



ILO Poster Project: A Tool in the Movement for Worldwide Workers' Rights

EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW THAT WORKERS WORLDWIDE HAVE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Unions in the United States are joining with unions around the world to make sure workers, employers and communities know that workers worldwide have fundamental rights. The ultimate goal is to build support for enforcement of those rights.

The U.N.'s International Labor Organization (ILO) says all workers have the right to form a union and bargain collectively, to refuse forced labor, to reject child labor and to work free from discrimination.

For too long, these internationally recognized rights have existed only "on paper." Employers often violate workers' rights while governments look the other way. It's time to make these rights real and bring them into the light of day.

A POSTER ON THE RIGHTS IS A POWERFUL TOOL

Posting workers' rights at the workplace is the simplest and most straightforward way to educate them about their rights. That's why the ILO has developed a poster listing workers' rights in understandable terms and has translated it into several languages. The poster is a new tool in worker campaigns to make sure workers' rights are honored on the job as well as under the law and in international trade agreements.

We can use the poster to make sure workers' rights are respected in the United States. It's a key tool in our **Voice@Work** campaign. We can use it to help rally support for workers whose rights are being violated and to engage elected officials, clergy and community leaders to demand that employers stop using immoral and illegal tactics. Community leaders then can use the poster in persuading employers to lessen their fierce hostility to organizing. The poster also serves as a bridge between unions and those who face discrimination daily, such as immigrants, women and people of color.

The poster also is an important tool in our **Campaign for Global Fairness** and as a follow-up to the Seattle WTO protests. As borders become invisible to corporations and our economy, there's a race to the bottom in terms of standards. Our answer to that is in localizing the movement for global justice.

What began in Seattle is now a massive grassroots effort by union movements around the world to write fair rules for the global economy that require respect for human rights and workplace and environmental standards so we can lift local communities up everywhere. The American union movement is playing a key role in balancing the power of corporations in order to do that.

The poster is a new tool in this movement to protect workers' rights worldwide.

HOW CAN WE USE THE POSTER?

You can use the poster to help advance organizing, bargaining, political action and local struggles to build respect for basic workers' rights in communities and companies around the world. Ideas include:

- Use it in an organizing or first-contract campaign—if an employer is violating workers' rights, hold a press conference or rally calling on the employer to change its behavior, pointing out the ILO rights and using the poster as a prop (see sample press release);
- Use the poster and the rights to spotlight an employer's unfair actions during a **7 Days in June** Voice@Work event;
- Highlight it in your FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) events on April 21 in materials, events and press work. Integrate the poster into all of your efforts to localize for global justice (see sample talking points and flier);
- May Day: Join activists in dozens of cities in the United States and worldwide who are using the poster for May 1 events (see sample media advisory);
- Use the poster with clergy or community leaders as a tool to explain workers' rights—they then can use the poster when asking a company to do the right thing. Use the poster as part of Labor in the Pulpits events and pass them out to the congregation;
- Sponsor a city or county resolution on workers' freedom to form unions, using the rights as one of the supporting arguments. You also could use it to build a case for a resolution or legislation prohibiting cities from buying goods made in sweatshops (see sample resolution);
- Ask candidates for public office to sign a pledge with their active support for these principles—locally and in trade and investment agreements (see sample pledge); and
- Highlight the rights and the poster in your newsletter, websites, newspapers and in union meetings. Be sure to get camera-ready art of the poster from the AFL-CIO. We also will have banners about the ILO poster for your website and a screensaver available.

AFL-CIO
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