## EDUCATION

### INTRODUCTION

96. Trade union education is one of the single most important factors in building the strength of the labour movement. Many of the ITF's affiliates have strong traditions of trade union education, often having received state funding, and thus benefit from large reserves of training expertise. Other

affiliates have had neither the resources nor the experience to develop even basic trade union training. Trade union education which includes an international element is becoming more and more essential in the context of regionalism and globalisation of the world economy. Education for identifiable groups of workers (e. g. women, atypically employed workers, young people) may be even more necessary for trade unions to maintain membership and recruit in tomorrow's changing workforce.

97. In countries which do not have a strong tradition of trade union education and in which resources for educational activities are limited, the ITF can play a crucial role in training new generations of trade union leaders in the basic principles of trade unionism and in international solidarity. Without such external assistance, the prospects of achieving a strong and united and ultimately self-sufficient trade union movement will be slim indeed.

### PROGRESS REPORT

98. ITF Education has been built up over the last couple of years from a situation where activities were concentrated in limited areas, to a situation where a comprehensive set of both seminars and education programmes is in place across all the developing regions. These have included activities relating to regional economic groupings, e. g. NAFTA. An **Education Working Party** has been launched, including participation from affiliates who have traditionally supported international education projects. Affiliates have begun to ask for ITF input into their own education programmes, as well as requesting ITF-organised activities, and the links between unions required to co-ordinate national seminars have in some cases led to better functioning of the national co-ordinating committees and closer relations between ITF unions. As the ITF's resources for education activities are limited, funding from external sources has become increasingly important. Since 1994, cooperation has been established with a wider range of donor organisations and other sources of financial assistance are being sought. In 1995 the total funds received from donors for ITF education activities was US\$ 617,707; this has increased dramatically, and the total funds



requested so far for 1996 total US\$ 1,056,298. Since additional new projects are still in preparation, the actual total received in 1996 is likely to be even more.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

99. The need for increased education was very strongly voiced in the replies to the ITF Questionnaire; specific requests included trade union leadership training, English language teaching and more education on questions of regionalism and multinational companies.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

100.

- *What new specific topic areas need to be addressed through ITF educational activities?*
- *Should the ITF further develop education programmes in relation to regional economic groupings? Do suitable partners for cooperation exist?*
- *How can the ITF ensure the continued development of a comprehensive ITF Education Policy aimed not only at affiliates in developing countries, but also in developed ones?*
- *How can we encourage affiliates to become more involved in the ITF's education activities, e. g. by providing lecturers, materials and other educational resources for the ITF Education Programme?*

## A MORE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO POLICY MAKING

### INTRODUCTION

101. "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" recommended that the ITF should adopt a more integrated approach towards policy making between the different ITF sections.

### PROGRESS REPORT

102. A **Transport Policy** Group of Experts has been established by the Executive Board to develop international transport policy and to encourage a cross-sectional approach and an examination of inter-modal issues.

103. In line with Motion 7 adopted by the Geneva Congress, the Secretariat has begun work on the establishment of an international database on **Transnational Corporations (TNCs)** in goods transport.

104. **Trade union rights** violations going beyond the boundaries of a single ITF section are now dealt with on a co-ordinated, inter-sectional basis. The Women/Policy Development department, working under the General Secretary's direct supervision, is co-ordinating the ITF's response to requests for solidarity when unions are involved in disputes and when trade union and human rights are violated. Each section now has the option of involving all ITF unions (and if relevant, the ICFTU and other International Trade Secretariats — see Chapter 2) in its struggle.

105. The ITF has increased its activities for **Women Transport Workers** in the last year, following the creation of the Women/Policy Development department. A 1996 calendar/poster and a publication aimed specifically at women transport workers have been produced, and there has been a meeting of the Women's Interim Steering Committee. Another meeting of this committee is planned before the Centenary Congress. Proposals to create a permanent ITF Women Transport Workers' Committee are likely to be discussed over the period and may



be submitted to the 39th Congress. The question of how to maintain a link between the structure of the Women's Committee and those of the sections and regions will have to be considered. One suggestion would be for section meetings and regional meetings to designate an agreed number of representative(s) to the Committee.

106. The Secretariat has approached all affiliates to respond to the Secretariat on questions relating to **young workers** (Circular No. 45/A. 3/1996, 8 February 1996) with the aim of assessing to what extent specific ITF activities for young transport workers would benefit our affiliates.

107. Affiliates have been consulted on questions of **health and safety** (Circular no: 222/A. 31/1995, 17 August 1995) with a view to drawing up a cross-sectional policy document.

108. Little concrete progress has been made so far on the measures to combat of **racism and xenophobia**, although some Secretariat-level discussions have taken place on the possibility of including non-discrimination clauses in ITF-approved agreements for seafarers. Special emphasis is also being given to the historical role of the ITF in the fight against fascism in the Centenary celebrations.

109. Other issues — such as the response to **atypical forms of employment**, remain to be developed.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

110. Most affiliates supported the creation of transport policy and transnational company groups. More could be done on combined and intermodal transport, some thought, although one affiliate was wary of creating additional structures. All supported the women's activities, although it was agreed that this work should be as integrated as possible in the ITF's mainstream work. In addition to young people, some affiliates felt the questions of disabled workers could be taken into account. On racism, trade union education was the best strategy, affiliates said; one suggested a special event on the topic. Research needed to be done on owner-operators and other self-employed transport workers, and on small enterprises and sub-contracted employees, respond-

ents said; affiliates should actively work on these questions and put their findings to the ITF.

111. Developing effective intersectional cooperation in the road transport and the railway industries to provide a comparable level of support to that which exists in the maritime industry, was an important issue.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

112.

- *What comments does the Congress have on progress made so far in the area of intersectional work?*
- *How much priority should be given to this type of activity compared with the ITF's Sectional work?*
- *How can increased intersectional cooperation be developed in the non-maritime transport sectors?*
- *To what extent is it possible/desirable to set common intersectional approaches guidelines for section work?*
- *What areas are suitable for such an approach?*  
*For example:*
  - *trade union organisation*
  - *questions affecting non-mobile transport workers*
  - *health and safety questions (e. g. AIDS, drugs and alcohol abuse)*
  - *discrimination (e. g. inserting clauses in collective agreements)*
  - *sub-contracting issues*
  - *questions on owner operators/small scale enterprises*
- *How should the proposed ITF Women's Committee be structured?*





## THE SECTIONS

### RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SECTIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

113. The ITF's industrial sections remain at the heart of the ITF. They must, however, reflect the priorities of the organisation as a whole. The Sections are carrying out their own reviews, part of which will be for each Section to examine relations between them. The Executive Board is however, still responsible for any final decisions over Section organisation or structure.

114. As part of this review we have been discussing an expanded role for sections in ITF structures, with section representation in the Executive Board, for example; we must recognise however, that there is huge variation between the sizes of the different sections. Of course, no decision can be made about the future of sections without full consultation with them, which is an argument for inviting section representatives to future meetings of the Executive Board devoted to "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000".

115. The size of the industrial sections varies widely, as is demonstrated by the following figures:<sup>2</sup>

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>NO. OF MEMBERS</u>	<u>%</u>
CIVIL AVIATION SECTION	409,848	9.4
DOCKERS SECTION	317,906	7.3
FISHERMEN'S SECTION	112,592	2.6
INLAND NAVIGATION SECTION	49,155	1.1
RAILWAY WORKERS' SECTION	1,275,177	29.3
ROAD TRANSPORT SECTION	1,374,129	31.6
SEAFARERS' SECTION	690,487	15.9
TOURISM SERVICES SECTION	53,348	1.2
OTHER MEMBERS	71,558	1.6
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>4,354,200</u>	<u>100</u>

116. Although they are not the biggest sections, the Seafarers' Section, Special Seafarers' Department (SSD) and Dockers' Sections have a special role in ITF's activities because of the Flag of Convenience campaign. Many seafarers' and dockers' activities and the whole of the SSD's activities are financed from a different source: the ITF International Seafarers Assistance Welfare and Protection Fund.

Despite their political and financial importance, these Sections are not as important in terms of Congress votes, or in terms of affiliation fees. This has produced an imbalance in activity levels compared with crude membership figures. Whether this is a problem, or not, is a matter for affiliates to decide.

117. It is clear that some sections need international action more than others, regardless of size; this has certainly been the case in the past, but now, even those sectors like the railways which were relatively stable, are beginning to be affected by the globalisation process. Cross-border, exploitative employment similar to that which occurs in the Flag of Convenience sector is already happening in the civil aviation industry and could easily occur in other sectors. Overall, the ITF is facing a membership crisis. The overall size of the organised transport workforce is decreasing just as the need for concerted international cooperation rises.

