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SOLIDARITY FUND

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE REPRESENT

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE REPRESENT WE ARE YOUR TRADE UNION!

Trade Union of Forestry, Wood industry and Energy of Republic of Macedonia, based on a complete transformation is profiled as an interesting, autonomous and independent workers' organization in relation to the state and political parties in 1990 with a new program orientation, organizational restructuring and method of work.

In accordance with Trade Union commitments, traditions and conventions and declarations of international organizations, these Union is determined to achieve social and economic rights of workers, freedom and democracy and social justice, respect for human dignity, humanism and solidarity, peace, society in which everyone will be provided with conditions for life worthy of all workers.

BECOME OUR MEMBER - JOIN US!

Workers from Forestry, Wood industry and Energy, are joining this Union on a voluntary base, based on their statement that they want to become members of this Union. In 1990 Union membership was 11000, i.e. 90% of employees were Union members. But with the restructuring of the economy, the large number of redundancies, the number of workers dropped to 8800, so in 1996 the number of members of the Union declined to 7600, and in 2000 to 6000 members. It should be noted that many firms in the sector are in bankruptcy and the membership of these workers is put on hold, i.e. unless companies become functional again, the workers will become our members. The Union is a legal entity, the membership fee is a basic source of revenue and financing activities of the Union. It is 1% of net wages of workers.

The Union is a member of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia. It has its own Statute and programs, and its bodies are: Congress, the Presidency and the Supervisory Board. The Congress is held every five years. The last was held on June 15, 2005, on which new members of the bodies of the Union were elected, as well as new elections in the basic Union organizations in companies.

WE FIGHT FOR:

1. Collective bargaining and Collective Agreements
2. Economic and material safety of membership
3. Improving working conditions, living environment and health of workers
4. OHS and labor rights
5. Securing the protection of Trade Union rights and freedoms
6. Giving legal protection to members through advocacy
7. Trade Union education
8. Joint interests of all members

A Collective Agreement was signed In 1994 for workers in Forestry and Wood industry in Macedonia and in 1997 with the transformation of Forestry in the PE Makedonski Sumi a Collective Agreement on company level was signed for the Forestry workers.

On 6.02.2006, Collective Agreement for workers in the public enterprise PE Makedonski Sumi-Skopje was signed for forest management . Minimum wage of 6500 denars was determined.

7 Collective Agreements were signed of the companies with limited liability.

Membership in International and European Trade Union organizations

The Union of Forestry and Wood industry in 1996 became a member of the World Federation

for Construction, Forestry and Wood industry IFBWW, by which several seminars were organized on issues of interest to our membership. In the next period several activities are being planned in order our Union to contribute to the big family of International Trade Unions.

Trade Union of Forestry, Wood Industry and Energy of the Republic of Macedonia in September 2005 became a member of the European Federation for Forestry and Wood industry EFBWW with observer status.

Trade Union education and training

In the last four years of the Union great efforts have being put on training, education and information of Union members and Union trustees i.e. presidents of Basic Trade Union organizations. Training should be be promoted in order these Unions to respond to the new challenges, among which is the transformation of Forestry.

In the past period, numerous seminars were held, as well as lectures, panel discussions, informational meetings for training of the membership.

The seminars were guided by the Education Center, which includes two projects by the Swiss Government and the American Center of International Solidarity, several seminars of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and especially the project of the Swedish Trade Union of Forestry and forest industry who, was financed by the World Federation for Construction, Forestry and wood industry - BWI.

Through the education project of the Swedish Trade Union of Forestry the following topics were discussed: The history of Union of Sweden and tasks of Trade Unions, workers rights, laws, Collective Agreements and negotiation, recruitment of new members, the European Union and international issues, the structure of Union organizations, joining Trade Unions and social policy of the Union. At these seminars the participants had specific tasks regarding seminar's topic, which should be realized in their working environment.

Other projects for training of the membership were included , such as Labor Law, Collective Agreements, Law on strike, building campaigns for a particular activity, communication networks, leadership, Pension Law, ILO Declarations and conventions, shareholding, redundancy and many other topics that were of interest to our membership.

The seminars were held in companies or at regional level and our membership have shown great interest in the seminars and was trained to exercise their rights and to be successful Trade Unionists.

But the education must continue in the future, especially with the education of young Trade Unionists and women who were less present at seminars in the past period.

On some of the seminars organized by the American Center for International Solidarity the participants received Trainers' Certificates.

In the next five years the Trade Union will pay particular attention to the education of its membership with a special emphasis on the members in order the workers to know and exercise their rights.

Starting from:

- Difficult working conditions in Forestry and Wood industry and psychological and physical tasks of the workers in these industries
- Large number of injuries on the workplace
- Delegates of the First Congress of Trade Union of Workers in Forestry and Wood industry of Macedonia held on 15/06/2005 adopted

OHS RESOLUTION

OHS awareness is changing at a speed that is difficult to follow. We must face the OHS problems in all segments and to promote safe workplaces. The Union of Forestry and Wood industry is accepting information on injuries in the workplace in a difficult manner. The Labor Law and OHS Law are setting out the obligations of employers to protect workers in the workplace.

For this purpose the Union requires from the employers:

- Consistent implementation of the Labor Law and OHS Law, Collective Agreements, and all laws pertaining to this area,
- To provide all workers with protective clothing and footwear on the workplaces which it is mandatory for the purpose of the work process,
- To provide retraining within the enterprise for those workers who are exposed to risk of occupational diseases,
- Compliance with legal obligations and reporting to the Trade Unions in organizations, as well as information of workers about the change of technology, the changing organization of work and training of workers for operations with new technology,
- Authorized OHS employees to get familiar with all risks in the working process, accepting them as collaborators and respecting their legal rights and responsibilities of internal supervision and enforcement of OHS rules,
- While purchase of protective equipment and introducing new materials and technology OHS professionals to be consulted,
- to continuously invest in OHS, to implemented OHS, to train workers on OHS.

We ask from the state:

- Harmonization of the total social work legislation in OHS segments especially regarding current situation, and later regarding adjustment of EU legislation
- To prohibit the import of hazard materials and technology and to tighten supervision over the import of non-standardized equipment
- Adoption of legal norms for continuous building of safety at work
- Greater participation of OHS inspectors,
- employers to be motivated with bigger investments in OHS by tax incentives policy
- To promote safety at work as an activity of social interest,
- To be required by the Government that at least once a year to be discussed on OHS in the Parliament and the Economic and Social Council.

For that purpose, the Trade Union of workers in Forestry and Wood industry of Macedonia will undertake following activities:

- To discuss of the implemented OHS measures at least twice a year on debates
- To find projects for training of workers on OHS
- To establish closer cooperation with IFBWW for obtaining timely information on new findings about European OHS activities
- To organize public meetings on OHS for Union activists and the Macedonian public