

INDEPENDENT TRADE UNION COALITION OF CUBA

MAY DAY DECLARATION

The Independent Trade Union Coalition of Cuba (CSIC) is proud to make its first declaration on May 1st, the International Workers' Day, a date when various places around the world celebrate the demands and achievements obtained by the working class through blood, sacrifice, perseverance and abnegation, and for which we must maintain firm our principles, objectives and labor goals as independent unions.

The VI Congress of the Cuban Communist Party adjourned adopting guidelines aiming to channel the Island in a reorganization of labor relations and a new economic model at the cost of the unemployment of one million three hundred thousand workers at a gradual, yet certain, pace.

Bearing in mind the difficulties our nation faces, and those yet to come,

THE CSIC CALLS ALL CUBAN WORKERS TO:

- Join the independent unions.
- Demand that union officials defend workers from the administrative injustice during the process of lay-offs.
- Oppose the arbitrariness of the Commission of Experts, which has evolved into an instrument of coercion, intimidation and a means to declare workers UNSUITABLE.
- Confront administrative inequities which, boasting ignominious principles, does not hesitate in terminating employment of men and women who confront them administratively, politically or at the union level.
- Those workers declared “available” to go to the Grassroots Labor Justice Entities (OJLB) in demand of their rights.
- Demand that each industrial union represent them and defend them before the Municipal Tribunal and labor courts.
- Not remain in their homes awaiting unfulfilled promises while exhausting the legal timeline to claim their rights.
- Turn to the independent unions for counsel in preparation of required documents for grievances against the OJLB and the Municipal Tribunal.
- Appeal to the administrations and the industrial trade unions to carry out the International Labor Standards (ILS / ILO), of which Cuba is a signatory.
- Demand that the private initiative for self-employment work not be limited, that it be open to the creativity of the men and women who opt for this informal sector.
- Demand that, prior to the fulfillment of high taxation, the self-employed have the right to associate amongst themselves and consequently create small and mid-sized businesses that contribute to the economic growth that the country needs, being at the same time creative sources for new employment.
- Claim the right for skilled professionals to practice self-employment within their specialization.
- Demand social aid for the elderly and handicapped that have a relative working with an income that is insufficient for survival due to the high cost of living, plunging the family to a state of helplessness that leads to the most impoverished misery.
- Demand, through their unions, that the State lower the price of basic need items, which have risen inexplicably, such as cooking oil among others.
- Oppose the fulfillment of the accords of the VI Congress of the Cuban Communist Party that threaten the working class.
- Refuse to be paid in currencies that are not enough to purchase the basic needs for subsistence.
- Make use of the right to strike to obtain benefits, for which we can provide counsel.

To the working class, to the proud and patriotic Cubans –in Cuba or elsewhere –, to the civil authorities, the military, leaders and officials of political organizations, the central State administration, the grassroots union workers, among others, WE CALL THEM TO UNITY based on our differences, putting wisdom at the service of the nation and its liberty, setting aside attacks, resentments and inequalities that do not help in this fight.

This May 1st unity emerges as the only way to reach our goals and objectives that throughout the years have cost imprisonment, shattered families, suffering, banishment and persecution.

The Independent Trade Union Coalition of Cuba takes advantage of this opportunity to:

- Congratulate the Cuban working class.
- Reaffirm the right of workers (manual, intellectual, industrial, farm, mine, transportation, maritime, teachers, professionals, technicians, artists, public and private, wage-earning or independents) to join our movement.
- Reaffirm our peaceful vocation that guides us to the fight for political freedom and freedom of association.
- Recognize labor as an effort and wearing down of physical and mental energies in the creation of goods and services for the people, and furthermore whose economic, social and cultural values should be recognized and fairly valued by the State.
- To instill upon the labor movement the dire need to truly represent the working class, for which an indispensable requisite need be the independence of the trade union leadership from the upper echelons of political parties and from government institutions at all levels which commit them administratively and alienate them from their reason for being.
- We, the Cuban independent trade unionists, call for measures that contribute in the creation of jobs with fair compensation and of the training of workers in free market policies, lobbying and supply and demand, among others, that would enable the Cuban economy to attain results contributing to the wellbeing of the working class.

We reaffirm our commitment to the values of democracy and civil society, rule of law, political pluralism, strict observance of human rights, values and freedoms guaranteed in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights based on the principles of sovereignty, governability, democracy, equality before the law, the right to freedom, stability, peace and social justice.

Taking into account all of the aforementioned and the need to unite in defense of the inalienable rights of the working class, this May First we call you to:

NOT ATTEND THE OFFICIAL DEMONSTRATION, REMAIN AT HOME AND DEMAND THE CHANGES THAT WILL LEAD CUBA ON THE ROAD TO LIBERTY, DEMOCRACY AND THE WELLBEING OF WORKERS.

Given in La Habana,
April 24th, 2011

By the Independent Trade Union Coalition of Cuba (CSIC)

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