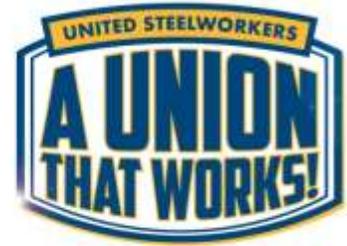


2014 USW CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION



Resolution No. 5 - International Activism and Solidarity

WHEREAS, increasing inequality and concentration of wealth in the wake of the global financial crisis threatens the stability of democratic institutions and the human rights of working people around the world; and

WHEREAS, the mobility of capital, without effective regulation or control, enables multinational corporations and wealthy investors to pit workers in different countries against each other; and

WHEREAS, corporate-driven globalization can only be countered by a worldwide democratic movement for economic and social justice that fights for improved wages, working conditions, health care, retirement security, human rights and environmental standards; and

WHEREAS, the lack of comprehensive and effective industrial policies in the United States and Canada has left North American workers defenseless against unfair corporate subsidies and currency manipulation by some foreign governments; and

WHEREAS, multinational corporations in pursuit of more profits continue to drive down real earnings of workers and weaken their health care coverage despite good-faith bargaining by the union and the willingness to accommodate, where warranted, demands for flexibility and cost savings; and

WHEREAS, millions of manufacturing jobs in the United States and Canada have been lost to outsourcing and the movement of production and investment to low-wage countries where labor rights have been repressed; and

WHEREAS, the right wing has expanded its political assault on North American labor beyond manufacturing to include public employee unions, worker rights in the private sector and efforts to suppress the vote of minorities, youth and the elderly while depriving immigrant workers of basic human and labor rights; and

WHEREAS, international corporations that generally respect workers' rights in their home countries increasingly violate those rights when they operate in the United States; and

WHEREAS, our union continues to promote the revitalization of the labor movement by engaging in political and organizing activities with working families, students, environmentalists, civic and religious leaders, immigrant communities, women's groups and civil and human rights activists as well as trade unionists; and

WHEREAS, our union is redoubling efforts to organize unorganized workers employed by multinational companies in North America and is committed to strengthening the capacity to coordinate bargaining within companies and industries; and

WHEREAS, our union supports the organization of global trade networks including IndustriALL Global Union and the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) to improve the unity of workers at multinational companies around the world and enable them to share information about working conditions and prepare for coordinated bargaining; and

WHEREAS, IndustriALL played a key part in creating the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, a legally enforceable five-year agreement signed in 2013 by over 170 global apparel companies, but not by The Gap and Wal-Mart; and

WHEREAS, our union has played a major role in strengthening the work of IndustriALL in promoting global campaigns against employers that violate labor and human rights as the foundation of current and future international work; and

WHEREAS, global solidarity campaigns over the past three years have provided concrete assistance to USW members at Argos, AltaSteel, Cooper Tire, Crown, Honeywell, Huhtamaki, Nortrak, Novelis, Rio Tinto, Sapa, Solvay, and other companies; and

WHEREAS, the first Congress of Workers Uniting, held in November 2011, united two million members of USW and UNITE the Union in the Canada, Ireland, the U.K, and the U.S. around a common program of industrial solidarity, political action to combat global austerity policies, member-to-member coordination around equalities, youth, women, and health and safety, and global cooperation; and

WHEREAS, the Workers Uniting Political Economy Conference, held in Toronto in May 2012, produced a plan of action to fight global austerity, including through a Financial Transactions Tax; and

WHEREAS, as part of Workers Uniting, the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights has supported the organizing efforts of garment and shipbreaking workers in Bangladesh and exposed sweatshop conditions in countries around the world; and

WHEREAS, our union has formed strategic alliances with labor unions around the globe, including The Australian Workers' Union (AWU) and the Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy Union (CFMEU) in Australia; the Unified Workers' Central (CUT) and the National Confederation of Metalworkers (CNM/CUT) in Brazil; the Industrial Union of Metalworkers (IG Metall) in Germany; the Authentic Workers Front (FAT) and the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Allied Workers of the Mexican Republic (Los Mineros) in Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the USW has advanced its process of unification with the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Allied Workers of the Mexican Republic (Los Mineros) to create a North American union of industrial workers. Since 2005, Los Mineros have bargained the highest wages and benefits in Mexico for their members, lifting them into the middle class and narrowing the wage gap that drives the outsourcing of American and Canadian jobs. They have organized more than 10,000 new members and are currently in organizing campaigns for another 10,000 workers; and