118. As employers increasingly organise their operations across modes of transport, forming logistical chains, they make the ITF's divisions look less relevant. There is a clear case for reviewing our section structure. Closer working relations or in the longer term even a merger of the maritime sectors, as well as a new strategy to deal with goods and passenger inland transport, are amongst ideas which need to be addressed. Relations between the ITF's transport sections must take account of resources, as well as of industrial logic; this could affect the way the Tourism Services Section is handled, for example.

#### PROGRESS REPORT

119. Each section has already held at least a preliminary discussion on its structure and activities in the context of the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" programme. It is clear that any major changes will require both time and a consensus amongst the unions concerned. Some of these issues apply to all the sections to differing degrees, and concern the way that they address the needs and concerns of identifiable groups of transport workers such as women and young people.

<sup>2</sup> ITF Affiliates' database, 1 May 1996.



120. Each section will no doubt express its own ideas for the future during the debate at the Centenary Congress. For the present, however, a number of key points can be identified:

121. In the **Railwaymen's** Section increasing attention is now focused on campaigning to retain integrated railway systems. The Section continues to argue strongly in favour of publicly owned railways, but the process of privatisation is continuing to spread across the world. For the first time, multinational corporations are establishing a presence in the railway industry. One of the biggest problems in the railwaymen's section has been establishing policies which have a global application. North American railway unions do not play an active role in the work of the Section and there are significant areas of overlapping responsibility in Europe with the work of the Brussels Committee.

122. In **Road Transport** attention continues to be focused on a number of technical issues of particular concern to European road transport unions, including regulations on working and driving time and their enforcement, vehicle design and maximum loads. The section is continuing to examine the need to provide separate machinery to discuss passenger and freight transport questions. However the biggest single problem facing the industry world wide is the lack of trade union organisation. In many countries, public transport undertakings are being split up and privatised. Small-scale passenger transport undertakings, owner-drivers and minibus/taxi operations all pose great threats to workers in the organised sector. The section's future work will have to focus more on finding ways of assisting unions to create new ways of organising road transport workers.

123. **Urban Transport** which spans the rail and road sections is now operating a level of activities not far short of that of a full section. Some affiliates have in the past pressed for full section status for Urban Transport, but this pressure has diminished in the light of the increased level of activity and has been opposed strongly by some unions, notably in the railway section.

124. **Inland Navigation**, which in Europe is dominated by small family based enterprises, suffers from many of the same problems as road transport. Russia and Eastern Europe pose particular problems which have yet to be fully addressed by the Section. Exploitative employment conditions have, unfortunately, already made an appearance in inland navigation on both the Rhine and the Danube and possibly on other waterways. The Inland Navigation Workers' Section is being consulted at present on the whole question of crews/flags of convenience. As in the railway industry, the problems of inland waterways in the different regions have little in common and there is only limited room for internationally co-ordinated action.

125. **Civil Aviation** faces huge structural change with the virtual end of national publicly-owned airlines and the deregulation of airport ground handling services. ITF activity will continue to focus on achieving international and regional regulatory standards to protect aviation workers and on establishing closer contact between unions within international airline groupings.

126. The **Fishermen's Section** is growing in size and importance but trade unions still represent only a small proportion of the world's fishing industry. Regional and inter-regional activity designed to raise the ability of fishing unions to organise and educate their members will be a key aspect of the section's future work. Within the Secretariat the Section is currently serviced by Seafarers' Section staff and the section has much in common with the other 'maritime' sections.

127. The **Ports** industry remains industrially at the heart of ITF activity but large scale deregulation has had a devastating effect on ITF dockers' unions. For the first time in many years these unions now need the support of seafarers' unions to retain their union strength. This has led to a major increase in the involvement of dockers' unions in the ITF Flag of Convenience Campaign, something which is likely to dominate the Section's future work. The issue of a merger between the Seafarers' and Dockers' Sections has already been discussed, but there is little enthusiasm for it at this stage.

128. The **Seafarers' Section** cannot be viewed in iso-



lation from the **Special Seafarers' Department**. The development in FOC shipping in recent years and the growth of quasi-FOC operations such as Second registers and increasing use of non domiciled seafarers on national flag ships has made the simple division of shipping into FOC and national irrelevant. The Section's workload continues to grow but is less concerned with the coordination of national unions own work. Seafarers' unions are involved in ITF activities on a daily basis in a way unlike any other sector. Major new initiatives in the FOC campaign including the expansion of the London staff, and the worldwide inspectorate, closer involvement of dockers and establishing a better relationship with 'good' shipowners appear to have paid off with a considerable increase in ships covered by ITF agreements in the past 12 months. The political side of the campaign has also begun to intensify with efforts to clamp down on substandard shipping showing the absurdities of the FOC system. A long term review of ITF FOC campaign policies has been initiated as has a general review of the relations between the different maritime sections of the ITF.

129. The **Tourism Services** section suffers from being very small in membership terms with only a small number of unions involved. Efforts are now therefore concentrated on relations with other ITSS, chiefly IUF and FIET. Despite the potential importance of the industry, the problem of defining tourism services workers and the extreme difficulty of organising them into trade unions will probably continue to limit the expansion of this Section.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

130. These ranged from strong support for a merger of the seafarers, dockers and fishing workers, and the creation of four sections only — air, rail, road, maritime, to opposition to such a merger. Some were worried that merging sections would dilute the sectional work and create more structures in the end. One proposal was to maintain the existing sectional structure but develop new ways of integrating different sections' work together, for example through an intersectional co-ordinating body. One clear point came across — Civil Aviation is a separate entity and is likely to be kept on its own.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

131.

- *How can the 100-year old industrial structure of the ITF be better adjusted to take account of today's changing transport industry? What possible structural changes could be made to the sections?*
- *How can the sections better address the problems of specific groups of workers e. g. women, and young people? Should the sections elect some or all members of the proposed ITF Women's Committee (see paragraph 105)?*
- *Would the creation of a seafarers' and dockers' joint Maritime Section be appropriate?*
- *If so, what structure would best represent the fishermen's section?*
- *Would inland navigation workers fit better into a maritime/water transport workers' section, or an inland transport section?*
- *If any of these measures are desirable, how would the system work in practice? e. g. Would there be meetings of subcommittees?*
- *Would there be any logic in combining the inland transport sections? Should the rail and road transport industries be organised together, or separately? .*
- *Should urban transport be organised separately from long distance transport, and passenger transport organised apart from freight transport?*
- *Should civil aviation remain as it is, or cooperate more closely with the Tourism Services section?*
- *What measures can be taken to better represent the types of workers in the ITF Tourism Services Section?*



## SECTION STRUCTURE

### INTRODUCTION

132. Rule XIII of the Constitution lays down that the Executive Board determines the role and guides the activities of the industrial sections.

133. The **Section Committees** are 'elected' at Congress, but in reality they are open to all unions. It is not laid down in the Constitution that they have to be elected at Congress, nor is any stipulation made about their size or meeting frequency. Representation on these Committees is dependent either on attendance at Congress or replying to the circulars sent out afterwards. The Secretariat maintains a database of all the Section Committee members' names.

134. One large **Section Conference** is usually held between Congresses (although this is not laid down in the Constitution) to review work programmes and modify section policy. Some Sections hold more than one large **section meeting** in the inter-Congressional period.

135. This structure is becoming increasingly irrelevant. The open nature of the current Section Committees has evolved to the point where it is difficult to distinguish between a Section Committee and Section Conference — many affiliates certainly don't understand the difference. Several sections have now created **Steering Committees**. These are smaller and often work in a limited number of languages, thus keeping costs down, and they meet with regularity. This means they can better exercise democratic control over the work of the ITF Secretariat. Steering committees can also take account of occupational, industrial or regional balance.

136. One way to create better regional balance within each section, as well as to provide a greater sectional input to regional activities might be to increase the number of Section Vice-Chairmen. The Seafarers' Section, during the course of its discussions on "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" has, for example, suggested that a Vice-Chairman should be elected from each region, with the exception of the

region which holds the chair of the Section. Rule XIII (5) of the ITF Constitution, envisages only one Vice-Chairman, although the Seafarers' Section already began the process of modifying this rule in Geneva with the election of a Deputy Vice-Chairman. If each section was able to elect more than one Vice-Chairman, the regions would find it easier to obtain representation at section level. At the same time, the respective Vice-Chairman could act as the chairs and co-ordinators of the respective regional section committees. In constitutional terms, this would simply require modifying Rule XIII (5) so that it read Chairmen instead of Chairman. (The issue of eliminating gender specific language from the Constitution is one to which the Executive Board will also have to turn its attention prior to the 1998 Congress).

