



METAL  
WORKERS BRANCH UNION  
**NEZAVISNOST**

# METALPRES

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Newspaper of MWBU „Nezavisnost”



METAL  
WORKERS BRANCH UNION  
**NEZAVISNOST**



TEXTILE, LEATHER AND  
FOOTWEAR BRANCH UNION  
**NEZAVISNOST**

**SAFER AND BETTER WITH TRADE UNION**



*Happy New Year 2008!*







**Dragan Matic, President  
of MWBU „Nezavisnost”**

## NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

*The end of the year, summarizing work results, thinking about non-working days during the holidays and "covering" the days, are usual subject of discussion in companies at the end of December. There are also those viewing tourist programs and those expecting guests from the interior. A great concern that cannot be avoided is what to eat and drink and where one can find money for such a need. Many people won't be able to afford essential things, everything is expensive, pays are low, and in some companies employees are not even paid for their work. Then, what does a holiday and New Year mean to a man? We, who represent workers, must remember just those who are going to expect holidays with a statement that it is worse than last year, that they lost their jobs in 2007, that they didn't get pays although they have worked, children stayed at home, because there was no money for financing studies at the university and they haven't bought any new thing for years to bring it to their homes. One should think about them and our responsibility for such situation.*

*What can we do to improve the situation, what have we omitted and how can we help our people? Let's look at our next of kin, our family, and ask a question: "Can every family be happy and carefree as mine, how to help others to have a nice and pleasant New Year's Eve on December 31, at midnight, with smiles and songs give a hug to their children, kiss their wives and husbands and see a much better 2008 than 2007?"*

*In that smile and embrace we have to recognize MWBU "Nezavisnost", in our contribution to this family happiness and satisfaction. If we accomplish this, our success will be immeasurable and personal content enormous.*

*With that desire and vision we wish to all good people, citizens of Serbia, workers and members of MWBU "Nezavisnost" a happy and successful New Year.*

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## WEBSITE – STILL THE MOSTLY READ UNIONIST SITE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

# THREE NEW RECORDS SET



The Website of MWBU "Nezavisnost" set three new records in November 2007. A new monthly record of visits - 4499 IP addresses was set, daily average visits of 143 IP addresses and record daily visits of 311 IP addresses, were recorded on November 29, 2007. As one IP address (e.g. of some company) can identify not only one, but tens or hundreds of visitors, the number of persons reading our site is much bigger. These results justify the slogan of "the mostly read unionist site in Southeast Europe" and they have not been scored by chance, but are the result of diligent, planned and creative work.

### A GOOD ORGANIZATION, A GOOD SITE

The MWBU "Nezavisnost" makes much effort regarding personnel, finance and program, because it perceives the possibility to be a part of the international trade union family through the site.

Monthly record of visits in November 2007 was 4499 IP addresses and the last record was recorded in July 2007, which was 4272 IP addresses. Daily average record of site visits has been 143 IP addresses, and the last record was 137 IP addresses in July 2007. Finally, a daily record of site visits was 311 visitors (November 29, 2007) and the last record was 255 IP addresses, and was recorded on November 22, 2007.

The Website of MWBU "Nezavisnost" is visited by 77% of men and women colleagues outside Serbia. The word is about colleagues from the following countries: Germany, Russia, U.S.A., Canada, Spain, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Brazil,

Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland, India, Slovakia, Switzerland, Rumania, Dominican Republic, Bulgaria, Turkey, Finland, Ukraine, Taiwan, Moldavia, Argentina ...

### THE SITE AS "EYES AND EARS" OF SERBIAN WORKING CLASS

During last year the Website of MWBU "Nezavisnost" published 402 news in total, from which number 272 news on the main information panel of the site, 80 news on the regional information panel of the site, and 50 news under "Current events", in Serbian and English language.

These results are important and show a great progress, having in mind that the Website of MWBU "Nezavisnost" has been working for only a year and that it started with 500 IP addresses per month.

The current results of the site visits are respectable if compared with other sites in Serbia.

Progressive increase in the number of visits gives good hopes for near and far future of the MWBU "Nezavisnost" site, and a team of creative unionists, serving the site, should be praised for their excellent work.

