

Graphical

MOTION 6. About the development of national strategies concerning the WTO-GATS

PRESENTED BY UNI GRAPHICAL SECTORAL COMMITTEE

The sectoral committee of UNI Graphical observed the growing importance the decisions of the international financial organisms have in the daily life of the workers. Globalization is not an abstract concept and the unions have to make specific proposals to confront it. It is clear that even if we strongly support protests and demonstrations, the Unions have to develop strategies that go beyond protest.

In this regard, and in spite of the fact that the last round of these WTO-GATS talks in Doha did not get much publicity, nor political attention, it touched upon important issues, e.g.:

- before the end of June 2002, each WTO member state has to indicate which services should be liberalized in other countries (so-called requests);
- before the end of March 2003, every WTO member state (including the EU) should indicate which sector it wants to liberalize itself;
- for the first time, there will be negotiations about the liberalization of environment services (not only drinking water distribution);
- member states wish to continue to have the right to regulate autonomously.

Many of the talks between governments to exchange ideas and to prepare deals with other countries are about sectors. A nice example was given in a daily in The Netherlands (18th April 2002) concerning the tensions at the top of Vivendi. Behind all the debates about media, Canal Plus and the other Vivendi activities, there was a deep debate about the French understanding of "exception culturelle", which should be defended, since the American government (USA) attacks this "cultural protectionism" of the French government in the WTO talks. This touches directly upon the policy of the media and the newspapers, as well as radio, television and film industry.

Apart from the initiatives we take to get more influence over the multinationals, which are absolutely necessary, there is obviously also a need to tackle these issues with national governments in the interest of pluriformity and consequently labour policy. E.g., is it known what positions national governments take and defend in these talks? Is it known on whose behalf they are discussing? So far, they only seem to represent the interests and the view of the big companies.

The delegates to the UNI Graphical Conference instruct the UNI Graphical Secretariat to encourage the Unions at the national level to:

1. Send letters to the Governments, suggesting that they are not representing any serious partner in these talks if they ignore the labour force,
2. To force the Governments into a debate about liberalization and globalization as far as it seems to damage pluriformity, and consequently freedom of expression and labour force,
3. To follow the sectoral dimension of the WTO-GATS, to provide Unions with relevant information and to establish common parameters with regard to the already mentioned sectoral dimension.

For your consideration.