### PROGRESS REPORT

137. The Civil Aviation, Road Transport, Seafarers', Fishermen's and Dockers' Sections have all formed Steering Committees, whilst the Railway Workers' Section has a "Transport Policy Sub-Committee" which, despite its name, fulfils the same kind of function. In most Sections, the reality is that the Section Committee rarely meets.

### AFFILIATES' VIEWS

138. One proposal made was that the smaller, steering committees should not try to take on the decision-making role of the Section Conference or Section Committee, but concentrate on co-ordinating special projects to prepare for the larger Section meetings.

### QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

- 139.
- *Is it possible, or desirable to lay down minimum requirements for section structures? e. g.*
    - *Abolish the election of Section Committees at Congress, or*
    - *Elect a smaller committee at Congress, of 10 to 20 delegates, taking regional and occupational balance into account.*



— *General meetings of affiliates, or smaller meetings of the section/steering committee or section officers could be organised, as required. Would this take care of the problem?*

- *Should the ITF Constitution be amended to permit the election of more than one Section Vice-Chair, to enable a better representation of regions at section meetings and vice versa?*
- *Does the Congress have any other comments on how ITF Section Activities should work?*

## THE REGIONS

### INTRODUCTION

140. The ITF's regions are carrying out their own reviews, but, as with the Sections, the Executive Board is still responsible for any final decisions over regional organisation or structure.

141. Regional structure is becoming increasingly vital to the integrity of the ITF. The ITF has organised regional activities in the past in three structural regions — Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Activities for Western European unions and more recently Central and Eastern European affiliates did take place, but to a great extent “regional activities” were perceived as being support for trade unions in developing countries. In addition, there are parts of the ITF which were never considered in the regional structure. In Latin America activities were organised that did not respond to the needs of the Caribbean unions, whilst the Inter-American relationship, that could have led to a forging of a strong links with North American trade unions, was never explored. These groups now need to be brought strongly into the regional activities of the ITF.

142. The increasing importance of regional economic groups, and the pressure created by the need to respond to regional free trade measures which mean internal deregulation is a challenge for the international trade union movement in general. Subregional trade union fora may need to be created to mirror the structure of trade pacts. Signifi-

cant economic growth in the Asia/Pacific Region, and the need to coherently represent the interests of workers in Central and Eastern Europe, especially in the context of a number of cooperation agreements with the European Union, are added pressures that the ITF has to respond to.

143. Perhaps the most fundamental challenge facing in the ITF in the longer term will be how to reconcile the growing trend towards regional economic integration with the need to maintain global trade union solidarity. This issue, which is at its most acute in Europe, is in no way unique to the transport sector. At the level of national trade union confederations, the ICFTU is facing increasing pressure as a result of the growing dominance of the European Union and the parallel growth in importance of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). For historical reasons, the ETUC, which also includes affiliates of the much smaller World Confederation of Labour (WCL) has taken over the role played in other parts of the World by the ICFTU's own regional organisations. The ETUC has established for itself a central role in the ‘social dialogue’ within the European Union, and as such provides the ability to influence political decisions which have a direct bearing on the lives of European trade union members. At the same time, however, such access brings with it disadvantages, not the least of which is the danger of becoming too closely identified with and too dependent upon the bureaucracy of Brussels.

144. The potential for conflict between European and international solidarity exists in virtually every industrial sector, although in some at least it is reduced by the fact that the relevant industrial body is, at the same time organically linked both to the International Trade Secretariat and to the ETUC. In transport, the Committee of Transport Workers in the European Community (the so called “Brussels Committee”) finds itself in a particularly complex position. Originally set up by ITF affiliates but now including a handful of non-ITF unions, the Committee has a mandate purely to represent unions in relation to EU transport policy. To add to the complexity, the ITF is an affiliate of the Brussels Committee and the ITF General Secretary acts as one of its Vice-Presidents.



145. Despite these rather strange arrangements, for most of its history the ITF/Brussels Committee relationship has worked quite well, with trade union action being the role of the ITF and EU representation being that of the Committee. Increasing European integration, beginning with the Single European Act progressing through the Maastricht Treaty and continuing with the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) have put increasing political strains on the relationship, however. There is clear pressure from the ETUC to create a closer relation between itself and “its” European structures (of which the Brussels Committee is one). One demonstration of this, is the decision at the ETUC’s 1995 Congress to change its Constitution to replace the term ‘Industry Committees’ with ‘Industrial Federations.’

146. But the pressure for change is not just external. There is an increasing demand from transport unions in the EU member states - virtually all of which are members both of the Brussels Committee and of the ITF, for the development of an effective, dynamic EU level trade union body, able to take industrial action and challenge both the EU institutions and governments and transport employers. So far, however, they have failed to reach any clear consensus about how this can best be done.

147. The question of regional representation is also vital because it can be difficult for ITF trade unions in many parts of the world to participate in regular section meetings, especially as many of them are held in Western Europe. The ITF has traditionally combined regional meetings with regional meetings of the sections. Regional-sectional activities have grown and are likely to continue growing in the future. This poses questions for the ITF’s structure, and there may be a need to look at how regional and sectional activities should be structurally integrated. The ITF’s regional committees, for example, could be elected *at least in part* from the sections. The Executive Board members from the regions could be more consistently involved in regional activities, for example. Another suggestion is that made under paragraph 136, which proposes increasing the number of Vice-Chairmen for each section to allow for one to be elected from each region.

148. In contrast with the detailed provisions in the ITF Constitution dealing with the role of the Industrial Sections, Rule XII deals with regional ‘and other’ organisations in just a sentence. The role and status of the Regional Committees, offices and Secretaries are nowhere defined. As a part of this review, it would seem sensible that new and more detailed provisions on the role and functioning of Regional organisations should be drafted for inclusion in the ITF Constitution.

149. The ITF’s regional activities — principally the organising of meetings — have been historically dependent on funds from donor organisations. This money is becoming increasingly harder to access as much of the international trade union movement is seeking resources in response to financial crisis. At the same time, regional meetings are becoming more politically important, thus are less “educational” in nature; donors are less interested in funding this kind of activities.

150. Funds received for regional “education” should be used for educational activities, and not be used to support the ITF’s routine regional activities or infrastructure. The ITF must avoid any kind of routine dependence on such funding. In order to be self-sufficient, the activities must become more streamlined and efficient.

## PROGRESS REPORT

151. In response to the pressures explained in paragraph numbers 143-146, both the ITF European Committee and the Brussels Committees structures have developed considerably since 1990. Parallel sectional bodies exist in most sections and, despite efforts to avoid this by the adoption in 1993 of a set of ‘guidelines’ governing relations between the two bodies, there is inevitable duplication from time to time in the work done. While a great deal can be (and has been) done by the two Secretariats to avoid such duplication, it is clear that the heart of the problem is a lack of clarity amongst ITF affiliates in Western Europe about how they want to see things develop. This issue has to be urgently addressed by the involved unions themselves.



152. This issue was debated at some length during the ITF Executive Board meeting held in Stuttgart in March 1996. During the course of the debate, Board members from the other ITF regions also expressed keen interest in being involved in the debate, aware both of the important role still played by Western Europe within the ITF and of the influence which European developments can have in other regions. It is an issue which must also be addressed in depth as part of the Transport Workers beyond 2000 review and in preparation for the next General Assembly of the "Brussels Committee" in November 1997.

153. The ITF's **European** Committee had already met and adopted changes to the constitution of the Committee in July 1995 in Vienna. At the same time, affiliates in Central and Eastern Europe decided that they did not wish to have a separate ITF structure to represent their interests — these were best dealt with inside the ITF's existing European structure, alongside Western European affiliates, they felt. There is a possibility that the ITF may decide to share a representative in Moscow with other ITFs. Other activities in Europe include the ITF's continued cooperation, through our affiliates, in the process of following up the Pan-European Transport Conference in Crete in 1994 and preparing for the next of these Conferences in Helsinki in 1997.