The website of MWBU "Nezavisnost" shall, among other tasks, continue to carry out its missionary assignment of enlightening. MWBU "Nezavisnost" will make more intense efforts to arouse and animate the apathetic generation of working class in Serbia, which has deeply sunk into the "horned pondweed" (stagnation) of post-socialist and transition apathy. There is a way out, on the condition that they are "not blind and ignorant".

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## TRADE UNION FUSION IN SLOVAKIA AS AN EXAMPLE

**„OZ KOVO“ AND PUBLIC SECTOR**

A positive trend of trade union integration in Slovakia led to a fusion which for we could certainly say that it was unusual. Fusion of Metal Workers Union „OZ KOVO“ and trade union of the public sector employees, are an indicator that trade union integration does not have to be based exclusively on some relatedness or similarity. The reasons for integration are of key importance and without uniting one cannot achieve the effects necessary for trade unions being integrated.

Freely expressed will of members of those two unions with the observance of democratic procedures encourages others that there is no limitation for trade union integration in the sense of their relatedness. Those being integrated are aware of the challenge and aim at strengthening their unions.

The goal of integration is that problems are solved more efficiently and promptly. Minor funds are spent then and a smaller number of people are engaged. All this was stated by the President of Metal Workers Union „OZ KOVO“, Emil Machina. As the capital is constantly enhanced and increased, trade unions should be like this. Everything



should be oriented towards an individual, i.e. a man, regardless of the fact whether he works in a Steel Shop or an office.

## 17TH CONGRESS OF „BIRLESIK METAL“ – IS (DISK)

**SLOGANS AGAINST INJUSTICE**

The 17th Congress of „Birlesik Metal“ took place in Istanbul from December 14 – 16, 2007 attended by many delegates and international guests. The delegates of this Congress, when shouting slogans against injustice and diminishing workers rights, showed their decisiveness to continue the fight for protection of workers rights in Turkey with the intention to use radical actions if necessary.

One should bear in mind that such delegates' acting has a historical background, because during military government

the Confederation of „DISK“ Union was prohibited, abolished, membership dismissed, forced to join a trade union close to military government, all their property was confiscated and the president at that time murdered by people from military government. At the beginning of 90-ies „DISK“ was given permission to start its work again with great efforts and by engaging its members, as well as by international support in spite of all obstacles and obstructions by other trade unions and the state, „Birlesik Metal“ managed to organize itself. Workers began to join this Union. Only in 2007 „Birlesik Metal“ increased its membership by 50%.

The Congress confirmed the old-new leadership at secret elections by a majority of votes.

Adnan Serdaroglu was re-elected president of trade union. The Congress was attended, besides domestic guests, by Marcelo Melentacchi, IMF Secretary General, Peter Scherrer, EMF Secretary General, Klaus Preignitz – IGM, Luc Triangle – CCMB, Christian Pilichovski, CGT-FTM, Blondine Landas – CFDT, as well as colleagues from Greece, Korea, Italy. From the Region, the Congress was attended by Vassil Yanachkov and Renata Petrova, „Metalicy“, Bulgaria, Hasan Abazi, „SPMK“, Kosovo. The delegation of MWBU „Nezavisnost“ was represented by A. Todici, Secretary and Sabrija Musovic, President of Trustee Committee of „FAP Livnica“, Prijepolje.



**„NEZAVISNOST“ UNION ENDED WITH TERMINATION OF PURCHASE AND  
SALES CONTRACT WITH „GLOBAL STEEL“**

# MITAL „KICKED OUT“



If positions and opinions of “Nezavisnost” Union were understood seriously before, “Global Steel” would have been eliminated a long time ago and Magnohrom’s property and machines preserved. Due to tardiness of government institutions, the Indian company that was fully supported by Magnohrom’s Management, sold out, according to plan, all that the generations of Magnohrom’s workers had acquired. The “Nezavisnost” Union will demand that those who committed the plundering should be presented to the public. In order that the outcome for workers would be as better as possible, the Privatization Agency would have to engage a representative for the capital. It is suggested that the moneys from bank guarantee and agreed fines should be delivered to workers, and the remaining part of the money should be invested in production start-up.

