

# Domestic workers of the world unite

The founding Congress of the IDWF

Uruguay, October 2013





## Acknowledgements

To enable us to hold our Founding Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay, on 26-28 October 2013, many organisations and individuals gave us a lot of support. The IDWF would like to express our appreciation especially to:

- The global union federation for food and allied workers IUF, especially its Latin America regional body UITA based in Montevideo
- Women in Informal Employment Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) for ongoing technical support and funding from the FLOW fund of the Netherlands Government via the WIEGO project 'Economic Rights and Employment Rights: Advancing Domestic Workers' Leadership'
- The Government of Uruguay
- The trade unions of Uruguay, especially the PCT-CNT union federation and the SUTD union of domestic workers
- International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- FNV-Mondiaal (Netherlands)
- ACV-CSC Service Union (Belgium)
- International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), especially its Latin America regional organisation TUCA
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) (Germany)

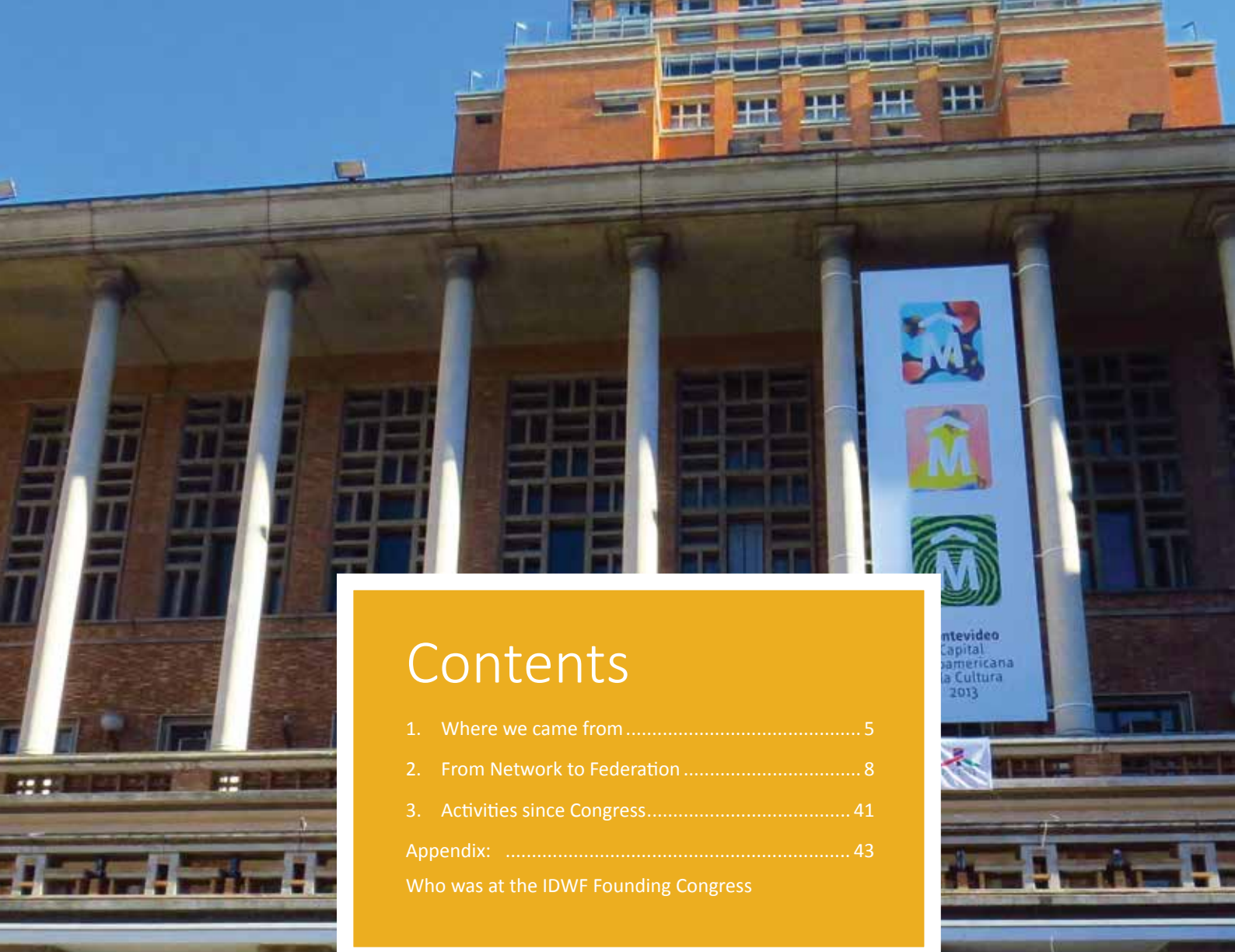
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May 2014

Design/layout: m+m studios Johannesburg





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“This is a new era for domestic workers. We must unite so that all governments give us the same treatment... The new Federation will have a big task ahead. But, with the right leadership, we will ‘take the world by storm’.

We are slaves no more. We are workers, with the same rights as other workers.”

**Myrtle Witbooi, Chair, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), from her opening speech to welcome delegates to the Congress.**

# The IDWF in brief

The International Domestic Workers' Federation (IDWF) is a membership-based global organisation of domestic/household workers. It is the first such global union federation to be formed for many years, and it is the first one to be led by women.

Its purpose is to build a strong, democratic and united domestic/household workers' global organisation so as to protect and advance domestic/household workers' rights everywhere across the world.

We believe that domestic work is work, and that all domestic/household workers must enjoy the same rights as all other workers.

The IDWF grew out of the International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN). It was established as a global federation at its Founding Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay, 26-28 October 2013.

As of May 2014, we have 48 affiliated organisations from 39 countries, representing some 280,000 dues-paying members. Most of the affiliates are trade unions, and others are associations and workers' cooperatives of domestic workers.

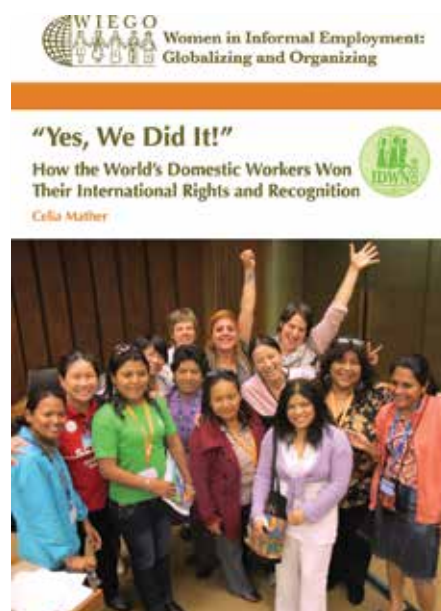


## Who can join the IDWF?

**Local or national membership-based organisations of domestic workers, led by domestic workers according to democratic rules and practices.**

The IDWF is also a Special Group of the global union federation for food and allied workers, the IUF, as provided for in the IUF Statutes. Many IUF affiliated unions include and represent domestic workers, and the IUF provided the organisational base for the IDWN to develop. Now, as domestic workers organise ourselves globally, we still find the IUF the right place to be so as to stay unified.

So we are encouraging our member organisations also to affiliate to the IUF.





# 1. Where we came from

## The IDWN

It was only in 2006 that domestic workers' organisations and our supporters from around the world came together for the first time in a global conference. There, we decided to found a new network, the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN).

We also decided on two key objectives:

- To fight together for an international ILO Convention setting out their rights as workers, which they had historically been denied.
- To use this as a means also to strengthen domestic workers' organisation on the ground.

In our efforts, we received huge support from the global union federation for food and allied workers, the IUF, and from Women in Informal Employment Globalising and Organising (WIEGO). We also collaborated and formed alliances with other global unions, notably the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) of many kinds – including migrant workers' networks, human rights and anti-slavery bodies, women's rights groups, and others such as labour professionals and academics.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**'Yes We Did It! How the World's Domestic Workers Won their International Rights and Recognition'**, Celia Mather, WIEGO, October 2013

This booklet sets out the history of how the world's domestic workers' organisations and supporters came together and won the C189 ILO Convention for the rights of domestic workers: <http://wiego.org/resources/yes-we-did-it-how-worlds-domestic-workers-won-their-international-rights-and-recognition>

## Who is a 'domestic/household worker'?

Any person engaged in domestic/household work within an employment relationship.



The collaboration and hard work paid off and, in June 2011, we achieved a massive victory when ILO Convention C189 Decent Work for Domestic Workers and its accompanying Recommendation R201 were agreed by representatives of the world's governments, employers, and workers at the International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Now no-one could deny that domestic workers are workers with the basic rights of other workers.

## What We Did Next

After winning the ILO Convention C189 and R201 at the ILO in June 2011, the IDWN concentrated on two goals:

### To fight for and achieve ratification and implementation of C189

To keep up the momentum and get C189 ratified by our governments, domestic workers' organisations built on the relationships we had developed with trade unions, government officials, and even in some cases with employers' bodies in our own countries. Our activities were very much supported by the ITUC-led '12 by 12' campaign (see page 20), by the IUF through its affiliated unions, and by WIEGO providing technical support and resources.

Within just over two years, 8 countries had ratified the C189. This number meant that the C189 officially came into force at a global level on 5 September 2013.

At the time of writing this booklet, the total number of ratifications had increased again, now to 13. They are: Uruguay, South Africa, Philippines, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Mauritius, Italy, Guyana, Germany, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Bolivia and Argentina. Compared with the usual speed of achieving ratification of ILO Conventions, this is truly outstanding. Plus there are others in the pipeline, where governments have indicated their intention to do so, including Tanzania, Jamaica, Chile and Mexico.

Meanwhile, there have also been improvements in legislation relating to domestic employment in various countries. For example:

**'Ratification' means a government agrees to put the contents of a Convention into its country's national laws.**

- **Brazil** has adopted a constitutional amendment entitling its estimated 6.5 million domestic workers to overtime pay, unemployment insurance, a pension, a maximum 8-hour work day and a 44-hour working week.
- In **Kenya**, a landmark court ruling has placed domestic workers under the protection of the labour law, extending to them the national minimum wage and social security benefits.
- The **Philippines** adopted a domestic workers' law in 2013, and has addressed one of the risks faced by migrant domestic workers by prohibiting employment agencies and employers from charging workers recruitment fees.
- **Spain** now requires domestic workers to be paid for stand-by time when they are not working but have to be on call. It has incorporated domestic workers into its social security system, and is encouraging more employers to comply by reducing the administrative charges they pay.



### For more information

'Claiming Rights: Domestic Workers' Movements and Global Advances for Labour Reform', IDWN, Human Rights Watch, and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), 28 October 2013. This booklet charts ratifications of the C189 ILO Convention, national labour law reforms, and the growing influence of domestic workers' rights movements in the two years after winning C189: <http://www.hrw.org/node/119850>



### **To build an international domestic workers' organisation based on democratic principles**

In building the movement for our rights and recognition, we had welcomed all kinds of domestic workers' and support organisations to join us in the IDWN. Over just a few years, we reached out to organisations across the world, and brought some 70 domestic workers' organisations in 35 countries together in the fight for our rights.