154. Activities in **Latin America** have been revitalised with the opening of the new regional office in Rio de Janeiro. This office will cover the Caribbean also, and there remains a need to properly integrate affiliates from this subregion into the region's activities. Inter-American activities involving US and Canadian unions, especially in the context of regional trade treaties, are important; an ITF Conference on the consequences of economic integration in North and South America is scheduled in Mexico for Autumn 1996. An agreement has also been reached with affiliates in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay to set up a "MERCOSUR" office to work on transport and social issues emanating from the southern cone free trade area. The ITF is making contribution to the running of this office which began operations in April 1996. As the MERCOSUR expands, affiliates from new countries will be invited to share in the running of and benefit

from the services of this office.

155. In **Africa**, a new regional committee was elected, and subregional committees have been set up. It is important to note that the composition of the African regional committee is not based on the format of "one delegate per country" often used by the ITF in the past; delegates to the committee represent several unions in a couple of countries. It is clear therefore that their responsibility as members of the committee is not just to the members of their union; it is a regional responsibility.

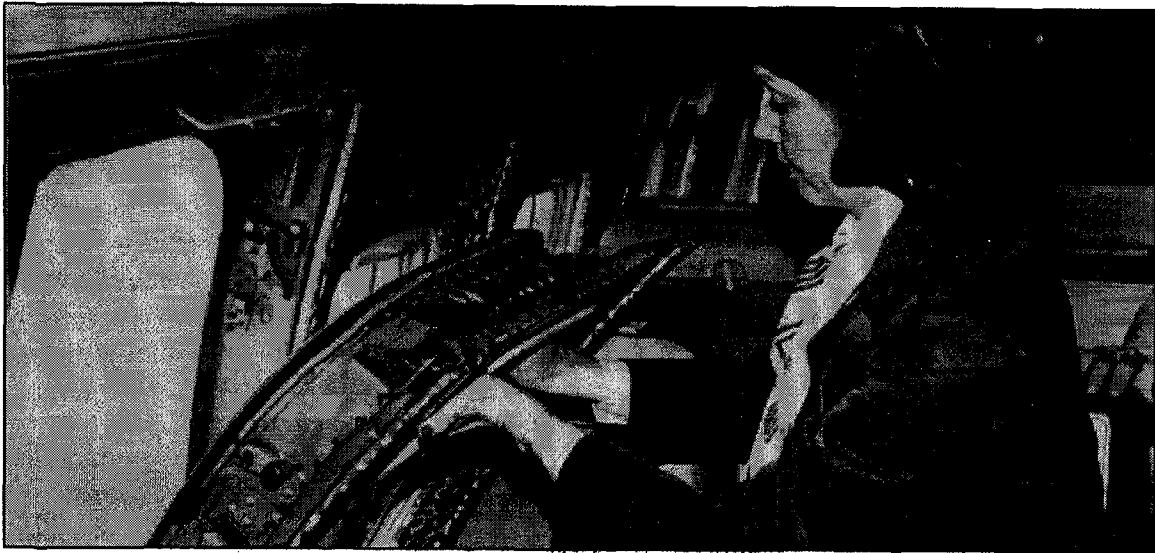
156. In the **Asia/Pacific** region, a new subregional office has been opened in Delhi, and the Asia Pacific regional office is in the process of relocation to Tokyo. The Asia/Pacific Regional Committee (APRC) is in the process of examining its structures to ensure the Committee, which is currently very large with more than one representative per country, can efficiently respond to the demands made upon it. Responses from affiliates on the question of the Committee's future structure will be submitted to the next meeting of the APRC.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

157. Affiliates felt that the ITF needed to emphasise more the importance of regional meetings. Regional meetings were a good place to focus on inter-sectional activity many thought. It was suggested that regional meetings needed to be structured according to trade blocs, but argued that no developments that would lead to a regional split in the structure should take place and that any existing substructures should be fully integrated into the ITF structure. Holding large regional meetings falling between Congresses was suggested.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

- 158.
- *Should the ITF Constitution be amended to better reflect the importance of its regional structures?*
  - *How can we make the regional structures more efficient? Should we limit the size of regional meetings to make cost savings, or expand them?*



- *How can we properly integrate regional and section work?*
- *How can the ITF's regional activities include developing relationships with regional economic groups? And how do we deal with inter-regional groups, such as APEC?*
- *Should regional level discussion concentrate on intersectional questions, and how should the regional contribution into intersectional work be handled?*
- *How should the regions better address the problems of specific groups of workers, such as women and young people? E. g. should regional meetings elect some or all members of the proposed ITF Women's Committee (see paragraph 105)?*
- *What regional input should there be into Congress? Should there be regional meetings in relation to Congress?*

## THE ITF'S GOVERNING BODIES

### GENERAL COMMENTS

159. The ITF has a lot of governing bodies — Congress, the General Council, the Executive Board and the Management Committee. All these bodies figure in the Constitution, which dates from 1920. Although the ITF Constitution has been modified over the years, it has never been thoroughly reviewed. The 100th anniversary of the ITF could be a good time to do this. Of course, it will be possible to improve many of the ITF's operations by executive decisions, but some changes may need constitutional amendments which would need to be put to the 1998 Ordinary Congress or to a subsequent one.

### THE CONGRESS

#### INTRODUCTION

160. The ITF's Constitution lays down that the Congress should meet every 4 years. Because of the section meetings it is an extended event, lasting 9 days, much longer than other international Congresses.

161. **Section meetings** are a very important part of the Congress, and they can be the only chance that some unions get to participate in sectional activities. For practical reasons, however, the sections currently only meet for half a day each. Their con-





stitutional function is to hold elections for section officers, adopt a work programme and consider motions, but they usually also debate substantive items of section business. This makes for a very rushed schedule. Ten meetings are held over a two and a half day period (eight section meetings, plus a joint seafarers' and dockers' conference and an urban transport meeting). As a result many delegates do not get the opportunity to express their views properly. Each Section is currently allocated the same meeting time irrespective of its size or the complexity of the issues it has to discuss. Other technical problems include the current practice of translating and printing reports of each section meeting in time for plenary debate, most of which are then thrown away. A further problem is that many delegates are left with extensive free time in the middle of the Congress waiting for their section to meet.

162. The ITF's **Regions** are only given informal opportunities to meet during Congress (mainly for the purpose of elections), yet regional work is becoming more and more important within the Federation. To superimpose formal regional meetings in addition to the current sectional meetings at Congress would, however, create enormous practical problems, even if it were considered desirable.

163. Many of the Congress **Motions** tend to be based on sectional issues and are highly technical. The Congress plenary session either "rubber stamps" a motion without debate, or its supporters use the final plenary session to appeal against the Section's decision. There is little time available either in section meetings or in the plenary session to give complex motions due consideration. Past practice is for the Resolutions Committee merely to refer motions to plenary or to different sections. It does not intervene directly in the drafting of motions, unlike the Resolutions Committees of some other ITS Congresses and of many ITF affiliates.

164. **Plenary** sessions can be very tedious. The 'debate' on the Report on Activities usually consists of delegates making general speeches designed mainly for home consumption. Section reports, which are usually only interesting to the sections concerned, are also given at length towards the end of the Congress.

165. **Elections** are very complex and are effectively open only to unions which are present at Congress. Whether a candidate is able to gain election is therefore dependent either on the union concerned being able to afford to attend, or on being granted financial assistance by the ITF. There are no Constitutional procedures for the division of countries into electoral groups or for the conduct of proceedings within the electoral groups. Several very difficult disputes arose during electoral group meetings at the Geneva Congress. It may be worth considering whether this way of electing ITF Governing bodies is the most democratic and efficient or whether some other system, perhaps involving a postal ballot, might be better.

166. There is no time for other informal activities during the Congress which might be more interesting for delegates. Pre-Congress women's meetings, for example, are at present constitutionally separate from the Congress. Any changes which involve more meetings taking place simultaneously would, of course, have important practical and cost implications since most Congress work requires interpretation into six languages.

## PROGRESS REPORT

167. Speakers were asked to limit their addresses in plenary to 10 minutes at the 1994 Congress. The Constitution lays down no rules on the Section Conferences during Congress or on the role of the Resolutions Committee, so there is scope for making some changes to the operation of Congress without having to amend the Constitution. Many of these ideas would require constitutional amendments and very careful consideration, however.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

168. Affiliates clearly felt that section meetings were vital to Congress, and accepted there was a problem of reconciling the wish for sections to meet for longer, with keeping Congress to a reasonable length. One suggested that four joint sessions be held and they could meet for longer. Regional meetings during Congress were not generally supported due to time constraints. Abandoning elections during Congress received some support. Financial pri-



ority should be given to Congress, it was felt, because it was the one ITF decision-making body where all affiliates had a chance to be represented. A topical theme for Congress was another suggestion.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

169.

