

RESOLUTION 17

BUILDING POWER FOR WORKING PEOPLE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Corporate globalization, increasingly organized in complex supply chains, threatens the rights of workers, citizens and communities worldwide. Corporations use global supply chains to subcontract many of their key functions and further distance themselves from direct employment responsibilities. This strategy undermines workers' ability to increase their collective power, because often their direct employer has little power within the supply chain. This model results in stagnant or shrinking wages, weaker social protections and greater job insecurity for workers.

Digitalization, automation and artificial intelligence are new fronts on which we must learn to analyze and organize, so that the promise of technology does not become another privilege and tool of only the few and powerful, but gives rise to new jobs where workers have power and bargain.

Globalization reaches beyond the private sector into public services like education, health care, transport and communications. The accessibility and quality of services, and the professional and working conditions of the providers of such services, are under attack. Global privatization leaves in its wake inequality, substantially reduced resources for those who need them most, disenfranchised communities, unaccountable decision making and an abdication of government accountability for vital public services—all in pursuit of profit and the erosion of collective voice and representation for public employees.

To meet the challenges of a globalized workplace, we must increase our commitment to working with the global labor movement to strengthen organizing capacity at the community, national and global levels, to develop effective, strategic campaigns that increase membership and bargaining power.

Action Steps:

1. Support research into new and expanding technologies and occupations that help unions meet the future of work with proactive plans that lead to collaboration on multicountry, comprehensive worker organizing campaigns at firms that focus on automation, digitalization, artificial intelligence and other means of disrupting traditional sectors, companies and employment relationships, and collective bargaining.
2. Develop popular education materials to deepen our understanding of the global economy in order to inform our organizing and bargaining strategies.
3. Defend a pro-worker rights agenda in multilateral, regional, global and sectoral forums and institutions, including but not limited to the International Labor Organization, United Nations, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and international financial institutions.
4. Support the development of new models of binding corporate accountability and transnational bargaining initiatives in global supply chains.