While working very closely with others, from the very beginning domestic workers made it clear that we wanted to speak for ourselves. So the IDWN was steered by a Committee that consisted only of domestic workers' leaders. They were supported by a team of professional 'technical advisors' from the IUF and WIEGO.

Now, however, it was time to convert ourselves from that relatively loose network into a properly constituted international organisation – one that would consist only of domestic workers' unions or associations, that is of membership-based organisations which have a set of rules and leaders elected by and accountable to the members. NGOs and CSOs would of course be more than welcome to continue as supporters and allies, but they would have no decision-making powers.

For that, we needed to hold a Founding Congress. We needed to prepare such things as a draft Constitution for the new federation. This would set out its objectives and rules for how it would be run, such as membership criteria and elections to the new body's Executive Committee. In this task, we were greatly helped by our colleagues IDWN Regional Coordinator for Europe Karin Pape from WIEGO, Chris Bonner from WIEGO, Barbro Budin from the IUF, and Pia Stalpaert from the ACV-CSC Service Union of Belgium, who joined the IDWN Chair Myrtle Witbooi and the IDWN International Coordinator Elizabeth Tang in a special Drafting Committee. They consulted IDWN member organisations by circulating a questionnaire in the first half of 2013. Then it was discussed by the IDWN Steering Committee at its meeting in June 2013, and a draft was sent out ready for decision at Congress (see page 34).

The International Coordinator and the Steering Committee also developed a 5-Year Action Plan for the new Federation, to be agreed at the first Congress (see page 38).



Meanwhile, we decided to hold the Congress in Uruguay, a country that had led the way in giving domestic workers their employment rights (see page 10). The IUF Latin America Regional office is based in the capital city Montevideo, and they made a huge contribution to the preparatory organising work.

Obviously, we also needed funding and other resources to enable the Congress to be held, and were greatly helped in this by bodies such as WIEGO, the ILO, and ACV-CSC Service Union in Belgium, the FNV union federation in the Netherlands and the FES in Germany (for a full list see Acknowledgements). The Government of Uruguay also gave a lot of support including a venue, the City Hall of Montevideo, free of charge.

All this preparation, and more, meant that we were now ready, to bring together domestic workers' representatives from around the world to found the new International Domestic Workers Federation.



## 2. From Network to Federation

The Founding Congress to turn the International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN) into a formal organisation, the International Domestic Workers' Federation (IDWF) took place on 26-28 October 2013 in Montevideo, Uruguay.

About 180 domestic workers' representatives came, from some 56 organisations in over 40 countries across the world. For many, this was the first time they had attended such an event – organised by themselves, for themselves. For some, it was the first time they had travelled to another country. Some had to negotiate carefully with their employer to get enough days' leave to be there.

Also among those present were domestic workers' leaders of many years' experience such as Casimira Rodriguez from Bolivia, and Adelina Diaz Urairte from Peru, as well as our Chair, Myrtle Witbooi from South Africa. There were also long-time supporters such as Sister Jeanne Devos, a Belgian nun active in India for many decades. It was their efforts that had laid the groundwork for all the recent gains in respect and rights for domestic workers.

Plus there were many individuals and organisations who had been supporting the domestic workers over the years. They included the Global Unions ITUC and IUF, WIEGO, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Global Labour Institute (GLI), Human Rights Watch, International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA), and individual academic researchers.

However, there were several domestic workers' leaders who were missing. Some from India and Togo had actually been barred from travelling when two airlines – Emirates and TAM – did not accept that domestic workers would need to go to an international meeting! Meanwhile, other domestic workers' leaders, for example from Europe, couldn't travel because they are 'undocumented' migrant workers: not having work permits, they would not be allowed to re-enter the country where they work.

There were also certain world regions which were not represented – notably Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Arabic-speaking countries, South Pacific and Central Asia – because we are still building our links there, still seeking out domestic workers' organisations to involve.



In her opening speech, **Myrtle Witbooi, Chair of the IDWN**, said what an honour it was to be in Uruguay, the country that led the way in ratifying C189. She felt *"very emotional"* to see everyone there and, with that, the hall broke out into the song which Myrtle and the other South African domestic workers have brought to the international movement:

***'My mother was a kitchen girl. My father was a garden boy.  
That's why I'm a unionist, a unionist, a unionist.'***

Myrtle continued, *"It took a lot of work to get to where we are today, and thank you to everyone who played a part. But there are still millions who are exploited. The new Federation will have a big task ahead. But, with the right leadership, we will 'take the world by storm'. We are slaves no more. We are workers, with the same rights as other workers. The impossible dream is becoming a reality. This is for you, about you. Make your voices heard today!"*



## Workers' Testimonies

Early in the Congress proceedings there was an opportunity to hear from domestic workers themselves, from different parts of the world. As the IDWN Chair Myrtle Witbooi said, paving the way for domestic workers to speak out and have their voices heard has been a vital part of the work of the international network.

### **GILLIAN ATWELL FROM THE NATIONAL UNION OF DOMESTIC EMPLOYEES (NUDE), TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

*"I have been a domestic worker for 25 years. They say I am 'part of the family' but I cannot eat at the same table as them. Those of us assembled here, we know the experience. We are organising: we hold workshops, educate workers about their rights, what they can get, for example the minimum wage. Now, we in NUDE are setting up a cooperative to employ domestic workers, so that our rights will be in our hands. It is time to emancipate ourselves from slavery."*



### **JOSÉPHINE ZONGO FROM THE SYNEMAGB UNION, BURKINA FASO**

*"I have been a domestic worker for over 12 years and now I am an active trade unionist. People used to say it is too difficult to organise domestic workers. This is not my experience. The IDWN preparations for the C189 were the starting point for my own activities. I could tell domestic workers that they also have rights but to gain them they have to come together in a union. We had organising drives in many African countries, and this year we have established an African Domestic Workers Network, composed of 17 unions with 95,000 members. And more unions are being formed. In Africa, our organisations are developing rapidly through active participation of our members. That is why we do not agree that organising domestic workers is something difficult."*



### **SONU DANUWAR FROM THE NEPAL INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC WORKERS' UNION (NIDWU), NEPAL**

*"I have been a domestic worker since I was 7 years old. There is a continuing lack of rights in Nepal. We unionised and joined the national union federation GEFONT in the struggle for C189 to give us rights. Through the Asian Domestic Workers' Network (ADWN) and the IDWN, I took part in the International Labour Conferences (ILCs) where the C189 was discussed. I became powerful. Where there is a will, there is a way. We can make domestic work decent."*



### **ADELINA DIAZ FROM THE FENTRAHOGARP (FEDERATION OF HOUSEHOLD WORKERS OF PERU), PERU**

*"For hundreds of years we have been excluded from rights. So I would like to thank all those who have helped us, especially the IUF. If we do not come together, it is impossible to achieve what we want. We all know about our problems. We all have a story to tell. But C189 is a tool to take the struggle forward. That is why we are all here. There is still reluctance among many governments. But Uruguay and the others which have already ratified the C189 show that they are concerned with the development of their country, not their own pockets."*



### **ANTONIA PEÑA FROM THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS' ASSOCIATION (NDWA), USA**

*"We can change the laws, but there is more to do to change people's minds. 14 years ago, I travelled from Colombia to the USA, but I always felt the discrimination. I entered the USA with diplomats, but once we arrived they changed completely. I had to work 12 hours a day. And I had no rights to leave them. If I did, they threatened they would tell the immigration authorities. In the USA, we now have some legal changes in a few States. But there is so much more to do."*



## Our hosts: Uruguay

Uruguay was chosen as the location for the first Congress because of the leadership it has shown in promoting domestic workers' rights. Notably, it was the first country in the world to ratify the ILO Domestic Workers Convention C189, plus it was the first country in Latin America to have a formal collective agreement negotiated between a domestic workers' union, employers and government. What is more, as a region, Latin America has the longest tradition of domestic workers organising at local, national and regional levels.

The Congress was held in the City Hall of the capital city of Uruguay, Montevideo, and was opened by the city's Mayor, Ana Olivera, who gave us a very warm welcome. Not only had they given us the hall for free but the Government had also declared the Congress 'an event of national interest'. On the final day, we were deeply honoured to have the country's President, José Mujica, come to give a closing speech (see page 40). Our hosts included the national trade union centre PIT-CNT, and the Single Union of Domestic Workers of Uruguay (SUTD).

**Graciela Espinosa, President of the SUTD**, spoke of her pride in being able to sit on the podium next to people like the Mayor of the City.



**Marcelo Abdala, Coordinator of the PCT-CNT union federation**, referring to the ground-breaking law that his country passed in 2006 giving domestic workers employment rights, said, *"This does not come from heaven"*, he said. *"It comes from the struggle of generations of workers in our country, above all to have a better life for our people."*



**Beatriz Ramirez, Head of the National Institute of Women** and responsible for gender affairs in Uruguay, was also there to welcome us. She said her own grandmother was a domestic worker, of African descent, and she would be proud of the way that domestic workers are now gaining their rights, and sitting and speaking in meetings such as this. *"Today I am happier than ever because this is part of a process that will lead people who live in situations of exploitation from the past to live in a different way"*, she said.

Our other host was the IUF Regional Office for Latin America of the. It is based in Montevideo and gave us vital support in preparing for the Congress. The Chair of the National Institute for Social Security, Ernesto Murro (see page 11), later told the meeting that the IUF office had provided one of the few secret places where they could meet during the military dictatorship in 1973-1984.



**Patricia Alonzo is President of the Women's Committee of the IUF Latin America region (CLAMU)**. She said that women are a growing proportion of the labour force, but with lower wages and poorer employment conditions than men, more likely to be in informal work. Many migrate from poor rural areas to work in the cities or in other countries. The IUF represents workers in agriculture, and this shows some of the common ground for the IUF and IDWF to collaborate. We have to aspire to rid the world of class-based as well as gender exploitation, she said. *"That is why we conceive of CLAMU as a tool for inclusion, not exclusion."*

Read the full speech at: <http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=402>

## Uruguay: Progress in Domestic Workers' Rights

As the Congress proceeded, participants were able to learn much more about Uruguay's laws and practices in such questions as collective bargaining, occupational health and safety standards, and labour inspection which are now benefitting domestic workers there. As well as union leaders, senior government officials and even the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs came to address the Congress. They are clearly proud of the progress so far, though all say there is still much more to do.



**Eduardo Brenta, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs,** spoke about the rights and protections that the 2006 law gives domestic workers in the country. This includes labour inspection in private homes where health and safety problems are reported.

*"We are often asked how we manage to have labour inspectors visit private households, to make sure there is no illegal work or bad conditions. But we have to. Respect means fulfilling human rights. We have the support of the judiciary and the police. When we enter the homes of the wealthiest people, many of whom are employing migrant workers, we feel proud."* But more rights for domestic workers are still needed, he said, such as the right to time off for union activities.