- *Are Congress delegates broadly satisfied with the way the ITF Ordinary Congress works at present? What improvements would they like to see?*
- *Should the inter-Congressional period remain at four years ?*
- *Should the practice of holding a general debate during plenary sessions be ended?*
- *Should the system of holding section conferences during Congress be modified and if so, how? Possible alternatives could include:*
  - *Eliminating Section conferences altogether and shortening Congress to perhaps five days.*
  - *Holding joint section meetings (e. g. road, rail, air, maritime) with each joint conference being allocated a day each, instead of half a day.*
  - *Holding three rather than two meetings simultaneously: by taking an additional half day from the plenary session and employing a third team of interpreters, it would be possible to provide nine one day 'slots' for section conferences. This would however be expensive (at least £10,000 for the additional team of interpreters) and would create practical problems for unions with membership in more than one section, not to mention the ITF Secretariat.*
  - *Deferring all elections to regular section meetings.*
- *Should formal regional meetings be held, and if so, when?*
- *Should other groups meet during Congress? (Women, youth transport policy or other cross-sectional issues).*
- *Should the ITF's Congress be organised differently? If so how? Should there be a specific theme with Guest Speakers, Panel Discussions, Workshops or other non traditional business items?*

## GENERAL COUNCIL

### INTRODUCTION

170. The General Council has not met for 30 years. When it did the ITF Executive Board was much smaller and the ITF had far fewer affiliates. The Council's size now would make it very difficult and expensive to convene — it has 74 titular members plus the same number of deputies. It is also unclear what purpose is now served by the General Council which cannot better be served either by some other body. Since the 1960s, the General Council's only real role has been to serve as an electoral college for elections to the Executive Board. Some members of the General Council do value their membership and one option would be to carry out a major restructuring of ITF governing bodies in order to give it a real function. But it seems pointless to maintain in the Constitution a body with no real purpose.

171. This was the argument put by the movers of Motion no. 9 submitted to the ITF Geneva Congress, which called for the abolition of the General Council. That motion was withdrawn on the understanding that the issues to which it referred would be considered by the ITF Executive Board as part of this review. The motion made two proposals: one was to eliminate the General Council; the other was to create a system of Deputy Members of the Executive Board. While the two issues are obviously linked, they must each be considered on their merits. In the context of discussions about the General Council, it should be noted that some other ITFs, for example the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF) do have a similar bodies. The IMF's Central Committee, which is made up of 100 plus members, meets once a year, but its Executive Board is smaller and also only meets once a year.

172. If the principles accepted in Motion no 9 were to be supported by the majority of Congress delegates, it would still be necessary to draw up detailed Constitutional amendments to implement the ideas in practice. Such amendments would have to deal with questions such as whether Deputy members should be permitted to attend all meetings, or only when a titular members was unable to attend,



whether each deputy was linked to a specified titular member and who should pay for their participation.

## PROGRESS REPORT

173. No progress has been made on this question since it is purely concerned with changes to the ITF Constitution, a matter in the first instance for consideration by the Executive Board, and then if necessary, by an Ordinary Congress.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

174. The majority of unions which replied to the Questionnaire supported the abolition of the General Council, arguing there was no point in maintaining a body that didn't meet. A minority thought it should be retained for emergencies, whilst others argued that its role should be changed, believing that individual members of the Council from the different regions could serve a regional coordinating function.

175. A specific proposal was formally submitted for consideration in the form of a Motion to the Centenary Congress on behalf of the ITF's Turkish affiliates. This Motion suggested convening one General Council meeting between each Ordinary Congress. The proposal emphasised the increasing need to have an inter-regional and cross-sectional forum which had broader participation than the Executive Board. The Turkish affiliates strongly believed this body should be the existing General Council. In the interests of saving time, this Motion was withdrawn on the request of the ITF Executive Board on the understanding that the points raised by the Turkish unions would be fully reflected in this document.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

176.

- *Does the Congress agree that the General Council should either be abolished or given a real functioning role in the ITF's Constitutional structure?*
- *Should the General Council be abolished? If so, how would this affect other ITF governing bodies?*

- *Should the Council be properly reactivated? If so, how frequently should it meet and what should it do? What effect would this have on the Executive Board's functions and frequency of meetings?*
- *If the Council is retained, can a more important role be found for the General Council members, in regional coordination, for example?*

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

### INTRODUCTION

177. The ITF's Executive Board currently has 30 members, including the General Secretary. It traditionally meets twice a year, on the third Tuesday and Wednesday in March and October. The Board has increased modestly in size in recent years but still remains small by comparison with that of other ITs or the ICFTU. Its current size aids efficient debate and decision making. Unlike many other international trade union bodies, the ITF has always adopted a strict rule that only Board members, Secretariat and interpreters are allowed to attend its meetings— no substitutes or advisers are permitted — and all costs are covered by the ITF. Election to the Executive Board is through electoral groups which are agreed by each Congress on the recommendation of the Board itself, and the Board also recommends to Congress rules on the maximum number of members permitted from different countries (no more than one Executive Board member for countries with less than 400,000 members, and two for countries with more than 400,000 members, with special arrangements for North America). The ITF's Constitution lays down that the Board should be industrially and regionally balanced but there is no Constitutional machinery to ensure that this happens in practice. The electoral group system does ensure some regional balance, but there is no formal system for ensuring sectional representation.

178. The Executive Board is expensive, costing around £60,000 (around US\$ 95,000.00) per year because all the costs of participation are for the ITF's account. Some members' unions could afford to fund their attendance, but the rule that the ITF pays



does ensure that no union is discouraged from seeking Executive Board membership because of the costs. Holding Board meetings in London saves money, particularly in Secretariat travel costs, but the time and effort involved for members from outside Europe to travel to London for such short meetings is considerable. Experience has shown that holding meetings in other regions significantly reduces the level of participation. The March 1994 meeting, held in Sydney, for example, was nearly inquorate.

179. The Executive Board is a very important body. It effectively runs the ITF between Congresses and exerts democratic control over the Secretariat as well as over the Sections, the regions and the ITF's other activities. It is also responsible for fixing the ITF's budget and approving its annual accounts. Its working methods, established over many years, have, however, recently been criticised, including most recently in a letter submitted by the three members from the United States. There is a general feeling that too much time is spent on examining the Secretariat's Report on Activities which could be better spent on more important issues which tend to be rushed at the end of meetings. Debates relating to administrative matters and Secretariat "housekeeping" which might more logically be dealt with by the Management Committee also take up significant time.

180. The lack of any formal system for ensuring section balance also makes the Board's relationship with the Sections unclear. Some Section Chairs are currently represented on the Board but others are not. There is no opportunity for formal pre-meetings of Board members by regional, sectional or other grouping. Indeed it is unclear who the Executive Board members are supposed to report to, except, of course, to Congress. Some members report back to their own unions or to their own national co-ordinating committees, but there is no mechanism through which they can report back to a wider constituency, for example the countries represented in their electoral group. Finally it should be remembered that only 25 countries are currently represented on the Board, compared with 130 in the ITF. Until recently very little information was made available to ITF affiliates in general about the decisions taken by the Board.

## PROGRESS REPORT

181. While Board documents and minutes continue to be distributed only to Board members, a summary of Board decisions together with an edited version of the Report on Activities is now circulated to all affiliated organisations on a regular basis. Some changes have also been made to the order of items on the Board's agenda. Applications for affiliation are now dealt with at the beginning of the meeting, matters relating to the Secretariat are discussed earlier, and efforts have also been made to separate out key items in the Report on Activities which require Board action from the more general reporting items. The extra day added to the March 1996 Board for the discussion on "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" in addition to the full day allocated for the Management Committee means that, for the first time, almost four whole days are being devoted to Board-related meetings.

182. In addition, a scheduling change was agreed at the March 1996 Executive Board meeting, allowing the first Executive Board meeting each year to be moved from March to April. It was also decided that Board meetings should be held on Thursdays and Fridays to make it easier for pre-meetings to take place.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

183. Opinions varied on this point. One proposal was that the Executive Board should be bigger, perhaps similar in size to the General Council, and should meet once a year or twice between Congresses. This would allow the number of countries represented on the Board to be expanded with participation costs in the main being for the unions to cover. Many agreed that section representation should be ensured on the ITF Executive Board. Less refunding of travel expenses to representatives of the better-off unions was also suggested.



## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

184.