**AN OPEN LETTER OF MWBU „NEZAVISNOST“ SENT TO SERBIAN PRIME MINISTER IN  
CONNECTION WITH „GLOBAL STEEL“**

# KOSTUNICA WARNED TOO

The intention of my address and sending a photo, which was published in the newspaper “Press” on December 19, 2007, was to draw your attention to take care whom you meet and photograph with. The people vis-r-vis, representatives of “Global Steel”, showed their “dark side” in such a way that they plundered the factory “Magnohrom” from Kraljevo, neither respected the workers’ rights nor observed the legislation of the Republic of Serbia. Perhaps “Global Steel” won’t take the consequences except that the factory is destroyed and workers ruined. Just try to remember who brought those people to you, who insisted that you receive them, because your meetings with people are scheduled and arranged by your associates. The Indians referred, many times, to political support from Serbian Democratic Party and you personally. Now, when they are caught in a lie and theft, it appears that they have done this with your knowledge”, it is said in the open letter written by D. Matic, President of MWBU “Nezavisnost”.



- “I kindly ask you to reconsider my statements and take steps to remedy the injustice that workers experienced, and you must not allow that your name and office are connected with suspicious persons and companies”, it is said at the end of D. Matic’s letter.





THE PRIVATIZATION AGENCY ACCEPTED THE ARGUMENTS OF TRADE UNION – MINEL ELVO, BEOGRAD

# THE TIME-LIMIT HAS BEEN SET FOR THE BUYER, NAMELY, DECEMBER 21

Trade Unions of "Minel Elvo", Belgrade, together with their headquarters, have proved, for 8 months already, to the Privatization Agency that the buyer Dusimir Zabunovic didn't fulfill any of the undertaken obligations provided for by the Purchase and Sales Contract. In only one year the buyer D. Zabunovic "managed" to ruin completely one of the most successful companies and leave employees without their jobs and pays. Finally, after almost 8 months of presenting arguments and proofs, the Privatization Agency sent a Notification to the buyer D. Zabunovic that if he did not fulfill the obligations provided for by Annex 1. and Purchase and Sales Contract by December 21, 2007, the Contract would be deemed terminated due to non-fulfillment of obligations pursuant to Article 41a. of the Privatization Law. Also, after the inspection carried out, the Privatization Agency informed the Department for Combating Economic Crimes of the actions taken by the buyer.

A question is posed as to why it took the Privatization Agency 8 months to react. In eight months, the buyer took actions that would have unforeseeable consequences for "Minel Elvo" and which would be impossible to remedy in the near future. If trade unions weren't persis-



tent, the Agency would certainly not have reacted in this way and "Minel Elvo" would have experienced the destiny of many enterprises that disappeared from the map of economic entities after privatization was completed.

## ACTION „NIGHT ON THE BARRICADES“

### ACTION NIGHT ON THE BARRICADES



A SINGLE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEND THE NIGHT ON BARRICADES WITH REVOLTED WORKERS OF MINEL ELVO, BELGRADE !!! IT COSTS NOTHING, BUT HELPS A LOT !!!

THE NIGHT SPENT WITH COLLEAGUES OF MINEL ELVO IS THE BEST WAY TO SHOW WORKER SOLIDARITY AND UNITY. THE WORKERS OF MINEL ELVO NEED THIS HELP TODAY, AND ALREADY TOMORROW, BARRICADES MIGHT APPEAR IN YOUR COMPANY TOO. SHOW A BROTHERLY WORKER SOLIDARITY AND COME TO MINEL ELVO.