**Ernesto Murro is President of the Social Provision Bank (BPS)** which is the national institute for social security.

He began by saying, *"Domestic work is essential. It is necessary for development"*. Since the law regulating domestic work was passed in 2006, they have registered about half of all domestic workers in the country for social security, which few other countries have done. However, they are still concerned for the other half. A handbook developed by lawyers working with the domestic workers' organisations and the ILO is now being distributed widely, and there are regular campaigns working with the employers' body, ministries and unions, about domestic workers' rights both under the 2006 law as well as under general regulations, such as those covering pensions and collective bargaining. Migrant workers have the same rights as Uruguayan workers too he said, adding, "They are welcome", for which he received much applause.



**Ariel Ferrari is a Director of the BPS** (see above), where he sits on behalf of the unions. The greater registration of domestic workers is giving them better access to services and benefits, he said. However, they still need more policies and implementation specific to the sector. And it is a growing sector. The exact figure is not known but, he said, there are perhaps as many as 125,000 in the country (about 17% of the population). Since 2010 there



have been discussions about the growing need for care for the elderly, and they are now drafting policy and running a pilot system to support pensioners who have little income to pay for their own care.



### For more information

'Collective Bargaining and Domestic Workers in Uruguay', by Mary Goldsmith, WIEGO, January 2013:

<http://wiego.org/resources/collective-bargaining-and-domestic-workers-uruguay>





**Walter Miglionico, Health and Safety Officer of the PIT-CNT union federation**, explained how they came to identify the occupational risks that domestic workers face. They found a study from Spain which outlined the dangers of household appliances, tools and kitchen equipment, fire hazards from energy sources, physical dangers from heavy weights and the chemicals used, and the psychosocial impact of insufficient rest time, low wages, and abuse/harassment. Much more needs to be done to raise awareness and provide specific training on these issues, he said.

*“The employer has a responsibility to anticipate accidents before they happen and, if they do happen, to repair the situation and indemnify the worker. This is established under Uruguayan law and also C121 (ILO Convention*

on Employment Injury Benefits)”, he said. Employers of domestic workers are now obliged to register their workers with the Social Provision Bank but it is difficult to carry out labour inspection in private homes, as homes are held to be “sacred places”, and there is still no specific regulation about this. *“We need to strengthen unionisation. We also need a stronger employers’ body, and the creation of a proper tripartite environment.”*

**Juan Andres Roballo** is Inspector General of Work, head of Uruguay’s labour inspection service. He explained more about their approach to the inspection of private homes. Although there may well be special bonds between a domestic worker and the family, it is nevertheless an employment relationship, he said, and their aim is a *“dramatic reduction in informality”*.

The 2006 law brought domestic workers the basic rights of other workers. It includes such issues as minimum working age, working hours, paid weekly rest including Sundays, minimum nightly rest for live-in domestic workers, severance payment, unemployment benefits, and sickness leave. Although there are no specific regulations on occupational health and safety standards in private households, he said that general regulations do apply. So, for example, regulations on the use of chemicals apply as much to private employers as to cleaning companies. It is the duty of household employers to prevent risks.

There needed to be a lot of awareness-raising about the new law. When the Inspectorate first announced that it would be visiting households, there was a bad public reaction. They were even accused of ‘state terrorism’. They tried to deal with this by sending inspectors at those times of the day when domestic workers would be more likely to open the door. If an employer opened the door, they introduced themselves as the Labour

Inspector but said that they want to speak with the domestic worker. If a young person opened the door, they simply left the leaflet and a model payment form. *“We keep it friendly”*, he said.

They have already visited some 15,000 homes, though not all were found to have a domestic worker, and not all opened their doors. However, they used the data gathered as a control study, and it led to significant awareness-raising. Public perception has changed. There have in fact been no claims of ‘violation of the household’, and it has led to more householders formalising the employment relationship with their domestic workers.

As for specific claims, he said these are more often made where the domestic workers are organised. The domestic workers’ union plays an important role in making and following up claims. The initial approach is to keep claims anonymous. When an inspector first visits a household against which there is a claim, s/he also visits neighbour’s homes, so that it is not obvious against whom the claim is being made. Then they issue a call for the employer to come and respond to the claim. If they are not satisfied with the response, they can get a court order to enter the house. It is a clear sign from the State that nowhere is free of monitoring. Everywhere must comply, he said.



**Anna Biondi, Deputy Director of ACTRAV, the Bureau for Workers' Activities of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)**, was another of the early speakers at the Congress. Previously Anna was Secretary of the Workers' Group at the ILO, when she played a huge part in helping us get the C189 and R201. As she said, just a few years before we would not even have dreamed of having an international federation of domestic workers' organisations. In that respect, the movement to win C189 did much more than *"correct history"*. It also created *"unprecedented alliance-building between the trade union movement and what we call civil society organisations or NGOs"*, she said. This has led unions to *"new approaches... to rethink their structures"*, to be more gender-sensitive, more open to migrant and undocumented workers.

Although there are already many ratifications of C189, and more in process, there is still much more to do. That very week, the ILO Governing Body had been discussing how to maintain the momentum, and had agreed to hold a high-level global conference on decent work for domestic workers, perhaps in late 2015. She ended by saying that her own mother was a domestic worker towards the end of her working life in Italy, and *"she would be proud to see us all here today"*.

**Read Anna's full speech at:**

<http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=398>

and see also page 23.

**Guy Ryder, Director General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)**, offered his congratulations for the Congress by video. Despite the widespread conditions of crisis today, domestic workers and their allies have shown that *"the right combination of values, persistence, organising and solidarity can make the world of work fairer and more just, and bring decent work to all... Your action inspires and motivates all others"*, he said.



He paid tribute to the *"years of action by pioneer activists"*, eventually winning the widespread collaboration that had led to the C189. The Convention is now being ratified and proving to be a catalyst for legislative reform.

However, only about half of the 53 million domestic workers in the world are protected by any labour legislation. Many are particularly vulnerable migrant workers, and few are able to realise any rights that they do have. So, *"domestic workers around the world will be looking to you for help in organising, engaging in collective bargaining, and campaigning for more legislation"*.

*"The ILO is committed to working with you"*, he continued. He confirmed the ILO Governing Body's decision to promote the C189 more, perhaps with a world conference on the topic. Also, at the recent United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, many delegates had spoken of the importance of C189. There is a *"real and unprecedented political impetus in favour of domestic workers and their rights – both globally and nationally. Your network is making a difference, and you can count on the ILO as an ally in meeting the challenges ahead"*.

**See the full video at:**

<http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=401>

*"We need to make sure that everyone lives up to their responsibilities. I could not live in my life if I did not have a woman who comes to my house 4 hours a week."*

**Anna Biondi, Deputy Director, ACTRAV, ILO**



In a video message of solidarity, **Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)** paid tribute to the “*incredible achievements*” of all those involved in the ITUC 12 by 12 campaign for ratification of C189, with the IDWN at the forefront along with other global unions IUF and PSI, as well as many human, migrants, and workers’ rights groups (see page 20). As well as the successes in getting countries to ratify the C189 and improve laws to benefit domestic workers, she applauded the growth in unions representing domestic workers, and the new Collective Bargaining Agreements being reached, meaning that “*millions of jobs are being formalised*”. “*We are determined to see this continue*”, she added, pledging the ITUC’s ongoing support.

See the full video at:

<http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=404>



**Shawna Bader-Blau, Executive Director of the Solidarity Centre, USA**, also sent her congratulations for the founding Congress by video. “*Anywhere that workers are coming out of the shadows, standing, fighting for decent work with dignity, we are proud to be there. In that regard, the IDWN represents one of the most exciting movements in decades, and we look forward to continuing collaboration.*”

See the full video at:

<http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=403>

**Dr. Stephen Ackermann, Bishop of Treves, German Commission for Justice and Peace** sent a letter of congratulations: “*We feel honoured for having accompanied you with some small steps of support on your way to the founding Congress. But we also have to thank you that you helped us in our work to advocate for the right to organise for workers in the informal economy.*”

See the full letter at:

<http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=436>





## IDWN Global Activity Report

**Elizabeth Tang, International Coordinator of the IDWN,** reported to the Congress on the global activities of the IDWN. She started with a brief history of how the domestic workers' organisations of the world had come together into the IDWN and won the C189, and what had happened in the two years since then (see also Section 1).



**In 2013, the IDWN received the George Meany 2013 Human Rights Award from the AFL-CIO union federation in the USA.**

The number of member organisations of the IDWN now stood at 47, representing about a quarter of a million domestic workers worldwide. Most members are trade unions, some specifically of domestic workers and some including workers from other sectors. Some members are domestic workers' union federations. Others are associations, networks and workers' cooperatives formed by domestic workers.

The IDWN had benefitted hugely from the continuing support of the IUF, WIEGO, the ITUC, the ILO and many other civil society organisations, and among the many activities:

- A training manual 'Decent Work for Domestic Workers' was published in collaboration with the ILO Asia/Pacific office, August 2012: <http://www.idwfed.org/publication.php>
- Baseline studies of domestic workers' situations and their organisations were carried out in Tanzania, Philippines, Indonesia and Nepal, to provide guidance for organising in those countries and for the IDWN in developing its strategies and action plans.

### **Key developments since mid-2011 include:**

- Over 100,000 more domestic workers have been organised into membership-based organisations across the world.
- Domestic workers have formed organisations in countries where they did not exist before, such as in Thailand, Cambodia, Guinea and Cameroon.

The IDWN global activities report also sets out some ‘**Key Lessons Learnt and Challenges**’. They include:

- Imaginative ways to include informal workers in trade union structures, including at a global level in the IUF.
- What is possible when the labour movement and other stakeholders act in solidarity: the IDWN is a product of labour movement solidarity, in alliance with other supportive groups and individuals such as UN Women, funding agencies, and academics. Elizabeth joined the IDWN Chair Myrtle Witbooi in “expressing, on behalf of our entire membership, our heartfelt gratitude” to them all”. Their technical support and resources allowed the IDWN “to reach something that previously seemed ‘impossible’”.
- Direct participation by the workers: ‘We speak for ourselves’ – both as an objective and in practice – has allowed domestic workers to have direct participation in decision-making processes, notably in the ILO discussions for the C189. The challenge now is turn this into an everyday reality within domestic workers’ organisations and elsewhere.
- From informal to formal: how? C189 paves the way for domestic workers to join the formal workforce. However, many questions remain, such as what kind of enforcement and implementation measures will work for domestic workers, what their collective bargaining model will look like, etc.
- ‘Working together’ – leadership by women: a collaborative style and practice has enabled many organisations to survive, despite great difficulties and minimum resources. However, many domestic workers’ leaders still need capacity-building, and organisations need policies to ensure equal participation of all workers regardless of gender, race, ethnicities, nationalities, beliefs, occupations and positions.

“No-one should spit blood so that another can live better.”