- *Should the structure of the Executive Board be left as it is, or should changes be made?*
- *If so, should it be bigger, or smaller; or is it the right size?*
- *Is the current frequency of meetings acceptable or should changes be made?*
- *Should the proposals made in Motion No. 9 to the 36th Congress, to eliminate the General Council and create a system of Deputy Members of the Executive Board, be adopted in whole or in part?*
- *Should the present system of refusing advisers access to the meetings be continued?*
- *Should additional seats be created to cater for particular groups e. g. for women?*
- *Should formal arrangements be adopted to ensure sectional representation on the Board? (Congress delegates may wish to take note of two motions submitted by the German and Austrian Railwaymen's unions to the ITF's 37th Congress in Florence in 1990, by which section Chairs would either become full members of the Board or be invited to attend its meetings.) In this connection, it should be noted that, under Rule V paragraph (3) of the ITF Constitution, Section Chairs are already entitled to attend meetings of the General Council as advisers.*
- *Is there a need for additional regional representation? For example, should the chairman and/or Vice-Chair of Regional Committees, if not already Executive Board members, be invited?*
- *Should the location of the meetings be examined? London is cheap and efficient (this is especially so since the acquisition of the new headquarters building) but holding all meetings there discriminates against unions from other parts of the world.*
- *Should financial assistance be limited to those unions which are unable to cover the costs themselves rather than extended to all Board members?*
- *Given that some participants will always be obliged to travel long distances regardless of location, is a two day Board meeting a sensible use of their time? Should the meetings themselves be longer (e. g. three days)? Should other meetings be held in conjunction with Board meetings? Should time be made available before Executive Board meetings for other groups, regional groups for example, to meet and prepare themselves?*
- *Is the current way of doing business efficient? Should there be more specific themes and documentation, rather than adhering to the current standard agenda we have now? Should outside speakers be invited to address Board meetings?*
- *Are two meetings a year really necessary, or would one big meeting, plus an expanded Management Committee (see below) be a better use of resources?*
- *Could more administrative matters be transferred to the Management Committee? If so what?*

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### INTRODUCTION

185. The powers and composition of the ITF Management Committee are laid down in Rule VII of the ITF Constitution. The Executive Board may delegate its specific duties and it currently consists of the President, the Vice-Presidents, the General Secretary, the Executive Board member or members from the country where the headquarters is resident (currently there are two British members) and three other Executive Board members, elected by the Board itself. After the Geneva Congress these were Umraomal Purohit (India), Bill Scheri (United States) and Anders Lindström (Sweden), who resigned in October 1995 and was replaced by Per Erik Nelin (Finland) by the Executive Board meeting in March 1996.



186. The Management Committee used to be more important when transport was difficult and expensive and the Executive Board was able to meet less frequently. For many years now, however, it has only met shortly before and in conjunction with an Executive Board meeting. Its role is limited to examining the Secretariat document and interviewing candidates for positions which the Board has the power to appoint. The Executive Board then invariably re-discusses the issues dealt with in the Management Committee. Usually the Committee has insufficient time for any substantial debate (it meets only for one hour before Executive Board meeting starts). Its size and representation means it has limited authority, but it still needs interpretation, so holding meetings still involve significant cost.

187. If the Management Committee were to be given greater powers, its composition might need to be looked at again. Granting more powers to the Management Committee might also have consequences for the frequency of meetings of the Executive Board.

## PROGRESS REPORT

188. This matter relates primarily to the ITF Constitution and should be discussed by the Executive Board in the first instance. An Ordinary Congress decision would be needed in order to make changes.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

189. Views varied — some thought the Committee should be expanded by a few members, should meet more frequently, but should have a real political role. Others felt the Management Committee should be abolished.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

190.

- *Should any action be taken in relation to the function and/or composition of the Management Committee? For example:*
  - *More meetings separately from the Executive Board meetings;*
  - *Larger and more representative composition?*

— *Different functions for the Committee e. g. transferring some agenda items entirely from the Executive Board, such as Secretariat, Finances, Report on Activities with the Board receiving Management Committee minutes for approval)*

## FINANCING THE ITF

191. The issues raised in Chapter One clearly point to potential problems in financing the ITF's general activities in the future. This is not a new problem but it is made more serious by the general crisis in trade unionism. Affiliating new unions (and persuading existing affiliates to pay more in affiliation fees) can help the problem, but new affiliates bring with them new demands on the Federation's time and resources. Two major issues have to be addressed. The first is the current system of affiliation fees. The second is the administration of the ITF's finances.

## AFFILIATION FEES

192. The present system of affiliation fees relies on unions declaring their total membership. They then receive an invoice for fees at the standard rate unless they have requested a concession. In the last two years, the system for paying fees at a concessionary rate has been modernised. Unions wishing to benefit from this privilege must submit, each year, a form giving details of their unions income and expenditure and their members' earnings. The Executive Board is given a list of unions paying at less than 100% each October and in principle has the right to object to any concession. In reality, however, the General Secretary has considerable discretion to negotiate a reasonable concession with unions unable to pay the standard rate.

193. The Florence Congress amended the ITF Constitution to eliminate the link between fee payments and voting rights. Previously the maximum voting strength an ITF union was able to exercise at Congress was twice that which it paid for. Following Congress, the Board was given complete discretion to permit payment at concessionary rates without affecting voting strength. The Board subsequently adopted some rules governing concessions. These



state that the lowest available concession is 10% of the standard rate, that no union paying less than the standard rate may affiliate with more than 100,000 members and that unions which do not pay fees in convertible currencies should be limited to 50,000 votes.

194. The standard affiliation fee is voted on by each Ordinary Congress. It is currently £0.70 per member per year. The Executive Board regularly receives a list of unions in arrears and normally delegates to the General Secretary the right to suspend the membership of unions whose arrears are significant. In addition, unions in arrears lose any right to financial sponsorship to ITF meetings.

195. Some countries impose real barriers on the international transfer of funds and the ITF has always recognised this and permitted some unions to pay fees into local accounts in national currency. Sometimes this money is directly useful to finance ITF activities and sometimes it isn't. Some unions try very hard to find ways of overcoming exchange control barriers. Others do not. Keeping control of large numbers of foreign currency bank accounts, and finding useful things to do with them, imposes an additional administrative burden on the ITF Finance Department.

196. Some unions genuinely cannot afford to pay ITF fees and need a concessionary rate. Others have paid at a low rate in the past and would prefer if possible to continue to do so. Some unions are extremely prompt at paying fees, others require substantial 'chasing'. Some kind of early payment discount (or late payment penalty) system might discourage this. Some ITF affiliates are themselves federations in which the bulk of union dues are retained by local or regional organisations, leaving the federal level with only a relatively small income against which the ITF's affiliation fee can sometimes be very large.

197. The concessionary rate system operated by the ITF relies on a great deal of discretion. It is, however, probably at least as good as those used by other ITS's which, for example, establish bands of fees according to the per capita income of the country concerned. ITF unions in a given country often have

widely differing financial circumstances which a country based system could not cope with.

198. The current system clearly puts the biggest financial burdens on a few large unions from a small number of countries. Some smaller unions which are heavy consumers of ITF services could probably afford to pay more but are not constitutionally obliged to. The current system also provides an incentive to unions to under-declare their membership (although most do not do so).

199. A number of possible changes could be made in the way that the ITF raises its finance. One could be to establish a minimum cash fee in addition to the current per capita system, to take account of the fact that small unions often require as much service as large ones. The Executive Board already has the power to do this under Article XVI (1) of the Constitution but it has never been enforced in practice. Concessionary payment rates would still be needed for such a system, however, and the unions concerned would presumably then demand voting rights in line with their payment.

200. The biggest single issue of all is the declaration of membership. In the end the ITF is dependent on each union declaring its real membership. Under-declaration of membership is serious, not only for financial reasons but because it makes it hard to estimate the ITF's true strength. Our full fee paying membership equivalent (fee income divided by £0.70) is currently around 3.5 million. Declared membership is around 4.4 million but the "real" membership of all ITF affiliates is probably nearer 10 million. It is, however, hard to see how any voluntary organisation can tackle this problem.

201. Another option would be to begin to charge unions for specific services. This is occasionally done already for large quantities of publications, but considerable resistance is always encountered from unions which feel they are paying twice for the same thing.

202. Restructuring the system of affiliation fees would be a very sensitive issue since any change to the existing system would inevitably result in at least some unions paying more than they do at present. It does nevertheless require serious consideration.



## FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

203. The Constitution charges the ITF General Secretary with the administration of the ITF's Finances.

204. The ITF's Finances are much larger and more complex, because of the Welfare Fund, than for any other international trade union body. The Executive Board approves the annual budget and the annual accounts. The Accounts are audited by a firm of Accountants each year and the Lay Auditors, elected by Congress, are responsible for general supervision of the ITF's Finances.

205. The size and professionalism of the ITF's Finance Department has been upgraded recently and a 'zero base' budget system, allied with regular management accounts, has been introduced for the first time.

206. The role of the Lay Auditors has been discussed several times by the Executive Board and with the auditors themselves. A new system has now been introduced where, in addition to access to any of the ITF's financial records at any time, the Lay Auditors regularly meet the Professional Auditors so that they can raise any questions about the functioning of the ITF's financial controls or about any other aspect of finance which concerns them.

## AFFILIATES' VIEWS

207. No views were expressed on the affiliation fees questions but one union did suggest a more systematic way of overlooking the ITF finances, for example by the creation of a Finance Committee.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

208.

- *Does the Congress feel that the current system of setting and charging affiliation fees to ITF member unions is fair and equitable?*
- *Should a new approach, e. g. a minimum fee for all unions plus a per capita fee be introduced, or a fee related to average national wages or the union's income?*
- *Is the current system of permitting concessions on fees acceptable? Is it too flexible or too rigid?*
- *How can the ITF cope with the problem of under-declaration of membership?*
- *How can the ITF cope with the problem of persistent arrears (more aggressive suspension of unions, late payment penalties etc. )*
- *How can the burden of paying ITF affiliation fees be shifted within federal unions towards those levels of the unions which can afford to make a reasonable contribution?*
- *Should the ITF move to a system of charging affiliates for certain services? If so what and how?*
- *Does the Congress have any comments on the role of the Lay Auditors?*
- *Are any changes needed in the way the ITF's finances are administered?*
- *Should the ITF cut back on its activities rather than seek new methods of finance? If so, which of the existing activities should be curtailed?*





## THE SECRETARIAT

209. Questions relating to the operation of the ITF Secretariat were not included in "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000", but many of the issues discussed in it would have implications for the Secretariat.

210. The ITF's Secretariat is very large compared to other ITFs. Over half of ITF employees are involved directly or indirectly in the FOC Campaign or other maritime activities. The Constitution gives the General Secretary authority to direct the Secretariat. The General Secretary appoints the staff and deals with their conditions of employment. The Officers of the ITF (Assistant General Secretaries, Heads of Departments and Industrial Sections) are appointed by the Executive Board, although in 1994 the Board gave the General Secretary the power to appoint certain professional departmental heads (Finance, Administration and Legal).

211. The recent growth in size of the Secretariat (almost 50% in two years) and the move to a bigger building has made the London office much harder to administer and has thrown up inconsistencies in the job and salary structure which are currently being addressed by a Committee comprising ITF management, Staff and Officers.

212. One of the biggest problems facing the ITF is recruitment of senior staff. A large number of senior staff and officers are British. This reflects a number of factors — one is the relative level of salaries and conditions which may not appear attractive to some other ITF affiliates; another is the difficulty of senior union officials moving, together with their families, to London in mid-career. A third is the complexity of some aspects of ITF work which makes it difficult to find candidates from outside the Secretariat itself with the necessary combination of language skills and industrial experience. Although no criticisms have been made of the quality of service provided by ITF officers and staff, there is little doubt, however, that some affiliates would prefer to see the Secretariat more balanced from a nationality point of view. At the same time it is even more difficult to recruit non-British staff at more junior levels due, amongst other things, to prob-

lems in obtaining work permits (for non EU staff) from the British government.

213. One approach which was advocated in the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" document was more extensive use of secondments from affiliated unions. This has been done so far on a modest basis in the seafarers' section but it does raise internal problems within the Secretariat when people doing similar jobs may receive very different salaries.

214. Managing the ITF Secretariat is not an easy task. There is no other equivalent organisation in the world with which to compare it. The system of Executive Board appointment of certain "officers" particularly those allocated to specific industrial sections provides for democratic input but reduces the possibilities for restructuring departments and sections internally. In some departments and sections the division between senior staff and officers is also becoming less important as senior staff are obliged to take on an important political and representational role on behalf of the ITF.

215. The Secretariat also includes the Regional offices. With the re-activation of the Latin American office, the relocation of Asia/Pacific to Tokyo and the opening of a MERCOSUR office in Buenos Aires, the number of ITF staff outside London is continuing to grow. The growth in importance of regional activities also raises questions about the co-ordination of regional industrial work, more of which will have to be devolved in future to the regional offices.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

216.

- *Does the Congress have any views on the composition, structure or functioning of the ITF Secretariat?*





# Chapter Four:

## DEEPENING THE ITF'S RELATIONSHIP WITH AFFILIATES

### INTRODUCTION

217. Running through this whole document is the idea that the ITF needs to develop better communications both with and between its affiliates, and to deepen the understanding of and involvement of trade union members in international questions.

218. Co-operation between ITF affiliates is of the highest priority. Some unions have long established bilateral relations and do not always have to rely on the ITF's services. For most, however, the ITF is an indispensable communications medium for union to union contact. This is true in some cases even at national level, particularly where affiliates are not members of any or of the same national trade union centre and where their common membership of the ITF can play an important part in building national level trade union unity. This is why the ITF Constitution suggests that affiliates should form committees at national level to discuss and co-ordinate ITF activities. This is the case, for example, of the Japanese Co-ordinating Committee (JCC). The General Secretary also attended the inaugural meeting of the Turkish Co-ordinating Committee; this committee is functioning well and affiliates are reportedly very happy with the opportunity for discussion it provides. However, other ITF affiliates simply don't think a co-ordinating committee would serve any purpose for them. In the Asia/Pacific region they are used to elect delegates to regional committee meetings — this is one purpose the com-

mittees can serve. Another is the question of pooling resources — in Russia, for example, the co-ordinating committee organises translation into Russian of ITF News. These are good examples, but there is still a lot of progress to be made and many affiliates who do not have good relations with each other.

219. Under the section of this Chapter entitled the Future Role of the ITF (see paragraph 68 onwards), exchanges between officials and activists were identified as a way to build relationships between unions and boost practical solidarity. The ITF has always encouraged such links and many of them are very successful for both the unions involved. The funding of education programmes and the sponsorship of delegates to national and international meetings have been eye-opening experiences for both sides. The ITF could encourage such links, as it is clear that education for unions in the developing countries can also reap benefits for unions in industrialised ones.

220. Of course, education is also needed in industrialised countries. In this global economy, one of the major goals for the ITF is raising the awareness of ordinary trade union members to international issues. The ITF needs to improve workers' knowledge about the international organisations that exist, and assist them in this global environment. In the past, participation in ITF meetings, in national co-ordinating committees and even in international



visits has been the territory of those occupying the higher echelons of trade unionism. This needs to change. It is politically essential for unions to remain relevant to the changing workforce, and one of the ways they can do this is by highlighting the international dimension of their work. The capacity of international work and global issues to attract members to unions and to retain them, is a question affiliates may wish to explore further.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE CENTENARY CONGRESS

2.21.

- *How can the ITF's relationship with the officials and members of its affiliated unions be deepened?*
- *Is the development of National Co-ordinating Committees important? And if so, how can the ITF Secretariat and/or the Executive Board encourage their development?*
- *What kind of practical support could the ITF give to unions wishing to increase the profile of their international activities?*
- *How can the ITF encourage a wider distribution of international information and broader participation in ITF activities by officials and members of affiliated trade unions?*



## TRANSPORT WORKERS: BEYOND 2000 — PROGRESS REPORT

# Conclusion

222. The entire review process, of which this document and the Congress debate are a part, is about establishing priorities. Unions have different needs to which they expect the ITF to respond. It is impossible to meet every need, but we have to do the very best we can with the available resources. In the consultation exercise, several unions stressed that new ITF affiliates felt that they were joining a "comprehensive framework of solidarity".

223. It is clear that the co-ordination of international solidarity has always been and will remain by far the most important role of the ITF. Policy work, information and research activities, the use of modern technology, public and media relations together with information to membership, are all part of a range of services aimed at making the ITF better at delivering this solidarity when it is needed. But, in the last analysis the ITF is as strong or as weak as its affiliated unions want it to be.