**CONTACT PHONE:**  
MWBU "NEZAVISNOST": 011/323 52 15

## SOLIDARITY FIRST OF ALL!



The first ones to join the MWBU Action "Night on the barricades" together with workers of "Minel Elvo" were their first neighbors, Committee of "Nezavisnost" Union of "IMT". We wish to remind that 12 workers of "IMT" were given notices of dismissal by the Decision of the former ASNS President, former President of IMT Board of Directors, former minister Dragan Milovanovic, and that after almost 2 years those same workers, supported by the MWBU "Nezavisnost", were returned to

work, indemnified, and they are now working in "IMT". Those 12 rejected workers were the subject of solidarity of all UBU members, and they know best the meaning of brotherly help and support. "One night can change everything" are the words from a song, that could be used in that night, which was sung by colleagues of "IMT" and workers of "Minel Elvo". Congratulations to colleagues of "Nezavisnost" Union of "IMT" and we express our gratitude for the support, time and solidarity they showed.



## XVII SESSION OF THE MWBU PRESIDENCY

# PLAN HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT

This Session of the MWBU Presidency aimed at sublimating the activities of the last quarter of 2007, which has been done through submitting a Report by the MWBU President. The entire Report was evaluated positively, which means that the undertaken obligations were fulfilled and assignments carried out in the set term, in order that MWBU would continue its development and preserve an image of a streamlined, strong and democratic union. A good communication, timely support and preventive acting are the base of MWBU work and activities on all levels.

The representative of the negotiating team for concluding a Branch Collective Agreement for Serbian Metal Industry, A. Todić, informed the members of the Presidency of the negotiations level that was reached. The final version of the Draft Branch C.A. will appear soon and there is a possibility that the Agreement will be signed by the end of 2007.

The MWBU Presidency shall prepare a Work Report, Schedule of Activities for 2008, Draft of the Budget for 2008 for the Session of the Leading Committee, and it will also commence



the activities for preparing the MWBU Congress, as well as the Congress of Uniting of MWBU and BU TLF.

The Youth Section presented a Report on its activities and work, which was adopted, and one should stress that young people, besides their ambitions, performed our and their activities in a professional manner, so they have to be supported and praised. Also, it

should be mentioned that our women colleagues of the Women's Section achieved good work results and they will continue their good work in the future.

The Budget Plan for 2008 shall be presented at the Session of the MWBU Leading Committee and it will be a base for planning and spending the funds in 2008.

## TOPOLA FOUNDRY – „LIVAR” GROUP

# GOOD WORKERS, BUT LOW WAGES

Excellent quality has been reached and outstanding performance shown during the month, which is disproportionate with the pay level. Shift work and working hours are below average in Serbia. Job coefficients have been reduced and overtime work has not been presented in a realistic manner. An economic violation has been committed with such work. The end of calendar year is approaching and payment of vacation allowance for 2007 suspended. Job safety at the workplace is inadequate. The standards set by the Executive Mana-



gement are considerably higher than in Slovenia, but workers' pays within the same company are higher in that country.

The following people were present at the meeting held in Topola Foundry: President of MWBU "Nezavisnost", Dragan Matic, as well as "Nezavisnost" Union's trustees of Topola Foundry – "Livar" Group. All the stated irregularities were presented at this meeting. Union representatives are willing to plead for eliminating those irregularities in such a way as to talk to the Foundry's Management and it has been envisaged that a poll for employees should be conducted, under the title: "Colleagues, let us ask you some questions."



## A LONG PROCESS OF „ZELVOZ“ SMEDEREVO PRIVATIZATION ENDED

## „GRANPET“ - NEW OWNER OF „ZELVOZ“

The Tender Commission in charge of sale of 70% capital of D.O.O. ZELVOZ accepted the Report of the Government Commission responsible for negotiations with the buyer, as well as the Report of representative trade unions on the Social Program content, accepted and signed by „Granpet“, at the Third Ordinary Session held on December 10, 2007. The Commission approved the signing of the Purchase and Sales Contract by unanimous decision. Thereby, a long process of „Zelvoz“ privatization ended and a renowned and powerful company dealing with railway program arrives in Serbia and enters its market.