WHEREAS, because Los Mineros' democratic organizing threatens the entrenched Mexican system of company-controlled "protection unions," the Mexican Government has continued its assault on Los Mineros and their leader, Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, re-filing baseless criminal charges against him that were thrown out by Mexican appellate courts and even rejected by Interpol as politically motivated, and the United States has denied him a visa to attend our Convention. Steelworkers at American Steel Foundries, ArcelorMittal, Asarco and Dana have forged

strong bonds of solidarity with Mineros members who also work for these companies, and the USW and Mineros are working together to strengthen our education, health and safety, women's leadership and Next Generation programs; and

WHEREAS, the USW has provided training and support in the areas of health and safety, collective bargaining, membership mobilization, organizing and women's empowerment through the Women of Steel to support the growth of the Liberian trade union movement in the rubber, mining and forestry sectors where we have industries and employers in common, leading to collective bargaining agreements that have reduced quotas for rubber tappers, helping to prevent child labor as well as introducing more humane means of transporting latex; and

WHEREAS, we recall the pioneering leadership of our former President Lynn R. Williams in establishing a linkage between labor rights and trade agreements, insisting that governmental suppression of labor rights "constitutes not only a social deprivation for the workers concerned, but an economic disadvantage for American workers"; and

WHEREAS, the labor rights provisions of U.S. and Canadian free trade agreements with Central America, Colombia and Korea fail to address fundamental worker rights violations. In Colombia, trade unionists continue to be murdered with impunity and government policies systematically undermine collective bargaining. In Korea, the government continues to violently repress workers' efforts to exercise their rights to strike, bargain and organize; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would extend trade benefits for systematic labor rights violators such as Brunei, Malaysia, Mexico and Vietnam without establishing effective mechanisms to protect workers in these countries or to shield Canadian and American workers from unfair competition; and

WHEREAS, Workers Uniting has demanded that the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) "strengthen social, labour and environmental rights by raising legal and regulatory standards across all member countries" to prevent the weakening of Europe's generally higher social protection standards and to improve protections for U.S. workers; and

WHEREAS, the USW opposes the proposed Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the European Union and Canada on the basis that it will increase corporate power by providing corporations with investor state rights, it threatens Canada's environmental and financial regulations, it will increase the price of generic drugs and it will encourage further privatization so as to threaten Canada's social programs; and

WHEREAS, the USW backs the efforts of the Publish What You Pay Coalition to require that multinational mining and petroleum companies disclose all of their payments to foreign governments; and has supported U.S. membership in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian Steelworkers have played a key role in the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability, which advocates for legislation that will hold Canadian extractive companies accountable for rights violations in their operations overseas; and

WHEREAS, Canadian Steelworkers, through the Steelworkers Humanity Fund, have played a key role in building international alliances that have strengthened labor and social movements in developing countries; and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center has provided critical support for the efforts of the USW and the global unions to develop partnerships with unions in many developing countries to defend fundamental labor rights.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

- (1)** Our union will continue its successful efforts to build international solidarity among workers and their unions to challenge right wing governments and corporations and achieve social and economic justice and a sustainable environment for all.
- (2)** As we construct a global union to challenge multinational corporations, our efforts to establish mutually beneficial global alliances in all sectors with key trade union partners that share the willingness to build workers' power through organizing, bargaining and political action will not cease.
- (3)** At home and abroad, our union will continue to build coalitions with activists - including environmentalists, students, religious, civil and human rights, immigrant, women's and senior citizens' groups to demand respect for fundamental human rights and democracy.
- (4)** We will build alliances to ensure that all trade agreements and the structure of the global economy will eventually include enforceable core labor standards. Such standards should include the right to organize or join a union without reprisal, the right to bargain collectively and to strike without the threat of being replaced, a prohibition on forced and child labor, minimum wages, hours of work and occupational health and safety.
- (5)** We will develop practical strategies to engage our members in transnational organizing, bargaining and solidarity, and work to educate them on the ways labor rights violations and declining living standards in other countries adversely affect our workplaces and communities.