



Workers' Bill of Rights

IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT :

- Democracy and human rights cannot flourish where workers' rights do not exist or are not enforced;
- Unions have been, and continue to be, an important force for democracy, not just in the workplace, but beyond, in the community—locally, nationally and globally;
- Unions have historically been a major force in humanizing and democratizing the economies of nations by promoting higher levels of economic equality and economic justice;
- Unions provide workers with decent wages, benefits and working conditions so they and their families can enjoy a quality standard of living and financial security.

THIS IS CONFIRMED BY:

- The *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) which sets out fundamental principles for human rights including the right to freedom of association (Article 21) as well as the right of everyone to form and to join trade unions (Article 23);
- The *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* (1998) which reaffirms the commitment of the international community “to respect, to promote and to realize in good faith” the rights of workers to freedom of association and the effective right to collective bargaining.

IT IS THEREFORE AFFIRMED THAT:

- All workers have the right to form unions for the promotion and defense of their interests without interference by employer or government. This basic human right goes together with freedom of association and freedom of expression. It is the basis of democratic representation and governance.
- All workers have the right to a legal framework that recognizes collective bargaining as the means of determining their wages, working conditions and terms of employment.

**Proclaimed in Ottawa
the 10th day of December 2005**

