

**Mouvement Mondial des Travailleurs Chrétiens
World Movement of Christian Workers
Movimiento Mundial de Trabajadores Cristianos
Weltbewegung Christlicher Arbeitnehmer**



**CALL IN THE OCCASION OF 1ST MAY
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY
2012: Job precariousness, unemployment and social injustice**

The World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW) celebrates May 1st as one of the most important events for workers and reasserts its solidarity and communion with all men and women who are suffering from serious injustice at work.

Labour precariousness, widespread unemployment, exploitation and slavery affecting many workers are but a consequence of a market-driven approach imposed on labour by the neoliberal economic powers. Workers who are creating wealth through their labour and who should be benefitting from production as Pope John Paul II explained it in his Encyclical *Laborem Exercem*, are just valued by companies because of the financial profit they make for the company. In periods of recession and restructuring, workers are the first ones to lose their job without any compassion or respect for their rights and dignity.

Labour precariousness is one of the main causes leading to poverty of men and women, young and adult people, coming from the North or the South. It has a very negative impact on their life and that of their family. We reject a system which imposes on workers very low salaries, accelerated working paces, irregular timetables, wild competition, work flexibility, moral and sexual harassment and slavery at work, mostly affecting migrant workers. Our challenge is to denounce this situation and commit ourselves with the poorest and most vulnerable persons.

Unemployment is considered as one of the main evils in the XXIst century and it keeps increasing. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) showed recently that 197 million people in the world were affected by unemployment in 2011. By 2012 this figure is estimated to rise to 200 million. In Europe, in countries like Spain, Greece and Portugal, which have a very high unemployment rate, one can see the emergence of a high number of new poor. In Spain, for instance, 50% of young people are jobless while the total unemployment rate reaches about 30%. Such a situation leads governments to restrict migrants' integration and implement labour laws which facilitate dismissals and cheap labour and limit the rights of those who are lucky enough to have a job.

We live in a globalised world which is also witnessing solidarity between the peoples, because of war, natural calamities or starvation, solidarity in support to the Arab Spring movements, or against the slavery of migrants working in some multinational corporations in Brazil. In this country, denouncing injustice before a Brazilian court obliged these companies to sign the National Covenant for the elimination of slavery at work and provide compensation to migrant workers. Such measures strengthen the legal mechanisms which have to be implemented by the companies operating in the country.

We are aware that work should be the basis for the social and economic system in all countries and cultures. Work fosters cooperation between citizens and the society and provides economic independence to those who do it. For us, work is a source of dignity,

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values and social acknowledgment. It is a factor of citizenship, inclusion and social commitment and a condition to be integrated in a structured society led by solidarity where each person belongs to a whole. Thanks to work (in agriculture, industry or services) men and women all over the world can improve their quality of life and that of their family.

Therefore, the movements of Christian workers which are members of WMCW, inspired by the Gospel and the Catholic social teaching, reassert that men and women were created by God. Ill-treating them, submitting them to the law of the strongest and preventing them from living in dignity is an offence against God's Creation. Their dignity as human beings is not respected as they are not paid a just salary, they are obliged to migrate to another city or country in order to survive, they are forced to work in different jobs to complete their income, they have to accept any condition by fear of losing their job.

Human labour should enable the development of all dimensions of life. There should be work contracts, not only to demand workers to be more productive, but to offer them leisure time for their family and for their social, political, cultural and spiritual life.

We want to build up a solidarity and fraternity network together with vulnerable, weakened or demoralised workers, in order to denounce injustice and announce the Good News of Resurrection. We want this network to build a new mentality, a more human culture, contributing to building a just and fair world, a world of more solidarity and fraternity.

General Secretariat of the WMCW