224. As we approach the year 2000 and beyond, the globalisation of the world economy will continue to pose new threats and challenges to the world's transport workers. If a body like the ITF did not exist, it would be urgently necessary to create one. Luckily, this is not necessary. The ITF has 100 years of experience and considerable technical resources to put at the disposal of its affiliated unions. While

this history provides us with enormous strength, it does not mean that we cannot adapt and amend the way our Federation operates in order to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. But this will only work if each and every affiliated union is prepared to play its part. Unions must become more ready to participate actively in international work and to spend time and effort explaining why they are doing so to their members. Those members, in turn, must be given the opportunity to understand and influence what their union is doing, through the ITF, on the international scene.

225. This is why debate on the issues raised in the document "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" and developed in the present document cannot be restricted to the relatively small group of union officials who regularly participate in ITF meetings. For this reason, the ITF Executive Board is asking all affiliated unions to refer this document to their appropriate Governing Body (Executive Committee, Congress or Section Committee), to explain what the ITF is doing and how it can be made more relevant to the day to day needs of trade union members. The ITF is an organisation founded by, controlled by and ultimately financed by individual workers. It is our responsibility to ensure that they get value for money.

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# G l o s s a r y

**APEC: The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation** process was initiated in 1989. Eighteen countries currently comprise APEC. They are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, PRC, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, US. In the 1991 Seoul APEC Declaration, APEC members agreed on specific objectives: to work for open trade, economic cooperation, investment expansion, and a stronger multilateral trading system. The declaration called for more active participation of the business/private sector in APEC. The ministers committed APEC "to enhance and promote the role of the private sector and the application of free market principles in maximising the benefits of regional cooperation." In September of 1992, in response to the growing size and scope of APEC, the APEC Secretariat was established on a permanent basis in Singapore and charged with disseminating the work of the 10 APEC working groups. Three relate to ITF work: Fisheries, Transportation and Tourism .

**Asia/Pacific Regional Committee — APRC:** The ITF's regional committee for the Asia/Pacific region, which is made up of one representative per country. Pacific Americans do not participate in this committee.

**Brussels Committee:** (see Committee of Transport Workers in the European Community — CTWUEC)

**Committee of Transport Workers in the European Community — CTWUEC,** also known as the "Brussels Committee": Founded in 1958 by ITF affiliates in the six original European Community countries, and originally known as the CTWUEC (ITF). This Committee, largely made up of ITF affiliates, is responsible for relations with the institutions of the European Union. The ITF is a member of the CTWUEC and the ITF General Secretary is one of its six Vice-Presidents. The CTWUEC is recognised as an Industry Committee of the ETUC, below, and is thus an ETUC member.

**European Trade Union Confederation — ETUC:** Founded in 1973, the ETUC is an organisation bringing together the European trade union centres. The majority of European trade union centres are affiliated to the ETUC. Most ETUC members are also members of the ICFTU but a minority are still affiliated with the (Christian) World Confederation of Labour. The ETUC recognises Industry Committees (since 1995, Industrial Federations) which are sectoral groupings of European trade unions. The CTWUEC is one of these, although the ITF is responsible for non-EU ETUC questions.

**The European Union:** Much more than an inter-governmental organisation, the EU has its own special legal status and extensive powers. Its fifteen members are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden



and the United Kingdom. The EU was founded on the basis of three Communities — the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC, Treaty of Paris, 1951), the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community (EEC and Euratom, Treaty of Rome, 1957). Five institutions are at the core of the EU's structure: the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the court of Justice and the Court of Auditors, with the support of the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. The EU's supreme decision-making body is the Council, is made up of ministers of the governments of the Member States. The Presidency of the Council and of the European Council rotates between the member governments at six-monthly intervals. The European Commission consists of commissioners appointed by agreement between the member governments. Members must remain independent of the governments and of the Council. The Single European Act (in force from 1 July 1987) gave formal legal status to European political cooperation and created the single European Market which took effect from 1 January 1993. The Treaty on European Union (the Maastricht Treaty), entered into force on 1 November 1993. It re-named the Community the *European Union*, and adopted measures aimed at the transition to a complete economic and monetary union with a single currency by 1997 or 1999. A step forward for unions in the EU was the Treaty's Social Protocol, allowing amendments to articles 117 and 118 of the Treaty on European Union which recognised that social dialogue — discussion and negotiation between employers' and employees' organisations — could lead to solutions based on collective agreement alone as an alternative to the legislative procedure. The United Kingdom was exempted from the Social Protocol.

**FOC Campaign:** The ITF's long-running Flag of Convenience campaign (it was founded in 1948) aims to return vessels registered under foreign administrations to their home flags. Through the application of minimum standards laid down in collective agreements for seafarers on FOC ships, the Campaign strives to reduce the competitive advantage in running low-cost operations which undermine international safety standards and exploit seafarers.

**Industrial Federations:** Since 1995, following a change in the Constitution of the ETUC, the European trade union Industry Committees (see below) are to be known as Industrial Federations (see also: ETUC).

**Industry Committees:** Sectoral groupings of European trade unions, one of which is the CTWUEC.

**Inter-Governmental Conference 1996 (IGC)** The workings of the European Union are being further examined during an IGC, launched in Spring 1996. The review was decided during the final stage of the negotiations of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, and will focus on further integration within the European Union as well as its enlargement.

**International Confederation of Free Trade Unions — ICFTU:** Founded in 1949, the ICFTU is a Confederation of national trade union centres, each of which links together the trade unions of that particular country. The ICFTU organises and directs campaigns on non-sectoral issues such as the respect of trade union and workers' rights, the eradication of forced and child labour, and the promotion of equal rights for working women, and trade unions and the environment. It organises education programmes for trade unionists all over the world, sends missions to investigate the trade union situation in many countries, and has very close relations with the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The ICFTU campaigns for the inclusion of social clauses in international trade union agreements linking trade to the respect of basic trade union rights. It represents the trade union movement at international UN conferences, and with financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. However, responsibility for sectoral issues relating to these issues and organisations is held by the International Trade Secretariats - ITSs.

**International Trade Secretariats - ITSs:** Federations of sectoral unions worldwide, of which the ITF is one. ITSs with which the ITF has working relationships include the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), the Public Services International (PSI), the Postal Telegraph and Telephone Interna-





tional (PTTI), the International; Federation of Commercial Clerical Professional and Technical Employees (FIET) and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations, (IUF).

**Maastricht Treaty:** (see The European Union)

**MERCOSUR (Spanish — MERCOSUL in Portuguese),** or Southern Common Market: This regional free-trade grouping springs from the Latin American Free Trade Association signed in 1960, and the 1980 Latin American Integration Association. Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay signed a new treaty in 1991 in Asunción, Paraguay, providing for the creation of a common market. Chile is due to join the MERCOSUR, and Bolivia, Venezuela, Colombia and Peru have expressed an interest in doing so. Other Latin American countries interested in joining can initially do so through association agreements with member nations. MERCOSUR initially targeted free-trade zones, then customs unification and, finally, a common market, where in addition to customs unification the free movement of workers and capital across the member nations' international frontiers is possible. The MERCOSUR structure is dependent on the Ministers and Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the member states. Work Subgroups, which are directly subordinated to these structures, draw up the minutes of the decisions to be submitted for their consideration and conduct studies on specific MERCOSUR concerns. Currently, the Work Subgroups are looking at, among other things, Land Transport, Sea Transport, Industrial and Technology Policies and Labor, Employment and Social Security Matters.

**NAFTA:** The North American Free Trade Agreement (known in Spanish as TLC, Tratado de Libre Comercio), concluded in 1991 between Mexico, Canada and the United States, came into force on 1 January 1994. NAFTA is not an organisation but a free-trade zone created by international treaty. No delegation of powers has been made from member states to any supranational body; NAFTA is an economically-oriented treaty and contains no social measures. The Free Trade Commission is the main body enforcing NAFTA, and is composed of representatives of ministers of the three countries. Its

powers allow it to establish, and delegate responsibilities to, ad-hoc or standing committees, working groups or expert groups and seek the advice of non-governmental persons or groups. The harmonisation of technical standards and political coordination are not direct goals of the NAFTA treaty. However, trans-border services are considerably liberalised under NAFTA. Since the first of January 1996, all requirements of nationality and residency are obsolete. In pursuit of the harmonisation of professional norms, national administrations must cooperate and meet every two years.

**Single European Act:** (see The European Union)

**Supply side measures:** Government economic policies which are aimed at improving economic performance by boosting the efficiency of markets (usually the labour market) and hence productivity as an alternative to measures aimed at managing demand.

**Trans-National Corporations (TNCs):** Multinational companies, also known as MNCs (Multinational Corporations).

**'Zero base' budget system:** The principle of estimating future expenditure on the basis of a detailed costing of the activities associated with that expenditure.