**Atahualpa Yupanqui**

**Argentinian singer-songwriter, 1908-1992**

**quoted by Walter Miglionico, PIT-CNT**

Elizabeth’s report concludes:

*“From now on domestic workers have their own global, democratic organisation. With this, we will speak at international forums as one, share experiences, campaign and mobilise to support each one’s struggles within countries and across borders. A new force is joining the labour movement...”*

*“What we have been able to achieve in organising will only find meaning when it results in protection of rights and better working conditions of our members and all other domestic workers in every corner of the world. We will keep all the lessons we have learnt in mind and face all challenges as one.”*

**The full report of IDWN global activities to October 2013 can be found at:**

**<http://idwfed.org/news.php?id=414>**





## IDWN Regional Activity Reports

The IDWN Regional Coordinators gave full reports of the activities they had been generating and supporting, with a lot of detail on organising strategies and achievements, as well as challenges and future plans. Here are some of the highlights.

**All the Regional Reports can be found at:**

<http://idwfed.org/news.php?id=414>

### **Africa: Vicky Kanyoka, IDWN Africa Regional Coordinator**

From 2009 to 2013 the number of domestic workers' trade unions in Africa grew from 9 to 17, with a total membership of nearly 100,000. Organising strategies include using radio at times of the day when domestic workers are listening as they work, doing door-to-door campaigns, and setting up committees in the local areas where domestic workers live and work.



The IDWN has been carrying out capacity-building workshops, conducting surveys and facilitating support from international labour bodies and supporters.

On 16 June 2013, over 100 domestic worker leaders from 17 African countries came together at a regional conference held in Cape Town, South Africa, and founded the **African Domestic Workers Network (AfDWN)**. Its Declaration can be read at: <http://wiego.org/informal-economy/declaration-african-regional-domestic-workers-conference>

### **Asia: Fish Ip Pui Yu, IDWN Asia Regional Coordinator**

Asia-Pacific is the region that has the highest number of domestic workers, about 21.5 million, and about 60% of all child domestic workers. There are also millions of Asian migrant domestic workers, working in countries within the region and in others far away. Abuse is rife but legal protection is minimal. However, there have been improvements in laws since the adoption of C189 – notably in the Philippines, India, Thailand, and Singapore.

Existing domestic workers' self organisations are generally small and very young. Few are unions, and it is hard for them to gather membership dues. Trade union centres like Gefont in Nepal are working with NGOs and unions in destination countries like Lebanon and Hong Kong to support migrant workers' organising. Plus there is very good, committed leadership of domestic workers in a number of countries. The Asia Domestic Workers' Network (ADWN), developed through the Committee for Asian Women (CAW) is also committed to building the IDWN.



### Caribbean: Ida le Blanc, IDWN Caribbean Regional Coordinator



Since winning the C189, the National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE) in Trinidad and Tobago, and the Jamaica Household Workers' Union (which converted from being an association) have won more

support for domestic workers' rights from unions in some countries of the Caribbean, such as Antigua and Barbados. Women's associations, particularly in St. Lucia and Guyana, have also been supportive. Relationships with international bodies such as UN Women and the International Organisation for Migration have also been strengthened. However, there is still work to be done to gain the support of more unions in the region.

Another challenge facing the region is the increasing flow of migrant domestic workers, including a new wave of Spanish-speaking migrants from countries such as Venezuela and the Dominican Republic to English-speaking countries like Trinidad and Tobago. In November 2011, the Caribbean Domestic Workers Network (CDWN) was launched.

### North America: Jill Shenker, IDWN North America Regional Coordinator

Domestic workers in North America are largely women immigrants and those from minority communities. The National Domestic Workers' Alliance (NDWA) of the USA is by far the strongest affiliate of the IDWN. It was founded in 2007, and now has 42 local, membership-based organisations affiliated to it, in 26 cities and 18 states. At the US federal level, domestic workers were excluded from the National Labor Relations Act because they were not defined as 'employees'. The first legal gains were made in the city of New York, and since then Domestic Workers Bills have been passed in Hawaii and California in 2013, with more in process. Meanwhile, the NDWA has campaigns such as 'We Belong Together' about the need to improve unjust immigration laws which badly affect women, children and families, 'Beyond Survival' against trafficking, and 'Caring Across Generations' (see page 24). It also carries out a lot of capacity-building and leadership training.

Meanwhile, in Canada support organisations for domestic workers have existed in various provinces for many years, and prior to privatisation careworkers were organised in some public sector unions. There are also migrant rights groups which are working with unions. However, there seems to be little national collaboration in Canada as yet. Plus the IDWF needs to re-build its contacts there.



## Europe: Karin Pape, IDWN European Regional Coordinator

There is no exact data, but many domestic workers in Europe are migrants, within Europe east-to-west, and from Asia and Latin America. In many European countries, domestic workers do have the same rights as other workers, regardless of their status or the nature of their work (part/full-time, live-in/out, etc.) and there are some good collective agreements. However, enforcement of legal rights is very low. Undocumented migrant workers are especially at risk. Across Europe, often the best organised domestic workers are the migrant ones. But now more European unions are opening up to domestic worker membership or building strong ties with domestic workers' associations.

As yet, organising at the regional level is still relatively weak, though. Traditional donors do not see the need to fund such activities. However, WIEGO does and so the WIEGO Regional Advisor for Europe is also the IDWN European Regional Coordinator. Meanwhile, the Women's Committee of the European regional body of the IUF, EFFAT, is promoting the issues and, by August 2013, five unions in Belgium, Netherlands, Italy and Switzerland had affiliated their domestic workers' membership to the IDWN.



## Latin America: Marcelina Bautista Bautista, IDWN Latin America Regional Coordinator

In countries like Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, almost one in five of all female workers is a domestic worker. Some 10-15% of all households in the region employ a domestic worker, not even counting those workers who work per day or per hour. So far, four countries of the region have ratified the C189 and there have been legal advances in a number of others. However, in all countries there is still discrimination in legislation against domestic workers, and serious delays in law enforcement.

This is also the region with the longest record of organising domestic workers, both in individual countries and regionally, with the confederation CONLACTRAHO founded in 1988. CONLACTRAHO was one of the founding members of the IDWN, and intends to continue its collaboration with the IDWF so as to develop the global domestic workers' movement.

## Panel Discussion – Domestic Workers and the Broader Labour Movement

This panel discussion was about the impact of the growing movement of domestic workers on the wider trade union movement. What, for example, are the lessons for their relationships to other informal and ‘precarious’ workers?

It was moderated by Nalini Nayak of the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) of India, and the panel included representatives from the two global unions which had been crucial in marshalling labour movement support for the IDWN and winning the C189. Another was from our other key ally WIEGO, a global organisation for workers, especially women, in informal employment. Plus there was a representative from an organisation in the USA which supports the organisation of workers there who are excluded, by law or practice, from the right to organise in the USA.

### **Marieke Koning, Equalities Officer of the ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) with special responsibility for the domestic work sector.**

Marieke started by congratulating the domestic workers for what has become an “*unstoppable movement*”, inspiring trade unions and other allies everywhere. After C189 was won, the ITUC led a campaign called ‘12 by 12’ to help generate momentum for ratification of the Convention. Already 14 had been achieved, and labour laws improved in many countries too, which she said feels like “*a miracle*”.

She spoke about how important alliances had been throughout the whole process, including with such as networks for women’s rights and migrants’ rights. Later at Congress, Human Rights Watch, the IDWN and ITUC would be launching a new booklet which they produced in collaboration, called ‘Claiming Rights’ (see page 6). But others too have continued to promote the issues, such as UN Women with their booklet ‘Domestic Workers Count Too’. There are now workshops on C189 in all kinds of international forums, and ILO meetings around the world.



*“You have been winning despite the global recession” and indeed the cause of domestic workers is fuelling debates about the global economy, she said. Domestic workers highlight the gender pay gap because they face the biggest gap of all. They are also a high proportion of migrant workers, who are now a high and increasing proportion of all workers. So there are common agendas with unions.*

*“This is an opportunity to revive the global labour movement, and you have the opportunity to be at the forefront of that. We count on you as leaders today and tomorrow.”*



### For more information

**ITUC ‘12 by 12’ Campaign:** <http://www.ituc-csi.org/domestic-workers-12-by-12>

**‘Domestic Workers Count Too: Implementing Protection for Domestic Workers’, UN Women and ITUC, 2013:** [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/unwomen\\_iutc\\_factsheets.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/unwomen_iutc_factsheets.pdf)



## Barbro Budin, Gender and Equalities Officer of the IUF (International Union of Food and Allied Workers)

The IUF was fundamental to the development of the IDWN, providing it with an organisational base in the global union movement. However, as Barbro said, until recently it took a lot to persuade many unionists that domestic workers are workers, with the same rights as other workers. Many unionists are themselves employers of domestic workers. Nevertheless, most leaders of IUF affiliated unions realised the importance of raising the rights of this group, also for the future of the whole labour movement. What is more, the “incredible energy and force of domestic workers” have been contagious, attracting strong support from many in the labour movement.

At a time when union and labour rights are constantly under threat, and precarious forms of employment have become the norm rather than the exception, domestic workers achieved what few thought would be possible: to negotiate a strong international Convention which confirms fundamental labour, trade union and human rights. Domestic workers used new and imaginative methods of mobilisation from which traditional unions can and have learnt, she said.

C189 is not only a huge victory for domestic workers but for the whole labour movement. It contains principles that have been deliberately undermined. For example, C189 says that ‘stand-by’ time is working time. One of the things that contribute to the slave-like working conditions of domestic workers, as well as many temporary workers today, is the lack of control over working time and free time, so that their already low income becomes even lower.

Many other important basic principles are spelt out in the C189 that are not limited just to domestic workers. They include a safe and healthy working environment, labour inspection, protection of domestic workers – including migrant workers – against abusive employment agencies, etc. “Workers in both formal and informal employment should make use of C189 as a source of inspiration and a reference when developing strategies for organising and bargaining.”



When most unions today are losing members due to unemployment, outsourcing and redundancies, domestic workers are establishing new organisations or strengthening existing ones. There is still a long way to go but, considering the obstacles to recruiting and organising domestic workers, the progress is considerable. The domestic workers’ movement is inspiring and boosting the trade union movement as well as other workers in informal employment.

When the IDWN was established, its objectives were few but crystal clear:

- To be recognised as workers
- To speak for themselves
- To win an international Convention for their rights as workers

The fact that domestic workers finally got the opportunity to speak for themselves is probably the key to their success in winning C189, and to the increasing recognition by others of domestic workers and their work.

### Chris Bonner, of WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment Globalising and Organising)

WIEGO has been another of the key organisations supporting the development of the IDWN and its campaigns. As well as domestic workers, WIEGO focuses on a number of other sectors where informal workers predominate: wastepickers, homebased workers, street vendors, construction and transport. Some are 'own account' informal producers working for themselves, often with unpaid family members. Some are waged workers, working for formal firms but in informal jobs. Some are in informal cooperatives.

She went on to look at the size of the informal economy, the gender dimension to it, and trends. The majority of workers in developing countries are informally employed. For example, in Latin America, informal employment is 51% of non-agricultural employment; in South Asia it is 82%. The informal economy is a greater source of income for women than for men in most regions. Women are concentrated in occupations with the highest level of insecurity and lowest incomes.