We wish to remind of the most important buyer's obligations toward employees of „Zelvoz“:

- Investments have been increased to 7,5 million Euro,
- Securing jobs for 1700 employees and regular payment of earnings to employees,
- Payment of contributions for pension and disability insurance for 2005, 2006 and 2007 until the date of signing of the Purchase and Sales Contract,
- Observance of the present Collective Agreement and its bringing in line with the Labor Law of 2005, as well as abiding by the signed Social Program of three representative unions. The most important provision of the Social Program is that the buyer does not announce surplus manpower in the next 3 years,
- Settlement of debt to all creditors and „Zelvoz“ employees by the Factory,



- The buyer obliged himself to solve all problems within the Factory in cooperation with trade unions.

## 150 YEARS OF QUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT ASSURANCE

## ANNIVERSARY OF „ZASTAVA“ FORGING SHOP



Oriented toward the world and Europe, „Zastava“ Forging Shop celebrated 150 years of its existence and operations. The Forging Shop in Kragujevac started its operations, on the basis of the Decree of the Prince Aleksandar Karadordevic, and as they

said - it was one of the biggest Shops on the route from Vienna to Istanbul. Many generations of smelters and blacksmiths had worked in the Forging Shop and experience, as well as high grade product quality remained behind them, but present employees and management knew exactly what they wanted, which way one should go and the vision of the Forging Shop for the next 150 years.

The customer and market are the base for present business operations and success. The competition in the products produced by „Zastava“ Forging Shop is tough, but this isn't the obstacle for successful entering the West European market, and there is also certain interest of Japan. All this was made possible by long lasting management's interceding in favor of personnel reforming and renewal. The result is the possession of the Certificate ISO 9001. The potentials of cold and hot forging, as well

as differential orbital forging are the advantages putting „Zastava“ Forging Shop on the top of the business line and considering it as a serious competitor in the West and the East. New investments in machines, technologies and equipment contribute to a high quality of products coming out from the Shop. Innovations, cooperation with famous institutions and Faculties of Engineering are a part of daily business and operations of this Shop.

In 2005, 80% of the capital of „Zastava“ Forging Shop was bought by „Intertrust“ from Bulgaria, property of Valentin Zaharijev.

- „It is a pleasure to develop successful business of „Zastava“ Forging Shop in the next 150 years“, stressed V. Zaharijev. Many guests, customers, associates, former directors and workers of the Forging Shop foresee a bright future for it.

## SUBOTICA

## ENCOUNTERING A-TEC

The delegation of „Nezavisnost“ Union of „RTB“ Bor, composed of R. Navijalic, D. Jankucic and M. Ursulovici, as well as the Secretary of MWBU „Nezavisnost“, Aleksandar Todoc, visited „ATB Sever“ in Subotica. The visit has been planned with the view of informing about „A-Tec Industries“, which was the winner at the tender for the sale of „RTB“ Bor – Group, and which is, at the same time, the owner of „ATB Sever“.

Among others, the delegation was welcomed by the General Director, Mr. Paul Platzer. In pleasant talks conducted with members of the delegation, Mr. Platzer pre-

sented „A-Tec“ as the company with international reputation with over 30 factories in Europe, Russia, India and Australia. The delegation from Bor and Belgrade had the opportunity, while visiting the plants in „ATB“, to get familiar with the production process, production programs, investments in the equipment and machines, as well as plans for the future.

The socio-economic status of employees, job safety and industrial hygiene are especially significant. In other words, the Employer abides by the reached agreement and tries to have a satisfied worker.



The „Nezavisnost“ Union of „RTB“ is ready and expects with optimism the commencement of negotiations and a successful completion of privatization.





**U. S. STEEL SERBIA, D.O.O.:**

**A POLL CONDUCTED BY MWBU „NEZAVISNOST” AND „STOP MOBBING” ASSOCIATION**

# THE CAMPAIGN – MAY I ASK YOU? HAS STARTED

In U. S. Steel Serbia, d.o.o. the “Nezavisnost” Union of USS conducted a poll called “May I ask you?” as the first trade union in Serbia, on December 7, 2007, whereby the MWBU “Nezavisnost” and “Stop Mobbing” Association initiated a campaign against mobbing called “MAY I ASK YOU?”. After Smederevo the poll will be conducted in other Serbian cities and towns. After processing the questionnaire forms, the “Stop Mobbing” Association and MWBU “Nezavisnost” shall inform the public of the results of this action.

