

A strong mobilisation and perspectives to be built

By CGT

On Saturday 6 November, over 100,000 people took to the streets of Glasgow for the Global Day of Action. A multi-faceted demonstration of indigenous peoples and communities, climate justice activists, feminist, anti-racist and gender equality movements, and a large trade union procession marched through the city.

Two days later, the event co-organised by the CGT was held at the Centre for Contemporary Arts, in line with the Forum held last June (the final call and videos of the different sessions are available here).

The debate was introduced by **Sebastian Franco, from the European network Alter Summit**.

He started with a review of the preparation process of the Forum and the resulting call. Sebastian opened the session by recalling that "these discussions are necessary to find common answers to the contradictions produced by the climate crisis that workers and trade unions have to face on a daily basis [...] the challenge is for workers to be driving forces in the fight against climate change".

Patrick Rondeau, from the Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec, opened the debate.

Going back over the process of building a trade union agenda linked to environmental issues, he explained how trade union caravans had been organised throughout the state, reaching out to local unions but also to communities and inhabitants, and climate activists.

Our comrade **Marie Buisson, member of the CGT Executive Committee** and co-leader of the Environment Collective, then took the floor.

Returning to the urgency of the situation, which calls for a rapid and profound change in our modes of production and consumption, she reminded us of the profound injustice of referring everyone to an individual choice between keeping their job and saving the planet.

She then explained: "At the CGT we have therefore chosen to approach the subject from the point of view of work, its meaning and its impact. In concrete terms, this means that, in addition to discussions, analyses and reflections with our trade union partners, associations, etc., we are going to meet employees in their workplaces so that they can explain their work to us and what should be done to improve it.

She concluded by listing concrete actions such as those carried out with the collective Plus Jamais ça at La Chapelle-Darblay, and the demands that the CGT is making to accompany this transition:

- the conditionality of public aid
- the right of employees to intervene in the strategic choices of companies
- the sharing of working time;
- the conditionality of public contracts;
- the setting up of public centres to take essential sectors out of the market logic.

Kim Seok, from the political leadership of the KCTU (South Korea's central labour body), then took the podium.

His first words went to the union's president, Yang Kyeung-soo, who is currently in prison for having called for a strike and mobilisation. He thanked them for the strong international solidarity they had received and reminded them of how essential it was to stand together in the face of these attacks.

He said that "the KCTU's response to the climate crisis is overdue. We have only recently started organised discussions. The KCTU Climate Crisis Response Network, the internal climate crisis unit, will soon go to the special committee. Unlike other KCTU committees, this one will include social movement groups and activists to directly participate, discuss and implement measures together.

Gautam Mody, General Secretary of the NTUI (Indian Trade Union Centre), then began his intervention by reaffirming his solidarity with the Korean comrade.

He then explained the need to deepen some of the Forum's work, particularly those related to globalized supply chains. There is a need to bring together the workers involved, from North to South, in these productions and to build effective responses.

He concluded with these strong words: "The imperialist countries are seeking to recalibrate their global domination and COP 26 is an expression of this. Winning a just ecological transition calls on us, in the trade union movement, to build the strongest solidarity of the working class in our countries and between our countries. We need to strengthen trade union action across our borders, between North and South, to fight and reverse growing inequalities. If unions in the North do not defend the rights of workers in the South against the ferocious attacks of global capital, it will be difficult to fight climate change.

The last word went to comrade **Elimane Diouf, General Secretary of the CSA in Senegal**.

He explained that the conclusions of the June Forum had been presented and discussed within the organisation, which had decided to make them its own.

He recalled that World Bank studies show that climate change could push more than 130 million people into poverty by 2030 and force more than 200 million people to migrate by 2050 and that investing in adaptation measures to help countries and businesses become more resilient is therefore an absolute necessity: "While climate finance has become a more than urgent issue given the budgetary constraints faced by African countries in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic and the looming climate crisis, developed countries have yet to deliver on their pledges to provide one hundred billion dollars each year in the period 2010 to 2020. "

Before concluding: "The challenges of the social and environmental consequences of global warming require strong alliances at national and sectoral level (inter-union with NGO partners) but also at African and international level. This is why our Confederation, the CSA, has been involved for years in building alliances with its partners in order to push the Government to involve us in these issues, but beyond that, to develop initiatives to safeguard our environment.

So we've made a date to continue the work begun in June with two possible deadlines in 2022, the preparation of a global day of action for which the CGT is acting as a relay and the announcement by our Korean comrades of a possible second edition of the Forum, in September 2022 in Seoul. Business to follow!