

Labour Standards in the International Banana Industry

Motion for Submission to _____ Conference 2012

This Conference is seriously concerned about the impact on labour standards of the 'Race to the Bottom' in the banana and pineapple industry which is being led by British supermarkets and calls on the _____ to support the tropical fruit workers' unions of West Africa and Latin America.

Companies chasing ever cheaper supplies of bananas and pineapples are increasingly relocating to West Africa where most plantation workers fail to receive a living wage, experience excessive working hours and are exposed to toxic agrochemicals. Although most workers are organised there is a real need for investment in worker education, notably in health and safety issues. Unions in Latin America continue to face severe repression with members discriminated against and even sacked.

Banana Link's Union to Union programme supports the building of links between West African and Latin American banana workers unions and enable them to work together in partnership as they organize workers employed by the same multinationals and experience similar working conditions. Union to Union also facilitates solidarity between plantation workers unions in West Africa and Latin America at one end of the banana supply chain and British trade unions at the other, to support advocacy, lobbying and campaigning activities to improve labour standards for the hundreds of thousands of workers who produce our favourite fruits.

To this end, Conference recommends that the _____

- a. Send messages of solidarity to COLSIBA (Co-ordinating Body of Latin American Banana and Agro-industrial Unions) and FAWU (the Fako Agricultural Workers Union) of Cameroon in support of their work to organize and educate plantation workers.
- b. Affiliate to Banana Link.
- c. Lobby the Government to regulate the buyer power of British supermarkets.
- d. Campaign to ensure that workers producing bananas and pineapples for British supermarkets are paid a living wage and have the freedom to join an independent trade union.
- e. Continue to work with Banana Link to support West African and Latin American banana workers' unions and their education and organisation of members through the Union to Union programme.