**19th INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE** OEA/Ser.K/XII.19.1

**OF MINISTERS OF LABOR (IACML)** CIDI/TRABAJO/doc.26/15

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REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE PERMANENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE TRADE UNION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (COSATE)

The Permanent Executive Committee of the Trade Union Technical Advisory Council (COSATE) met on December 3, 2015, in Cancún, Mexico, on the occasion of the 19th IACML. The meeting was attended by representatives of various trade union organizations; also present were the OAS, in its capacity as the Technical Secretariat, and the ILO.

1. **Adoption of the agenda**

The Chair of COSATE, Luis Alejandro Pedraza, welcomed the participants and presented the draft agenda, which was duly adopted.

1. **Report of the Chair of COSATE**

The Chair reported on COSATE’s participation in OAS and IACML events since 2013, with particular emphasis on the following: the OAS General Assemblies of 2014 and 2015, at which workers, the private sector, and civil society held discussions with the member states; the two RIAL workshops on formalization and social protection; the working group meetings in Barbados and Cartagena; and the preparatory meetings for the 19th IACML, where the Cancún commitments were negotiated and where, he said, there was broad agreement with the governments on the topics discussed. The Chair said that COSATE’s active participation in the discussions had been acknowledged, including its presentation of proposals, which were endorsed for inclusion in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Cancún. He noted that COSATE continued to receive enormous support from the CSA, ILO, and the OAS, and that over this period it had continued to call for a new model of development based on the precepts of the Development Platform of the Americas.

1. **Address by the Technical Secretariat**

María Claudia Camacho, Head of the Employment and Labor Section of the OAS Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, congratulated COSATE on its participation at the different events held since the 18th IACML, which evidenced coordinated and strategic efforts to position the key topics of trade unionism on the regional agenda, including trade union freedom, collective bargaining, formalization, social protection, sustainable development, and human rights. She thanked ILO and the CSA for working together with the OAS, and she noted that the CSA’s support had been essential in ensuring COSATE’s strategic efforts. She spoke of the 2030 Agenda, specifically Goal 8, which, along with the Declaration and Plan of Action of Cancún, was the new horizon for labor matters. She noted the creation within the OAS of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity, which was a basic tool adopted by the new Secretary General to ensure “More Rights for More People” in the Americas, and she expressed her appreciation for the presence of the head of this new Secretariat at this meeting.

Idelí Salvatti, the OAS Secretary for Access to Rights and Equity, said that the creation of her Secretariat was a great challenge in that it entailed placing the agenda for inclusion on an equal footing with the OAS’s other pillars: development, democracy, and security. She remarked that the region was facing a period of crisis that called for alertness lest the workers be left with the bill, and she said that she would work hand-in-hand with SEDI, as the agency formally responsible for work-related issues within the OAS, because it was impossible to speak about rights without guaranteeing work and trade-union rights. She spoke of the meeting between authorities from the CSA and the OAS Secretary General a few months previously, which had underscored the need for progress on an Inter-American social security agreement for migrants, which she considered a priority topic, together with the CSA’s support for restructuring the OAS’s relationship with civil society. She expressed her thanks for the opportunity to address the meeting and reiterated her commitment toward furthering workers’ rights and the Hemisphere’s social agenda.

The Chair of COSATE agreed on the importance of working for the situation of migrants and their families, which is a central topic for the trade union movement.

María Claudia Camacho noted the study conducted by CISS and the OAS on bilateral and multilateral social security agreements, which was to be presented at the 19th IACML; this study, she said, set important foundations toward an inter-American agreement and she urged the members of COSATE to insist on continued progress with this objective within the IACML.

1. **Composition and election of the Executive Committee of COSATE**

Laerte Teixeira, the CSA’s Secretary for Social Policies, presented a proposal for the composition of the COSATE Executive Committee arising from discussions within the CSA; the proposal was adopted unanimously.

**Chair:** Marta Pujadas, General Confederation of Labor (CGT) of Argentina

**Vice Chairs:**

Luis Alejandro Pedraza, Unitary Workers’ Central (CUT) of Colombia

José Olvera, National Union of Workers (UNT) of Mexico

Cathy Feingold, AFL-CIO of the United States

Antonio Lisboa, Unitary Workers’ Confederation (CUT) of Brazil

Eulogia Familia, National Confederation of Trade Union Unity (CNUS) of the Dominican Republic

Francisco Quijano, Autonomous Central of Salvadoran Workers (CATS)

Víctor Irala Del Castillo, Autonomous Workers’ Central of Peru (CATP)

Luis Alejandro Pedraza congratulated the new Chair, Marta Pujadas, noting that this was the first time that COSATE had had a female chair, and he invited her to address the meeting.

In her first address as Chair, Marta Pujadas thanked COSATE and the CSA for her appointment and the representatives of the OAS for their support. She said that this was a very important forum within the OAS for regional trade unionism and she thanked the fraternity of the CSA centrals and the ILO and reiterated her commitment toward working to defend all workers. She then spoke of the COSATE Declaration to the 19th IACML, which had been drafted over the previous weeks, and she referred briefly to its contents that set down the opinions of the trade union movement regarding priority topics, and she asked the participants at the meeting to share their comments.

The representative of AFL-CIO, Brian Finnegan, underscored the urgency of addressing new hiring methods that imply higher levels of precarity in employment; he spoke in particular of mobile applications (Uber, for example) within what has been called the “on-demand economy” and of the need to continue to work on the relationship between human rights and multinational companies. José Olvera, the representative of UNT Mexico, asked for greater emphasis to be placed on the right of association and for differentiated responsibilities in connection with climate change to be addressed, and he also said that he agreed with the AFL-CIO’s position. Iván González of the CSA highlighted the importance of the trade union movement’s request for the ministers to work toward an inter-American social security agreement.

The Chair thanked the participants for their contributions and said they would be included in the Declaration, which was adopted in those terms. She added that the Declaration was the basis for the presentation she was to give to the ministers and that COSATE was seeking to ensure action, coherence, and a connected structure, in addition to respect for the agreements reached with the governments and employers.

1. **Final thoughts and discussion on the Joint Declaration of COSATE and CEATAL**

The Chair indicated that negotiations were underway for a joint declaration that would highlight the importance of the IACML, the tenth anniversary of the RIAL, the 2030 Agenda, and ILO’s Lima Declaration, in addition to the importance of respecting basic rights in order to ensure sustainable companies, a concept that, in those terms, warranted particular attention. The inclusion of social dialogue and the transition from informality to the formal economy had also been proposed. The willingness to produce a joint declaration existed, but it depended on the result of the negotiations with CEATAL.

Carmen Benítez, a Specialist with ACTRAV/ILO, congratulated the Chair on her appointment and suggested that the references in the COSATE Declaration to the transition from informality to the formal economy refer to Resolution 204, which was accepted by COSATE.

1. **Other business**

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

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