The working poor are more likely to work their way out of poverty if they enjoy economic rights and legal protections, and if they are represented in relevant negotiations. Informal workers are forming organisations and finding ways of promoting their rights. They are for example, developing new types of collective bargaining. We need to share those examples more widely. However, most informal workers are not yet organised and don't have a voice. There are many who are still not recognised as workers, and still not brought into the labour movement. *"We need to take what domestic workers have done and spread it to other workers"*, she said.

### Anannya Bhattacharjee of the United Workers Congress, USA

The UWC is a strategic alliance of workers who are either by law or by practice excluded from the right to organise in the USA. The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) is part of the UWC. As Anannya said, it is important to look at the relationship between workers who are excluded and the rest of the labour movement. In Anannya's view, the formal sector is disappearing, and so therefore are unions which only operate in the formal sector. *"In that sense, domestic workers... tell us about the future of labour. Employers would like all workers to be as precarious as domestic workers."*



*"What is true about informal work is that it coincides with people who are socially excluded - migrants, women, race, class, citizenship (and by 'citizenship' I just don't mean passport)"*, she said. She urged trade unions to be active in building a working class movement, one that includes all workers, because that has to be the future of unions.

Looking at the question from a North-South perspective, *"It is the workers of the Global South who will change the world today."* In the USA, she believes it is the migrant workers from the South who are the 'labour movement' now, whether the traditional unions accept them or not.

Looking at it from a gender perspective, she hopes that women will infuse the union movement more. Women must stop being victims, she said, and become decision-makers and leaders. One of the key elements of the domestic workers' struggle has been to put their demands in a positive way rather than just as 'victims'. *"We are there to change society, as workers and as women. The trade union movement has to learn this from women leaders."* For that reason, the founding of the IDWF as the first women's global union federation is a *"huge history-making moment"*. It means that the IDWF has big responsibilities to the labour movement, which in turn needs the IDWF.



## Anna Biondi, Deputy Director of ACTRAV of the ILO (see also page 13)

Anna reminded the participants of some of the gains that the trade union movement has made, which domestic workers and other informal workers can be using more. C87 and C98 are two ‘fundamental’ ILO Conventions that give all workers the right to organise and bargain collectively. It is also worth checking which other Conventions your country has ratified, she said, for example C131 on minimum wages, and C155 on Occupational Health and Safety. There are also useful Recommendations such as R193 on the promotion of cooperatives.

For workers who do not yet have access to social protection, *“the engagement of the state to create the social protection floor is a key part of democracy”*. In the next two years, the ILO will be discussing a general standard on this. *“Make sure you call for participation in this.”*

*“We don’t need to accept that ‘informal is normal’. We need to look at rights. The ILO Constitution says that ‘labour is not a commodity’, but labour is the cheapest commodity of all. Only if we insert rights into this division of what goes to capital and what goes to the workers can we change things for the better, and get workers’ rights and justice.”*



## Looking at world data through different eyes

Jill Shenker of the NDWA (USA) showed Congress a series of maps of the world, reinterpreting data about the global population through new eyes. They included maps of poverty distribution, ecological footprint, gender empowerment (showing information about women holding official positions, and women’s earnings), child labour, and migration (some 174 million people, or 3% of the world’s population, now live outside their country of origin). *“These patterns are not fixed”, she said. “We can reshape these maps.”*

On this world map, the size of each country shows the number of international immigrants who live there.



See the full set of maps at: <http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=391>



## Panel Discussion – Organising Innovations

Domestic workers can organise, but it takes innovative strategies to make real headway. The panel was moderated by Fish Ip Pui Yu, IDWN Regional Coordinator for Asia, and we heard from some highly experienced people on this.

### **Ai-Jen Poo, Director, National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), USA.**

Ai-Jen's opening call, "Respect the work that makes all other work possible", led to chanting across the Congress hall:

*"Free Domestic Workers, End Slavery"*

*"Si se puede. Si, si se puede!"*

She told how domestic workers started organising in New York in 2001 and, after a 7-year campaign, won a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights there. This set the stage for more states: California and Hawaii passed Bills in 2013.

The NDWA has been developing other kinds of campaigns too. One example is 'Caring Across Generations'. There is no system in the USA to take care of the rapidly ageing population, and migrant domestic workers are coming in to fill the gap. Ever more care workers are needed, and families want the best for their elders. So the NDWA is working with associations of many different types, including those for seniors and people with disabilities, for a win-win solution: trained care workers, with quality jobs, and pathways to career advancement and citizenship for undocumented migrants, who are providing high quality but affordable homecare for millions of US citizens.



**Jeanne Devos** is a Belgian nun who has been helping domestic workers in India organise since the 1960s.

Jeanne was a key founder of the **National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM)** in India, in 1985. It was an advocacy body, an anti-slavery movement rather than a labour movement, she said. It was not possible to unionise because domestic workers were seen as 'not workers'. The difficulties they faced in organising included a caste system which supports discrimination against domestic workers, the prevalence of child labour, and inter-state migration and trafficking. Nevertheless, the NDWM grew to over 12,000 domestic workers' organisations in 18 out of 28 states in India, overcoming barriers of class, caste, language, lack of education, and so on.

In 2010, they decided to turn their associations into trade unions, and managed also to get some participation in the process for the ILO Convention, which they saw as huge progress. "Now our voice is recognised", she said. In some states, domestic workers are starting to be registered, with ID cards, and getting access to some minimum benefits. This same month, October 2013, they held the founding Congress of the new Indian Domestic Workers Trade Union Federation. Its President was not with us in Uruguay, however, because she was refused boarding by the airline (see page 8).

Many challenges to organising remain: caste, language differences, lack of education, difficulties with getting enough leave to attend meetings, etc. Some state governments still refuse the right to organise in unions, a sexual harassment bill excludes domestic workers because 'the home is not a workplace', and so on.

## Phobsuk Gasing, Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions, Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, there are hundreds of thousands of domestic workers from many different Asian countries. Phobsuk spoke about how migrant domestic workers there formed unions based on nationality (Thai, Filipina, Indonesian, Nepali, etc.). Their common national identity is what helps them to build their organisations. They meet with each other and with Hong Kong national domestic workers in the Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions (FADWU).

## Carmen Cruz, ASTRADOMES, Costa Rica (and General Secretary of the Latin America regional confederation CONLACTRAHO)

Carmen said that many domestic workers in Costa Rica are migrants from Nicaragua, including herself. As migrant workers, they can belong to unions but not hold positions in them. Their feeling was that this would not lead to much improvement for them, and so some 30 years ago they formed their own association ASTRADOMES.



It was slow progress, though. Domestic workers have no real day off: even on a Sunday they only have a few hours before they have to return to the house where they work. “You have to know when and how to make requests”, she said. However, by getting a number of Costa Rican workers involved, they finally managed to get ASTRADOMES registered in 2011, plus they collected enough funds to provide a shelter for migrant domestic workers who have fled abuse or have been discovered not to have a work permit.



## Hester Stephens, President, South Africa Domestic and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU).

Hester spoke of the methods SADSAWU has been adopting to reach out to domestic workers: talking with them at railway stations as they travel to and from work, going door-to-door and holding street meetings in the domestic workers’ own rooms, getting



broadcasts on local radio stations, and setting up information tables in townships.

She also told the Congress about the support they get from their union confederation COSATU, including office space, and

access to national and international negotiations. Some other COSATU affiliates are now spreading the word about domestic workers’ rights to their own members. After all, many unionists are also employers of domestic workers.

## Workshops on organising

Over the first two days of the Congress, there was also a series of workshops. There, participants shared their experiences of building domestic workers' organisations at local, regional and global levels. This included looking at organising particular types of domestic workers, such as homecare workers and migrants.

There were also workshops to exchange information and strategies on national campaigns to ratify C189, as well as on getting better enforcement of existing laws, social protection for domestic workers, and imaginative approaches to collective bargaining.

The aim was to discuss these questions in a way that would help inform and activate the proposed IDWF 5-Year Action Plan (see page 38) on the ground.

## Organising to Scale

### Action Plan Q: What must domestic workers' organisations do in order to organise more effectively?

Led by Anannaya Bhattacharjee of the NDWA, USA

Many participants at this workshop said they were there to learn from others. They have built their organisations and are actively organising to grow, but they lack the resources to expand significantly. How have others been able to take their own organisations to the next level? What are the best methods for raising awareness and recruiting when workers are so scattered in private homes?

It became clear that the realities can differ very much from country to country. However, many of the responses, from Indonesia to the USA, emphasised the need to take organising to the local community level, even door-to-door. Rather than holding distant, centralised meetings, this reaches out to the workers and helps to keep costs down.

In Kenya, KUDHEIHA is a domestic workers' union that has grown by thousands over the past few years. Its General Secretary, Albert Njeru, said that their strategy is to expect organisational leaders to bring in new workers and increase actual union membership at every meeting. Those domestic workers attending for the first time get their transport costs reimbursed, which helps to attract them.

In Jamaica, Shirley Pryce said that being active in the international campaign for C189 had helped her organisation to gain profile, particularly in the wider union movement and with their Government. Previously an Association, it has now become a union, the Jamaica Household Workers' Union.

Meanwhile, in Belgium, the system is different again as the Government is actively formalising the employment of domestic workers and has allocated funding to facilitate this. So, here the emphasis is more on the employers, to get them to register their workers, and this then automatically brings the workers into the union.



## Organising Homecare Workers

### Action Plan Q: How best to build strategic campaigns to support and organise homecare workers?

Led by Ai-Jen Poo, leader of the National Domestic Workers' Alliance (NDWA), USA

Ai-Jen said that by 2012 some 11.5% of the world's population was aged over 65 years, and by 2050 the proportion will rise to at least 22%. We will then, for the first time in world history, have more elderly people than children. A high proportion of elders have some kind of disability. The 35.6 million who now have dementia is projected to double every 20 years. Care workers provide them with company and safety; it is not just a health issue.

Yet our structures in society are out of kilter with this changing pattern. With more women working, there is a huge care gap, but neo-liberal policies are taking government care programmes apart, precisely at the wrong time. This is a problem for everyone, not just the workers concerned. This is different from other organising where workers are against the bosses. Here, the bosses are us too.

Caring Hands is a not-for-profit organisation in the USA which acts as a job placement agency for care workers. Juanita Flores has been with them for 20 years and she explained that they provide the workers not just with jobs but with a wide range of support and training on such things as different types of disabilities, caring for young children, and First Aid, as well as English classes so that

migrant workers can communicate better with those for whom they are working as well as with agencies and government bodies. *"We stress that if you are doing this work only for the money, then you should not be doing it. You must have care and compassion"*, she said.

Ai-Jen added that there is a big gap in the US between the very rich who can pay for what they need and the very poor who have access to state provision. In between, the middle class pay from their own pockets for untrained workers, and this is where Caring Hands comes in.

Increasingly, domestic work and homecare of the elderly and disabled is the same sector. There is also an overlap with the medical professionals, and in the USA the NDWA is reaching out to the nursing unions for solidarity in this question of 'professionalisation'.

Several participants spoke of the problem of how the different types of domestic and care workers identify themselves. Sometimes too there is inequality in the law between them.

