

SARTUC AND ATUC
STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT
ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

THE South Asia Regional Trade Union Council (**SARTUC**¹) and the ASEAN Trade Union Council (**ATUC**²) issue this statement of commitment and resolve to ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;

ACHIEVING Sustainable Development Goal 8 --“*Promote Sustained, Inclusive, and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All*” --is the **CORE FOCUS** of this commitment.

EXPRESS grave concern over disregard of the principles of tripartite consultation as enshrined in ILO Convention 144 manifested by the non-inclusion of trade unions by respective governments in the planning, implementing, monitoring and reporting processes on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

APPREHENSIVE of the glaring decent work deficits in the region characterized by:

- an unemployment rate of around 4.2 per cent of all workers in Asia Pacific and vulnerable employment affecting almost half of all workers in the region, or more than 900 million men and women, thereby pushing precarious employment and labour migration;
- 400 million people in extreme poverty and 1.2 billion in moderate poverty, around 10% workers in Asia Pacific (174 million workers) in extreme poverty with less than \$ 1.9 per person per day; 17% workers in the region with less than \$ 3.10
- rising income and wealth inequality --an increase of over 5percentage points in the last 20 years (<http://www.unescap.org>); one percent owns 70 percent of the world’s wealth;
- gender pay gap in Asia Pacific is 100 to 67 (WEF) and “shocking inequalities” remain in education, the labour market and security
- high incidence of informality which continues to challenge prospects of further reduction in working poverty, especially in Southern and South-Eastern Asia. Informality affects close to 90 per cent or more of all workers in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar and Nepal ([World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2018](#)); and
- unabated attack against workers’ freedom of association and collective bargaining.

¹South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (SARTUC) is a regional federation of national level trade unions of South Asia. Established in 1988, SARTUC exists to unite the workers organized in the free and democratic trade unions of the South Asia region and to afford a means of consultation and collaboration between member trade unions. SARTUC represents more than 50 million workers in eight countries and territories and has 19 national affiliates.

² The ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC) as an apex body of 18 national trade union centers and confederations in nine ASEAN member states (except Brunei) representing over five million workers.

TRADE UNION INVOLVEMENT is crucial in the successful achievement of the 2030 Agenda at regional and national levels;

NOTE that trade union actions and advocacies --upholding freedom of association, social dialogue and collective bargaining, on promoting decent work, social protection and the rights of working people, among others --and the SDGs are mutually reinforcing;

NOTE further that tripartism is an important principle that must be observed by governments in the development and implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) in most countries in the region and should be strengthened;

APPRECIATE that the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have acknowledged the role of SDGs in economic and social development;

RECOGNIZE the SDGs shall lead the Member States to a sustainable development path, countries/region need to involve the people at large, ensuring active, enthusiastic, and full participation of the whole country, particularly organized labour;

SARTUC and ATUC pledge to contribute to the successful implementation of SDGs and help ensure *“to reach the furthest behind first”* and that *“no one will be left behind”* through following actions:

1. Strengthen the voice of labour through awareness-raising and capacity-building of leaders and focal points on the SDGs at the national, sub-regional, and regional levels;
2. Conduct research for an evidence-based trade union position on SDGs;
3. Call on governments, with the assistance of the ILO to convene tripartite meetings at the national level to hasten processes and implementation of the SDGs;
4. Undertake joint campaigns and events to influence decision-makers to support SDGs and for governments to fulfill commitments as Member States of the UN and the ILO;
5. ITUC AP affiliates to take initiative to bring about unified trade union actions in support of the SDGs, particularly on the ILO and ITUC AP-identified priority Goals and Targets;
6. Ensure union participation in global, regional, and national processes of the UN contributing to the follow-up and monitoring of the SDGs;
7. Build trade union capacity for effective involvement in national United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes;
8. Ensure that the DWCP, which highlights the critical role of unions and other social partners, is used as basis for the development of programme for workers in the UNDAF;
9. Build the capacity of trade union national focal points, including women and youth, on SDGs implementation, monitoring, reporting, data collection and analysis using the ILO Trade Union

Reference Manual on the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the ITUC AP monitoring and reporting template;

10. Campaign for ratification of ILO Core Conventions (particularly C87 and C98), Migrant Labour Conventions (Nos. 97 and 143), and Domestic Workers Convention (No.189) and promote the use of ILO Recommendation No. 204 concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy;
11. Reconcile the DWCP, national development plans and SDGs;
12. Coordinate and cooperate with governments, the SAARC, the ASEAN, ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) and SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAARC CCI) on the SDG processes and implementation;
13. Establish a Joint SARTUC-ATUC Knowledge Sharing Platform on SDGs information and campaigns;
14. Establish a structure consisting of SARTUC and ATUC, in cooperation with ITUC AP and ILO, to ensure implementation and monitoring of these commitments, including quarterly assessment meetings; and
15. Seek technical and financial support and engagement with Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), ITUC AP, European Union (EU), European Trade Union Council (ETUC), ILO, and other support organizations for trade union actions on the SDGs.

EXPRESS sincere appreciation for the ILO ACTRAV, the ITCILO ACTRAV, the ITUC AP and the Sri Lanka trade unions for the initiative in convening this timely “*Trade Union Conference on Inclusive Growth, Equitable Development and Decent Work for All*” on 20-22 June 2018 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Adopted on the 22nd of June 2018
Colombo, Sri Lanka

SOUTH ASIAN REGIONAL TRADE UNION COUNCIL (SARTUC)

1. National Union of Afghanistan Workers and Employees (NUAWE)
2. Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC)
3. Bangladesh Jatyatabadi Sramik Dal (BJSD)
4. Bangladesh Labour Federation (BLF)
5. Bangladesh Mukta Sramik Federation (BMSF)
6. Bangladesh Sanjukta Sramik Federation (BSSF)
7. Jatio Sramik League (JSL)
8. Hind Mazdoor Sabha(HMS)
9. Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)
10. Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
11. All Nepal Federation of Trade Unions (ANTUF)
12. General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)
13. Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC)
14. All Pakistan Trade Union Congress (APTUC)
15. Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF)

16. Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC)
17. National Trade Union Federation (NTUF)
18. Sri Lanka Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya (SLNSS)

ASEAN TRADE UNION COUNCIL (ATUC)

1. Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC)
2. Cambodian Confederation of Trade Unions (CCTU)
3. Cambodian Confederation of Unions (CCU)
4. Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Indonesia/Confederation of Indonesian Trade Unions (KSPI/CITU)
5. Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia/Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Unions (KSPSI)
6. Konfederasi Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia/Confederation of Indonesian Prosperity Trade Unions (KSBSI)
7. Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU)
8. Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC)
9. Confederation of Trade Unions – Myanmar (CTUM)
10. Federation of Free Workers (FFW)
11. Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP)
12. Singapore National Trade Union Congress (NTUC)
13. Labour Confederation of Thailand (LCT)
14. National Congress of Private Industrial Employees (NCPE)
15. State Enterprise Workers' Relation Confederation (SERC)
16. Thai Trade Union Congress (TTUC)
17. Timor Lorosa'e Trade Union Confederation (TLTUC)
18. Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL)