

## **Minutes GLU Annual Council Meeting, Johannesburg 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2007**

The meeting was attended by 23 participants (Annex I) representing the Global Unions, the ITUC, the Universities of Campinas, Witwatersrand, Kassel and Berlin, the CUT COSATU, the DGB, the Observatorio Social, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the ILO and the students from the programs in Germany and South Africa.

### **1 GLU Programs**

#### ***1.1 Implementation South Africa***

The Masters Programme was successfully launched at the University of Witwatersrand in January 2007 with a comparatively small number of students. The small number makes it easier to start the course, develop the methodology further and give intensive support to the students. Students are from Brazil, Poland, Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The students gave feedback of their assessment of the course. They welcomed the very high level of teaching and the excellent support from the programme organisers. There had been some technical problems in the beginning and the students also mentioned that it would be nice to have an opportunity for internships outside of South Africa. However it was discussed that the first priority for determining the internship is the topic of the research and that for the current year there would probably not be the possibility for an internship in other regions.

Prof. Edward Webster from the University of Witwatersrand outlined how he sees the role of the programme in supporting labour. While business has plenty of international MBA programs labour does normally not have equivalent program opportunities at universities. The GLU should help to develop for labour international MLA to provide high level qualification and learning opportunities for labour. This is crucial if labour wants to influence the global discourse and respond to the challenges of globalisation.

The challenge of such a programme is to meet labour's needs for alternative ideas and thinking as well as the academic standards of a university. These two objectives are of equal importance and mutually interdependent. An academically « soft » programme would not help to provide labour representatives with the skills level they

need and are looking for and would also lack the academic recognition that is required for sustainability within the university. A mainstream curriculum would fail to address the need for labour to base policy alternatives on solid data and sound reasoning.

To meet the academic criteria is difficult for many students from the labour movement. To address this challenge the university in cooperation with COSATU is planning to develop a complementary bridging programme that will provide students with a certificate that will assist with entrance requirements to the MA. This programme will be offered part-time and will equip South African trade unionists with the skills and the formal recognition to enter in a full masters programme.

The GLU conference played a positive role in giving visibility and recognition to the GLU in South Africa. The University will consult a number of Journals to publish the most interesting contributions of the Conference in a special edition in a recognized journal.

## **1.2 *Implementation Germany***

In Germany the third group of students is currently finishing their internships and more than 80 trade unionists applied for the upcoming course in September 2007. A number of changes have been undertaken during the years to meet students' proposals for change. In particular the cooperation with the trade unions has been intensified and a longer introduction programme has been developed to help students to "get up to speed" at the beginning and to provide assistance in language training. During the last three years the course on 'trade unions and globalisation' had been delivered by Cardiff University. In the coming year this will be done by the colleagues from the University of Witwatersrand in cooperation with Prof. Wolfgang Schröder a newly appointed Professor at Kassel University, who has been the head of the social policy department of the IG Metall before.

The two German Universities are currently exploring the possibility to offer a shorter (four month) postgraduate programme for trade unionists reflecting the fact that it is often difficult for trade unionists to leave their jobs for an entire year. This programme will be developed further in conjunction with the existing Master programme.

### **1.3 Program launch Brazil**

The University of Campinas has in cooperation with the Observatorio Social and the CUT developed a Master Programme (Annex II) that will be launched in 2008. The full description of the course is attached. The colleagues are planning to start with a group of 10 students in 2008. They will in particular target students from Latin America but it will be important to include also a number of students from other parts of the world to maintain the global character.

### **1.4 Program launch India**

Colleagues from the German and South African Universities, the ILO and the FES had undertaken preliminary consultation in India to identify a potential GLU Asian partner. The Tata Institute of Social Studies (TISS), a deemed university in Mumbai is keen to cooperate with the GLU and also Indian trade unions expressed interest in preliminary consultation. Unfortunately the representatives of the TISS had to cancel their participation at the GLU conference, at short notice, and could not present the programme at the Council meeting. It was decided to explore the potential for cooperation further and to invite the colleagues to the GLU Summer School in Kassel to have further discussions. The TISS is planning to start a course on Labour and Globalisation already in September 2007. This will not yet be a course within the GLU network as it was felt that more contacts and consultations are required before entering in a partnership. A course description of the designed programme is attached. (Annex III)

### **1.5 Program launch Canada**

McMaster University is exploring the possibility of launching a master programme on "labour and globalisation". Unfortunately Prof. Charlotte Yates could not attend the conference due to teaching obligations and more detailed information was not available at the council meeting.

### **1.6 GLU Summer School September 2007**

Nearly all students who finished the programme in the last years returned to their trade unions, are active in the labour movement in another capacity or are continuing their research work. The Universities have mobilised resources for the first GLU summer school in 2007 to strengthen the Alumni-Network of the GLU. It will also be used to initiate a joint research project on trade union representation in small and micro enterprises. Edward Webster from the University of Witwatersrand will supervise this comparative research project that will be undertaken in cooperation with the ILO and the GLU.

### **2 Memorandum of Understanding**

The Text of the Memorandum of Understanding (Annex IV) was accepted by all participants as a good proposal. However it was felt premature to sign an agreement that would include the Indian partners as some network partners did not have the possibility of personal contact and direct discussion. It was therefore agreed to sign the memorandum of understanding at a later stage, when more cooperation through faculty exchange and the GLU summer school has been established also with the Indian colleagues.

### **3 Topic, Venue and dates of GLU conference and GLU annual council meeting 2008**

It was agreed that the GLU conference in 2008 will take place in Brazil from the 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> of April. The theme of the conference will focus on development strategies of developing countries and the role of trade unions as social movements to influence these strategies. A special focus will be on the role of trade unions in dealing with multinational companies and supply chains in this context. The colleagues from Brazil will circulate a draft call for papers in the coming weeks.

The meeting reflected on the experience of the conference in Johannesburg and made a number of suggestions to focus the conference more directly on trade union needs. There should be fewer papers presented and more room for discussions. The papers themselves should be more strategic and include a section on policy ideas. The conference should have at least one afternoon to allow for strategic discussions on the way forward.

#### **4 Election of the Steering Committee**

Election of Steering Committee

The following persons were confirmed as members of the International Steering Committee:

Anthony Dietrich	COSATU
Dieter Eich	DGB
Bob Harris	Global Unions
Frank Hoffer	ILO
Rudolf Traub-Merz	Friedrich Ebert Foundation
Mariano Laplane	University of Campinas
Christoph Scherrer	University of Kassel
Edward Webster	University of the Witwatersrand
N.N.	CUT

#### **5 Progress Report 2006 – 2007**

The Progress report was adopted without further discussion