This is why solidarity between 'sectors' is important, said Ai-Jen. *"It is the NDWA strategy to unify the different types of worker"*, and training can be a tool in this process.



## Organising Migrant Domestic Workers

### Action Plan Q: How to include migrant domestic workers in the domestic workers' organisations of the countries where they work?

Led by Maria Elena Valenzuela of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)

1. 'Organising' is a big word. What does it mean to you?
2. 'Si se puede' / 'Yes we can!' ...What? Fill in the blank...

The participants went into three language groups – Spanish, French and English – to find answers to these questions. When they came back together, they found common themes in their responses:

**Organising is an art to unite, to bring people together into a community with common interests/a common purpose/a unified voice. Organising comes not just from individuals, but from the energy and creativity of a group that allows for action. One union = one voice.**

With this unity of purpose and voice, 'Yes, we can'... What? We can organise ourselves to:

- Support and help each other to take up the issues that individually we cannot.
- Recruit and gather domestic workers together to build a movement for change, build power, fight for our rights, restore our dignity, improve our working conditions and have a decent life.
- Train ourselves, build capacity among domestic workers, empower women.
- Change unions, integrate migrant domestic workers into union organisations, unite forces without caring about race, colour, religion, or country of origin.
- Connect with other organisations, and articulate our needs and demands with government, academia, and wider civil society.
- Struggle for equal rights between residents and migrants, for all migrants to have a residence permit, and for the dignity of every individual working in our country to be respected.
- Look beyond our borders, organise domestic workers globally and fight for human rights.
- Respect ourselves, and have patience, listen to and be generous with each other
- Obtain commitment and consensus, and find strategies.
- Learn from wrongs, and create order.



They were then asked to find the common words in these descriptions, to come up with a 'super definition' of 'organising':

TRANSFORMATION, EMPOWERMENT, DIGNITY, ART, GLOBAL, STRUGGLE

UNITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE, FOR RIGHTS CHANGE

*"Through unity, we can reach our objectives."*

*"If we can organise globally, then we can make change globally."*

## Building Domestic Workers' Organisations at Regional and Global Levels

**Action Plan Q: To build sustainable regional and international networks, what are the specific contributions that each member organisation should make? What are the models / strategies?**

Led by Vicky Kanyoka, IDWN Regional Coordinator for Africa



This workshop looked at the challenges and strategies of cross-border organising into regional networks. It drew particularly on the experience of CONLACTRAHO in Latin America to help inform the emerging regional networks in other world regions: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Europe. It also looked for lessons for the IDWN as it converts into a global federation.

CONLACTRAHO in Latin America is the longest standing regional body of domestic workers' organisations, founded in 1988. Carmen Cruz, CONLACTRAHO's current General Secretary, and several other longstanding members were at the workshop and they gave some background to its early years. It started with three people from domestic workers' unions in Chile, Colombia and Peru who wanted to combine their organisational experiences and give life to a movement, especially because no governments were then recognising this as 'work'. In building the federation, they were less concerned with the political background of each organisation and more with how it sustained itself. Periodic regional meetings proved important, as did the exchange of leaflets and newsletters to help learn from each other's experiences.

Over the years, the key difficulties that CONLACTRAHO faced concern communications and resources. Though

today communications are much easier using electronic tools, still many domestic workers do not have access to them. Nor, with their long working hours, do they have enough time to put into regional activities. It relies very much on the organisational experience and knowledge of the Secretaries in each country.

CONLACTRAHO benefitted from the fact that the majority of countries in Latin America share one language, Spanish. For the other regional bodies and the new global Federation, the wide number of languages used is a major difficulty. However, Vicky Kanyoka noted that non-English-speaking delegates at this Congress were picking up English-language materials, clearly aiming to get them translated so as to learn from others' experiences. The IDWN website is proving to be a very useful resource,

and Vicky said that just the previous day four new applications for membership had been received.

As the IDWN Chairperson Myrtle Witbooi added, to build strong regional and global federations, we need strong local

and national organisations. In her organisation in South Africa, they recently changed tactics. Instead of giving out a lot of information, they have been saying to workers that, if they have a problem at work or want to know more about SADSAWU, they should call or visit the union. This has brought thousands of new members to the union.

Other ideas for strengthening cross-border collaboration included:

- celebrating 16 June each year as International Domestic Workers' Day (see page 38)
- closer collaboration between Latin America and the Caribbean
- building more exchanges between the Global South and the Global North.





## C189: Ratification Campaign

**Action Plan Q: What are the priorities for the next 2 years, and how should domestic workers' organisations, trade unions and civil society organisations work collaboratively so as to strengthen their actions?**

Led by Amanda Villatoro of the ITUC Latin America Regional Office TUCA

Despite the good progress that is being made in getting governments across the world to ratify C189, there are still many who are resisting, trying to avoid it or moving on it only very slowly.

As Lita Angraini from the Jala-PRT network in Indonesia said, winning the support of the wider trade union movement is needed to keep the pressure on government. But this can prove difficult because many trade unionists are themselves employers of domestic workers.

In Tanzania, by contrast, ratification is anticipated soon and there have already been significant improvements in legal rights for domestic workers. However, there the major problem to be overcome is impunity. The Inspectorate is weak and, even where employers are found to be violating the law, they are rarely punished. This is a widespread experience.

Raimi Sourakatu from the SYNEM union in Bénin said they are emphasising the campaign to get C189 ratified and are in close contact with government officials for this. Yet still very little is changing in domestic workers' situation on the ground.

Nicaragua was the 5th country to ratify, but Delores Roblero of the FUTATSCON/SINTRADOMGRA union there said their slogan from the beginning has been 'Ratification and Implementation!'

The general agreement was that alliances continue to be very important for winning ratification of C189. So is public awareness-raising, whether through vibrant banners on street mobilisations or through the use of social media. After ratification is achieved, enforcement has to become the key focus.



## Implementation and Enforcement of Domestic Workers' Rights

### Action Plan Q: What can and should domestic workers' organisations and trade unions do to monitor law enforcement?

Led by Pia Stalpaert, President, ACV-CSC Service Union, Belgium



Domestic workers are among the most informal and vulnerable workers, historically excluded from legislation. But now that they are gaining legal rights, the next question is: how to make sure the laws are enforced?

Martine Bagnoud from the SIT union in Switzerland explained how 10 years of regulation have improved conditions for domestic workers there. In 2005, in the canton of Geneva, the SIT managed to conclude a tripartite agreement with minimum working conditions (regulation of working time, holidays, occupational health and safety, etc.) and also a mandatory minimum wage. This served as a model for a country-wide minimum wage, which came into force 1 January 2011. If an employer pays below this, the worker has legal support to claim the difference. The unions, led by the biggest union in the country UNIA, also won a 45-hour working week for live-in workers, with the right to extra payment for any additional hours worked.

However, the country depends on migrants, largely from the Philippines, Latin America and Africa, to do this work and those without a work permit are extremely vulnerable. In Geneva, the local authorities have agreed that they are still allowed to join the welfare system and receive benefits without interference from immigration officials. "We believe that no domestic worker is illegal", she said. Elsewhere in the country, though, a domestic worker needs a permit to be registered in the welfare system. The unions are very concerned about this, and are trying to get the Government to protect all those who are currently unprotected. Meanwhile, regulations which allow workplace inspection in companies have not yet been extended to households. The Swiss Government has said it is prepared to ratify C189, though will not change the law to include household inspection.

Belgium is a European country with a functioning industrial relations system. A 'cheque' system operates for domestic workers where they can be registered and entitled to good working conditions. However, there are also many migrant domestic workers without access to this system. The Government promised to ratify C189 two years ago, but has still not done so.

In Uruguay, the 2006 law gives domestic workers rights to the minimum wage, a 44-hour working week for live-in domestic workers, an 8-hour working day with two hours break, and a day off per week. If they work outside of these hours, they should receive overtime pay. The union was also called in by the Government to work together on the C189, and C189 has indeed improved how domestic workers at the bottom of society are viewed. A new kind of respect has been gained. However, there is still a long way to go. Domestic workers do not have paid time off for union activities, and so they must rely on scheduling meetings after working hours. The union is not wealthy and cannot pay its officials.



Bolivia is another country that has ratified C189.

**Casimira Rodriguez**, a domestic worker activist for over 30 years there, said it is taking a long time for the Minister of Labour to revise the

country's laws accordingly, though, particularly relating to health insurance. However, there is an office that takes claims from domestic workers and helps them with problems.

The workshop concluded that getting those laws and regulations which do exist actually implemented is very difficult. However, with energy and diplomacy, progress can be made.

## Collective Bargaining and Collective Actions

### Action Plan Q: What are the strategies and models that make collective bargaining possible? What alternative approaches exist?

Led by Jill Shenker, Field Director of the NDWA, USA, and IDWN Regional Coordinator for North America

Participants were invited to talk about some of their approaches to collective bargaining between domestic workers and employers. This is known to be difficult because, unlike for other sectors, the employers of domestic workers are numerous, individual householders. However, in some countries there are imaginative ways of making progress, particularly where there are associations of householders with whom workers and governments can have a dialogue and negotiate.

In Uruguay, there is an official tripartite (three party) system involving the Ministry of Labour, the League of Householders and Consumers, and the union SUTD. As the Minister mentioned in his speech (see page 11), there is a system for checking that employers are respecting the laws, and union delegates at the Congress said that they too sometimes pay visits to individual employers.

A delegate from Bolivia said that a League of Housewives has recently been founded there. However, they are proving to be resistant about being liable for certain aspects such as the health conditions of their workers, especially for pre- and post-natal care when the worker gives birth.

A delegate from the ACV-CSC union federation in Belgium described the system that operates there. The Government now runs a system where it pays domestic workers a wage, in addition to what the employers pay. It subsidises labour as part of its policy to decrease unemployment. It even includes migrant domestic workers in this system.

The group then shared victories and accomplishments as a result of collective action. Some related how large mobilisations of workers on the streets helped to win the C189 and are now bringing progress for its ratification. A delegate from Indonesia described the multiple strategies that domestic workers there have used to increase visibility for their rights, including sit-ins outside Parliament to bring pressure on Government as well as to raise their profile with the unions and the general public.

Jill Shenker spoke about some of the many initiatives of the National Domestic Workers' Alliance (NDWA) in the USA. She gave an example from the city of Sacramento, California, where they held a party for children who painted large fabric panels with images and words that expressed their love for their nannies. These were sewn together to create a banner carried at a Children's March to add to the pressure for a Domestic Worker Bill of Rights there.

Annual Domestic Workers' Days each year are a good way of promoting the issues. International Domestic Workers' Day is on June 16, celebrating the day on which the C189 was won.





## Social Protection for Domestic Workers

### Action Plan Q: Which are the key social protections that domestic workers need, and what are the best strategies to achieve them?

Led by Ivonne Macassi of the Flora Tristan women's centre, Peru

Those at this workshop were asked to share their experiences on how to expand social protection to cover domestic workers. Social protection is a fundamental right for everybody. It implies medical care and income guarantee, in particular old age pension, and it should cover such situations as unemployment, illness, disability, work-related accidents or illnesses, maternity, or the loss of the principal income earner of the family.

