

Position: Worker Representative of Russian Federation

Committee: International Labour Organization (ILO)

Agenda Item: Achieving The Decent Work Agenda Through Reinforcement of Collective Agreements

Russian Federation also known as Russia is a country that stretches over a vast expanse of eastern Europe and northern Asia. Once the preeminent republic of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.; commonly known as the Soviet Union), Russia became an independent country after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. By far the world's largest country, it covers nearly twice the territory of Canada, the second largest. It extends across the whole of northern Asia and the eastern third of Europe. Most of the Russian population is concentrated in the European portion of the country, especially in the fertile region surrounding Moscow, the capital. Moscow and St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad) are the two most important cultural and financial centers in Russia and are among the most picturesque cities in the world.

Russian Federation is one of the biggest natural gas and oil exporters in the worldwide. Russia holds the world's largest natural gas reserves and is the leading exporter of natural gas. Russian companies like Gazprom and Rosneft dominate the global natural gas market, and Russia's gas exports are crucial for energy provision in Europe, Asia, and beyond. It is a permanent member of UN Security Council in addition to being a founding member of BRICS, SCO and EAEU. Furthermore The Russian Federation is part of the expanded group known as OPEC+ and its production contributes significantly to the production reductions in OPEC+ agreements.

Before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, an overarching All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions nominally represented the interests of workers, though it was controlled by the governing Communist Party. In the mid-1980s there was increasing labour unrest, particularly from miners, and greater rights were granted to workers. Since the collapse of communism, labour relations have been in constant flux, and several labour codes have been adopted. Trade union reform in 2001 effectively provided the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of the Russian Federation, which represents some 50 million workers organized into various branches, a monopoly on most union activity. In Russia the primary sector continues to provide employment for a large proportion of the workforce, with one-eighth of workers employed in agriculture and one-fifth in mining and manufacturing. Still, the service sector (including

banking, insurance, and other financial services) has grown appreciably and now employs about three-fifths of all Russian workers.

Russia's laws and Constitution guaranteed freedom of association, including the right to form trade unions for advancing workers' interests and the freedom to set up and run non-governmental associations and it ratified the ILO's fundamental Conventions No. 87 and No. 98 concerning freedom of association and collective bargaining and the right of all workers and entrepreneurs to form and join organizations without previous authorization, thereby making a commitment to respect the said principles and rights. However, throughout Russia's modern history, trade unions have faced problems with carrying out their daily activities, since despite recognizing the rights stipulated in the said ILO conventions, Russia has failed to provide adequate mechanisms supporting their implementation. In today's Russia independent unions face difficulties, such as undue employer and state interference in union activity, barriers to collective bargaining, discrimination against union members, limited opportunities to set up and register new organizations, disproportionate restrictions on the right to strike, and sometimes pressure, persecution, criminal charges and violent attacks against trade unionists.

If we want achieving decent work agenda through reinforcement of collective agreements firstly we have to deeply understand current problems of workers. One of the significant and specific problems of the Russian federation workers is the ongoing restriction on the power of independent trade unions by the government. Many unions are state-affiliated or have limited influence, which reducing their ability to advocate for workers' rights effectively. Furthermore, widespread corruption is continuing because of the vulnerability of migrant workers from former Soviet republics. These workers, who constitute a substantial portion of Russia's labour force—particularly in fields like construction and agriculture—are often employed informally, leaving them without access to essential social services or legal recourse. In addition, workplace and gender discrimination, job insecurity, poor working conditions, wage inequality create a huge challenge for workers.

After understanding these problems thoroughly, it remains to find proper solutions to these problems. Thus, we believe that as Russian Federation Workers' representative we have some possible solutions to offer that can help achieving decent work agenda through reinforcement of collective agreements. These are;

\*As The Russian Federation workers' representative as we have said before one of our biggest problems with independent trade unions is government's ongoing restriction. We are planning to report the government's pressure of trade unions by contacting the ILO. Our request to the ILO is for the ILO to consider such reports and discuss them with the government. This can help convenience pressures or strengthen union rights. Also if ILO monitors violations of union rights in Russia and can recommend sanctions against Russian Federation government, this could help to solve the problem. Such monitoring can affect Russia's international prestige and may lead the government to ease its pressure

\*Informing workers: The impact of workers' knowledge of their rights on collective agreements is unignorable. Before anything else workers should know their labour rights completely. Their knowledge and consciousness about that takes them one step further in reinforcement collective agreements. Hence, should be given some educations and trainings to workers on labour rights. These educations can be given as conferences by the experts who specialize in fundamental rights of the workers.

\*Identifying Participants and Representation: In negotiations, not only union leaders or senior managers should be involved also workers from different levels and fields should participate. This supplies that various perspectives and requirements are evaluate too.

\*Creating independent monitoring committees: In the process of collective bargaining, one of the important problems is the insufficient follow-up and implementation of agreements. Even when an agreement is reached, there may be failures in properly be implemented or conducting the conditions of the agreement. For this reason, independent monitoring committees constituted of the union and employer representatives can be created. These committees can periodically review the agreement and remove any gaps in implementation. Thus collective agreements can be conducting properly.

\*Attentive mediator selection: Mediators are neutral person or commission who interfere impartially in the collective bargaining process and contribute to the healthy process of negotiations. But sometimes parties could bribe to mediators and ask them to take sides in exchange for money. This leads to a violation of impartiality. And if the violation of impartiality is broken, it will weaken the collective agreement's power and credibility. For this reason, mediators should be mutually selected by the parties, and when selecting mediators, a deep

research on their background and connections should be conducted. This builds trust between the parties, and this trust can help prevent ethical violations.

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