

# Workers Rights

## Report of Workshop 1

Moderation: Staphany Wong  
20 participants

Staphany Wong explained the concept and the goals for the Workshop.

- (1) Introduction: each participant shortly explained his/her background
- (2) Key note speakers: 5 key note speakers should present, exemplarily their working areas in the field of workers rights
- (3) Open discussion on the outcomes of the speeches

### Ad 2

Sally Choi (Asia Monitor Resource Centre); Hong Kong based organisation with a focus on information, publication and trainings of labour issues.

April Lai (Worker Empowerment); Hong Kong based organisation; their mission is to support migrant workers to reach their basic rights; they are running an information centre, publishing booklets and organizing actions; they are following a community based approach

Tong Xin (Research Centre for Chinese Workers); based in Beijing; their focus is research work on Chinese politics, labour policy and safety, antidiscrimination, and sociological issues.

Wolfgang Greif (GPA, Austrian Trade Unions); the European concept of a "balanced society", which differs a bit from country to country and a "European Social Model is discussed by the Trade Unions as well; Austria has the most developed welfare system in terms of involvement of workers and level of compensation; the workers representative system is based on three pillars: (1) trade unions, (2) workers representatives, (3) chamber of Labour; 95% of the workers are covered by the collective agreements.

Claudia Schürz (weltumspannend arbeiten); an NGO, founded by the Trade Unions, dealing with "global working"; is seen as an experts organisation of international exchange on global working issues, with the aim to improve the situation of workers in development countries; wusa is organizing seminars, workshops, materials and documentations.

### Ad 3

Discussion on the topic: Trade Unions in China? How to cooperate with them?

Different terms are used: trade unions, shop stewards, workers congress; in China a company needs a workers congress and a trade union; but there are differences in the power of trade unions from province to province (Tong Xin); in China it would be a challenge to make the trade unions more independent from the party (Claus Eilrich). In some provinces the trade unions have a specific policy towards migrant workers, e.g. in Xian migrant workers are not accepted in trade unions. In Hong Kong street-protests are showing the non-functioning of the ACFTU (All-China Federation of Trade Unions) and no workers are going there to get support. What should be the role of the European Trade Unions? Should we go on to co-operate with ACFTU? (Claus Eilrich) There are also examples where the ACFTU was successful, e.g. the important case of Wal-Mart (Staphany Wong); the membership in the ACFTU is free, the company has to pay a fee.

The main outcomes of the workshops were:

- (1) workers everywhere should be mobilized to get organized for their rights on decent work
- (2) trade unions and workers rights organisations have a similar mission; to bring them together to co-operate is an important issue

For the minutes  
Franz Halbartschlager