However, almost 30% of domestic workers worldwide are still excluded from national labour legislation and, due to the informality of their employment, many more are lacking social security coverage. There was a special focus on experiences from Chile and France, which inspired a wider discussion.

In Chile, the social security scheme was revised and simplified in 2008. It includes domestic workers on the same basis as all other wage workers and covers health, pension, maternity, sick leave, and accidents at work. However, domestic workers are not covered by unemployment schemes. Compliance is slightly lower than 50%, but most domestic workers working full time are covered.

In France, the 'service check' system was introduced in 2006 to facilitate and promote the registration of domestic work, and provide domestic workers with social security coverage and a guaranteed minimum wage. Since the introduction of this system, the proportion of domestic workers officially registered has increased to almost 80%.

Experience shows that simplified administrative procedures, for both employers and employees, increase domestic workers' access to social protection schemes. It should be as much in the interest of the employers as the workers to get this.

The participants listed the priority actions for the IDWF and member organisations around the world:

- Documenting and sharing about good practice on social protection
- Research on the specific social protection needs of domestic workers
- Lobbying/campaigning strategies towards governments and employers for social protection, also using ILO Conventions, Recommendations and other documents on the 'social protection floor'
- Awareness-raising through media/electronic communications about what social protection exists/is possible, how to win it, and how to get it implemented
- Education and training for domestic workers' organisations



## Our New Federation is Born

As well as all the consultation of IDWN member organisations in the run up to the Congress and circulation of drafts, etc., the day before the Congress started, there were preparatory workshops for each region. Here the delegates worked through the draft Constitution, and decided who to nominate for their own regional representatives on the Executive Committee.

Such preparations meant that the documents and the election procedures were well understood and 'owned' by the delegates before the main proceedings got going. Naturally, differences of language, organising traditions and culture meant that there were contested ideas and also different interpretations. However, the good preparations paid off.

First, the Congress was asked to accept the proposed Constitution. Then it was time to elect the new Executive Committee and Office Bearers. This was openly, democratically and smoothly run. Finally, the Five-Year Action Plan was adopted (see page 38).

With that, a new global union organisation was founded for millions of workers who had been largely been ignored.

What is more, it is the first global union organisation to be formed by women from the poorest sections of society, and the first one with an all-women elected leadership.







## IDWF Constitution

The Constitution for the new organisation had been drafted by a special IDWN Drafting Committee in consultation with IDWN affiliates (see page 6).

Then at the Congress there was opportunity to make any last amendments. One key change, requested by the Spanish language speakers, was to use the term 'domestic/household' workers rather than simply 'domestic'. Some delegates wanted a stronger commitment in the Preamble to promoting the rights of migrant domestic workers. Others asked for a rule that with any new application for membership there should be consultation with existing member organisations in that country. Also, it was proposed to have two representatives on the Executive Committee from each region, with one as the 'alternate' member.

With those changes accepted, the new IDWF Constitution was ready, and it was unanimously adopted by the Congress by a show of voting cards. The hall immediately broke out into clapping and cheering, with cries of "¡Si Se Puede!" and singing of 'Solidarity Forever'.

The IDWF Constitution can be found at:

<http://idwfed.org/about.php?id=58>

The policies for running the Congress – Standing Orders, Credentials Committee Terms of Reference, and Election Procedures – can be found at:

<http://idwfed.org/news.php?id=414>



## Elections for IDWF Executive Committee and Office Bearers

The process for electing the first Executive Committee and Office Bearers of the IDWF was overseen by an Elections Committee comprising:

- Albert Njeru, General Secretary of the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Education Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA),
- Amanda Villatorro of the ITUC Latin America Regional Office, and
- Karin Pape IDWN Regional Coordinator for Europe.

### IDWF Executive Committee

Each world region had been asked to nominate their candidates, and all were accepted by a show of voting cards.

REGION	TITULAR	ALTERNATE
Caribbean	Shirley Pryce Jamaica Household Workers' Association Jamaica	Gillian Atwell National Union of Domestic Employees Trinidad & Tobago
North America	Juanita Flores National Domestic Workers' Alliance USA	Antonia Peña National Domestic Workers' Alliance USA
Europe	Guiliana Mesina FILCAMS Italy	Anacoreta de los Reyes FNV-Bondgenoten Netherlands
Asia	Phobsuk Gasing Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers' Unions Hong Kong	Sonu Danuwar Nepalese Independent Domestic Workers Union Nepal
Africa	Myrtle Witbooi South African Domestic and Allied Workers' Union South Africa	Asmaou Bah SYNTRAD Guinea
Latin America	Ernestina Ochoa I PROFOTH Peru	Elena Pérez Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar (ATH) Dominican Republic

### Office Bearers:

- **President: Myrtle Witbooi**, who had been the IDWN Chairperson, was elected unopposed.
- **Vice-President: Ernestina Ochoa**. There were two nominations: Ernestina and Juanita Flores. So the Congress went through a transparent election process, where IDWF member organisations voted in a secret ballot. Ernestina got 46 votes and Juanita got 34.
- **General Secretary: Elizabeth Tang**, who was the IDWN International Coordinator, was also elected unopposed.

### Secretariat:

This comprises the General Secretary leading a team of Regional Coordinators (see also pages 17 – 19) and staff.



## IDWF 5-Year Action Plan, 2014-2018

The key elements of the 5-Year Action Plan adopted at the IDWF Congress are:

### Strategic Goal

To develop the capacity of the IDWF to defend and advance the rights and protection of its members in particular, and all domestic workers in general.

### Objectives

- Develop the IDWF's ability to represent its members at national, regional and global levels
- Increase domestic workers' participation in collective actions that will help bring changes in the social, economic, political and cultural landscape, strengthen domestic workers' organisations, and advance their rights and interests.
- Strengthen the IDWF organisational structures and financial sustainability

### Program Plan

#### International Work

- Strengthen cooperation with the IUF at all levels, through joint membership and a special structure within the IUF
- Maintain strong partnership with the ITUC and promote membership of IDWF affiliates to their national union centres to achieve ratification of C189 and improved national laws
- Actively participate in ILO processes and activities
- Develop links with informal workers' organisations in other sectors, and build alliances with solidarity support organisations

#### Organisational Formation and Development

- Conduct strategic development planning for affiliates in 2014-2015, on organising of members, membership dues systems, leadership development, etc.
- Support affiliates to organise and include migrant domestic workers in their organisations
- Identify and make contact with domestic workers' organisations not yet in the IDWF, particularly in the Middle East, North Africa, South Pacific, North America, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- Develop regional structures in the IDWF
- Help to strengthen and expand CONLACTRAHO and the Caribbean domestic workers' networks as strategic partners of the IDWF
- Increase members' participation in joint activities on International Women's Day 8 March, International Labour Day 1 May, International Domestic Workers' Day 16 June and 30 March in Latin America, and International Migrants Day 18 December.



## Strategic Campaigns and Actions

In collaboration with trade unions, civil society organisations and political allies:

- For the ratification of ILO Conventions, targeting C189, C87, C97 and C98; and for national laws to improve and protect domestic workers' rights
- Against abusive employment agencies and excessive recruitment fees
- For the elimination of exploitation of child domestic workers
- For basic labour rights and social protection of domestic workers
- For collective bargaining forums and regular negotiations

## Education and Research

- Model contracts and collective bargaining agreement standards
- Alternative models of collective bargaining and actions
- Homecare industry trends and organising of homecare workers
- Migrant domestic workers

## Governance, Administration and Communications

- Establish the office of the Secretariat
- Publish the IDWF e-newsletter monthly, maintain the IDWF website and Facebook, and expand the e-group and Twitter
- Establish the IDWF financial system, including bank accounts and standard policies
- Generate resources by expanding networks and relationships with support organisations
- Conduct Executive Committee meetings regularly, with face-to-face meetings at least once a year and teleconferences at least twice in between
- Convene the second Congress in 2018 at the latest

## For more information

The full IDWF 5-Year Action Plan can be found at:

<http://www.idwfed.org/files/files/publication/IDWN%205-years%20Action%20Plan-Eng.pdf>



“The world doesn't yet realise how important our work is to the economy. But we are showing that we have the power to change such attitudes. Respect for ourselves and each other will bring others to respect us.”

Juanita Flores of the National Domestic Workers' Alliance (NDWA), USA

## Closing Speeches

As the Congress drew to an end, **Dan Gallin of the Global Labour Institute and former General Secretary of the IUF** gave a moving speech. Dan has provided us with huge support over these years, and now he summed up the significance of what domestic workers had achieved, and its implications for the future of the whole trade union movement:

*“You have created your own road by walking... You have created a federation of workers who until recently were not even perceived as workers. You have demonstrated that there is no such thing as ‘unorganisable’ workers.*

*Under the impact of new forms of capitalism, the working class has changed and is still changing. It has become fragmented, unsure of its identity. The trade union movement has not kept up with these changes. Its response has been confused and weak.*

*Our task is now to restore the identity of all working people as a class, and to restore the trade union movement as the instrument of emancipation. You are part of this process, you are part of the renewal of the trade union movement.”*

**The full speech is at:**

<http://www.idwn.info/news.php?id=397>



As the Congress drew to a close, we were honoured to have the **President of Uruguay, José Mujica**, give the final address. Commonly known as ‘Pepe’, he is a former guerrilla fighter and was a political prisoner for 14 years under the military dictatorship. These days he lives on his wife’s farm, and donates some 90% of his presidential salary to charities that benefit the poor. He told us:

*“We shouldn’t get tired of fighting because, in the end, only those who stop fighting are defeated. This does not mean that we have the solution right around the corner just because we fight. Nobody will give us anything. We have to win it.*

*And the poor, even more so poor workers, have no other tool than to get together, be united, and learn that struggles are collective.*

*And, to be collective, we have to learn to bear with each other. Sometimes we have differences. Sometimes we have comings and goings. But if you are alone, you don’t have the strength.”*

**The full version of President José Mujica’s speech can be found at:**

<http://idwfed.org/news.php?id=400>

## 3. Activities since Congress

Since the IDWF Congress, we have been getting on with the 5-Year Action Plan agreed there (see page 38), building the Federation and supporting our member organisations to grow in number and in strength.

In 2014-2015, our key activities are:

### Organisation Formation and Development

- Establish the Secretariat in Hong Kong
- Launch the 'Uniting For Domestic Workers Rights' online knowledge network
- Conduct strategic development s among our affiliates:
  - Support the organising of migrant domestic workers in India, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand, Zimbabwe and Argentina
  - Hold capacity-building and gender training activities, focusing on communication and organising skills with our affiliates, e.g. in Nepal, Cambodia, Hong Kong/China, Mexico, Colombia, Kenya, Tanzania and Guinea
  - Produce materials for education, training and awareness-raising: a domestic workers' training manual, leaflets, video clips, digital stories, etc.

### Strategic Campaigns and Advocacy for Domestic Workers Rights

- For the ratification of C189 in Tanzania, Benin, Indonesia, Chile, Brazil, Peru, Mexico and Jamaica
- For the enactment of domestic workers policies/legislations in countries, particularly India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Peru, Brazil and Chile
- Against excessive recruitment fees for Indonesian migrant domestic workers
- For legal reform to protect migrant domestic workers in the Arabic and GCC countries
- Participate in the ILO processes on 'Trafficking and Forced Labour' and 'Transitioning from Informal to Formal Economy': provide inputs to the ILO reports and participate at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva in 2014
- Coordinate international action day activities on 30 March, 1 May, 16 June and 18 December





## Who was at the IDWF Founding Congress

### ARGENTINA

*Union Personal Auxiliar De Casas Particulares (UPACP)*

Lorenza Benítez

Juana del Carmen Britez

### BANGLADESH

*National Domestic Women Workers Union (NDWWU)*

Murshida Akter

Houssain Abul

### BELGIUM

*CSC Alimentation et Services*

Christel Van de Gucht

Kinberly Flaming

Pia Stalpaert

Kartrien Boudrez

### BENIN

*Syndicat National des Employés d'Hotels et de Maison du Benin (SYNEHM)*

Raimi Sourakatou Fataou Assika Olabiyi

Benon Taibatou

### BURKINA FASO

*Syndicat National des Employés et Gens de Maison du Burkina Faso (SYNEMAGB)*

Rasmene Nana

Josephine Zongo

### CAMBODIA

*Cambodia Domestic Workers Network (CDWN)*

Von Samphous

Chum Chamm

### COLOMBIA

*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadoras del Servicio Doméstico (SINTRASEDOM)*

Claudia Martínez Medina

Yenny del Carmen Hurtado

### COSTA RICA

*Asociación de Trabajadoras Domésticas (ASTRADOMES)*

María del Carmen Cruz Martínez

### REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA

*Asociación de Trabajadoras del hogar de Republica Dominicana (ATH)*

Elena Andrea Pérez Garcia

*Unión Nacional Fenamutra Trabajadoras del Hogar (UNFETRAH)*

Ruth Esther Díaz Medrano

Lilliam Marrero

Milagros Santana

### GHANA

*Domestic Services Workers' Union (DSWU)*

Esther Kosi

Eva Attakpah

### GUINEA

*Syndicat National des Travailleurs et Travailleuses Domestiques de Guinee (SYNTRAD)*

Asmaou Bah

Djibril Wague

### HONG KONG

*Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions (FADWU)*

Grace Aquino Estrada

Phobsuk Gasing

### INDIA

*Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)*

Nalini Nayak

Ushakumari Sarada

*National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM),*

*National Domestic Workers Trade Unions Federation (NDWTUF),*

India

Jeanne Devos

### INDONESIA

*Tunas Mulia Domestic Workers Union*

Yuli Maheni

Sayuti

### ITALIA

*Federazione italiana lavoratori*

*commercio, albergo, mensa e servizi CGIL (FILCAMS-CGIL)*

Gabriele Guglielmi

### JAMAICA

*Jamaican Household Workers Union (JHWA)*

Shirley Price

Jennifer Mitchell

Norma Wollery

### KENYA

*Kenya Union of Domestic, Education Institutions & Hospital Workers (KUDHEIHA)*

Albert Njeru Obed

Elizabeth Nduku Masamba

### MALAWI

*Commercial, Industrial & Allied Workers Union (CIAWU)*

Gertrude Kandoje

Viwemi Benson Mzumara

### MÉXICO

*Centro de Apoyo y Capacitación Para Empleadas del Hogar (CACEH)*

Ana Laura Aquino Gaspar

*Red de Mujeres Empleadas del Hogar (RMEHO)*

Petra Hermillo Martínez

### MOZAMBIQUE

*Sindicato Nacional dos Empregados Domésticos (SINED)*

Maria Joaquim

Rosa Bambamba

### NEPAL

*Home Workers Trade Union of Nepal (HUN)*

Sonu Danuwar

Gyanu Kshetri

### NICARAGUA

*Sindicato de Trabajadoras Domésticas del departamento de Granada (SINTRADOMGRA-FUTATSCON)*

Dolores Roblero

## **PERÚ**

*Centro de Capacitacion para las Trabajadoras del Hogar (CCTH)*

Julia Rivera de Córdoba

Paulina Luza Ocsa

*Federación Trabajadores y Trabajadoras del Hogar*

Remunerador del Perú (FENTRAHOGARP)

Adelina Díaz Urairte

Marleny Robles Lazo

*Instituto de Promocion y Formacion de Trabajadoras del Hogar (IPROFOTH)*

Clementina Serrano Mejico

María de los Ángeles Ochoa Lujan

Ernestina Ochoa Lujan

*Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar de la*

*Región Lima (SINTTRAHOL)*

Obdulia Guevara Neyra

*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadoras del Hogar del Peru*

*(SINTRAHOGARP)*

Elda Faustino Calixto

María Cecilia Soto Jara

Juana S. Muñoz

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

*South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union*

*(SADSAWU)*

Hester Stephens

Myrtle Witbooi

## **SOUTH KOREA**

*National House Managers Cooperative (NHCM)*

Kang Seokkeum

Jeana Kim (interpreter)

## **SRI LANKA**

*Domestic Workers Union (DWU)*

S. Anandi Devecndrakumari

Evangelyn Yogamany (interpreter)

## **SWITZERLAND**

*SIT - UNIA*

Martine Bagnoud

## **TANZANIA**

*Conservation, Hotels, Domestic, Social Services and Consultancy*

*Workers Union (CHODAWU)*

Saidi Wamba

Anna Lawrence Bundala

## **THAILAND**

*Network of Thai Domestic Workers*

Wantha Wilailak

Poonsap Tulaphan

## **TOGO**

*Syndicat des Travailleurs des Entreprises de Boissons (SYNTEB)*

Sogbadji Afi Akouete

## **TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**

*National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE)*

Gillian Atwell

Althea Coombs-Rivas

Ida Le Blanc

## **UGANDA**

*Uganda Hotels, Food, Tourism and Allied Workers' Union (UHFTAWU)*

Assumpta Namaganda

Stephen Mugole

## **UNITED STATES**

*National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)*

Antonia Peña

Ai-jen Poo

Juanita Flores

Jill Shenker

## **ZAMBIA**

*United House and Domestic Workers Union (UDHWUZ)*

Joyce Mwale Phiri

Petronella Phiri

## **ZIMBABWE**

*Zimbabwe Domestic and Allied Workers Union (ZDAWU)*

Toindepi Dhure

## **IDWN Steering Committee**

Myrtle Witbooi (South Africa)

Ernestina Ochoa Lujan (Peru)

Sonu Danuwar (Nepal)

Ida Le Blanc (Trinidad&Tobago)

Juanita Flores (USA)

Sayuti (Indonesia)

## **IDWN Coordinators**

Elizabeth Tang (Hong Kong)

Marcelina Bautista (Mexico)

Vicky Kanyoka (Tanzania)

Fish Ip (Hong Kong)

Jill Shenker (United States)

Karin Pape (Germany)



## GUESTS

ARGENTINA – Federación Argentina Unión Personal de Panadería y Afines de la República Argentina (FAUPPA),  
Patricia Alonso

BRAZIL – Federação Nacional dos Trabalhadores Domésticos or National Federation of Domestic Workers (FENATRAD)  
Maria Noelí Dos Santos

BRAZIL – Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores nas Indústrias de Alimentação e Afins (CNTA),  
Neuza Barbosa de Lima  
Maria Goreth Aragao  
Rosecleia de Castro

CHILE - Sindicato de Trabajadoras de Casa Particular (SINTRACAP)  
Ruth Solar Morenos

CHILE – Sindicato Único Nacional de Trabajadoras de Casa Particular (SINDUTCAP)  
Emilia Solis

COLOMBIA – Asociación Unión de Trabajadoras del Hogar Remuneradas (UTRAHOGAR)  
Luz Dary Camayo

FRANCE – Fédération générale des travailleurs de l'agriculture, de l'alimentation, des tabacs et allumettes et des services annexes - Force Ouvrière (FGAT-FO),  
Denis Raguet  
Véronique Delaitre  
Monique Potelet

INDONESIA – Action Committee for Protectino of Domestic Workers and Migrant Workers (KAPPRT/BM)  
Lita Anggraini

LEBANON – Domestic Workers Committee, National Federation of Workers' and Employees' Unions in Lebanon (FENASOL)  
Gemma Calingayan Justo

NICARAGUA – Federación Unitaria de Trabajadores de la Alimentación, Agroindustria, Turismo, Servicio, Comercio y Conexos de Nicaragua (FUTATSCON),  
Marcial Cabrera

PARAGUAY – Asociación del Servicio Doméstico de Paraguay (AESD)  
Marciana Santander Martinez  
Librada Marcia

PERU – Floro Tristan  
Ivonne Macassi

REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA – Confederación Nacional de Unidad Sindical de República Dominicana (CNUS)  
Candida Castillo

## URUGUAY

*Government of Uruguay*

José Mujica, President  
Juan Andrés Roballo, Inspección Laboral  
Alejandra Pico, Negociación Colectiva  
Walter Miglionico, Salud y Seguridad  
Ariel Ferrari, Seguridad Social

*Sindicato Único de Trabajadoras Domésticas (SUTD)*

Yaneth Mazzoleni  
Daniela Marín  
Silvana Danovich  
Alejandra Magallanes  
Lucía Gandara  
Viviana Barro  
Graciela Espinosa  
María Cristina Silveira  
Adela Sosa  
Raquel Santillán  
Marta Morales  
Soledad Britos  
Gladis Urusmendi  
Any Naimaier  
Isabel Irihoyen  
Laura Rivero  
Virginia Rivero  
María Cristina Sandoval  
Cristina Pini  
Rosa Acosta  
Zuly Montero  
Mirta Ustra  
Selva Benítez  
Lourdes Medina  
Eva Godin  
María Lourdes Sánchez  
Isabel Benítez  
Estela de los Reyes  
Silvia Pereira  
Debora Patricia De Souza  
Mirian Da Rosa  
Nelli Fernández  
Mirta Cáceres

*Association of Vendors of Special Fairs (AFFE)*

Fernando Gallardo

**Confederación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Trabajadoras del Hogar (CONLACTRAHO)**

Casimira Rodríguez (Bolivia)  
María del Carmen Cruz Martínez (Costa Rica)

**International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF/UITA)**

*IUF/UITA International Secretariat*  
Barbro Budin  
Graciela Mondillo

*IUF/UITA LATIN AMERICA Regional Secretariat*

Patricia Iglesias  
María Carcamo  
Daniel García  
Germán González  
Gustavo Villarreal

**Global Labour Institute (GLI)**

Dan Gallin

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### **Uniting for Domestic Workers' Rights**

This is an online Knowledge Network that is in development. Please keep an eye open for its launch.





International Domestic Workers Network  
Founding Congress

Uruguay, 26-28 October 2013



[www.idwfed.org](http://www.idwfed.org)