By conducting this poll, the “Nezavisnost” Union of USS wanted to get the answers to the questions posed to employees of U. S. Steel Serbia, d.o.o. relating to work, life and employee status in the Factory. The poll “May I ask you?” was anonymous and was distributed in 3200 copies, and after data processing the results would be announced to the public and certain actions initiated with the view of safeguarding employees’ rights.



**SEMINAR ON MOBBING FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS OF „NEZAVISNOST” USS**

## MOBBING – SLOW „KILLING” OF SOUL

Seminar on mobbing for active members of MWBU “Nezavisnost”, which was organized in U. S. Steel Serbia, d.o.o., showed the existence of mobbing, but one should find a response to this fact. The aim of this seminar was to train

active trade union members to recognize mobbing, take action and act in a preventive manner. Nearly 40 men and women colleagues discussed about this topic with the assistance of Aleksandar Ilic, President of “Stop Mobbing” Association, with which the MWBU has

a signed Protocol on cooperation and mutual support. The cases of mobbing have to be reported and we must encourage employees to do this. Besides unionists of “Nezavisnost” Union, the Seminar was attended by colleagues of USS Job Safety Commission and joint conclusion was that mobbing should be included in the work of USS Job Safety Commission, in order to institutionalize the mobbing area. The result of the seminar was the admission of two workers to membership of “Nezavisnost” Union of USS who will be trained for mobbing area through additional education.

It was stressed that mobbing was a phenomenon that could not, most often, be clearly noticed, because victims are individuals, and there are also cases of group mobbing, where the participants-mobbers, are not even aware of the consequences of their behavior. In its essence, mobbing is a serious violation of labor legislation and often contains elements of a criminal offence.





STATEMENT FROM THE PRESS CONFERENCE OF MWBU „NEZAVISNOST”

# STORIES ABOUT PRIVATIZATION, FAR FROM REALITY

**W**e have witnessed that some ministers spoke publicly about the stories concerning successful privatization, increased and more intense level of employment, successful economic growth, etc. Unfortunately, such stories are far from reality in which we are now. Six years since passing the Privatization Law and privatization of 2400 public companies that was realized, represents a sufficient period to perceive the effects of proclaimed principles when enacting the Privatization Law in 2001.

Let us remind all that the Law proclaimed four principles in Article 2.:

1. Creating the conditions for the development of the economy and social stability
2. Public security
3. Flexibility
4. Sales pricing according to market conditions.

In the first principle of this Law, the privatization did not give expected results, but it can be said that it generated unforeseeable consequences for future development of the economy and employment as well. Successful privatizations are rather an exception while those unsuccessful are a rule. The thing that is characteristic for successful privatizations is that in most cases foreign companies are in question and seldom domestic ones. In five years of privatization (with 2006 inclusive) a decrease of employment is only evident. At the beginning of privatization in 2001 there were 1.752,000 employees that were employed in industry, and five years later, with 2006 inclusive, this number was 1.471,000 of employees. Almost 300.000 employees lost their jobs during the privatization process. In the metal industry complex there were 251.000 workers



at the beginning of privatization in 2001 and five years later the number of employees decreased to 173.000 meaning that almost 80.000 employees lost their jobs due to privatization, and privatization process in metal industry complex has not been completed yet.

## ASNS FAILURE IN PROVING REPRESENTATION AND WHY „YUMCO” WORKERS KNOCKED OUT DRAGAN MILOVANOVIC?

# ASNS COMPLETELY RUINED

**A** SNS's attempt to prove union representation before the Republic Committee for Trade Union Representation, ended with a total fiasco. The Committee brought a unanimous decision and stated that ASNS's registration form had many shortcomings and that it was impossible to establish where they attempted to steal. Some companies comprised by ASNS's representation have more ASNS members than employees. On the lists there were employees who died a long time ago, as well as those who were no longer employed in their companies and individual members, whose identity is impossible to establish. In one word, only old "illusionists" Ranka Savic and Dragan Milovanovic remained, ready to realize their ambitions in the most dishonorable and brutal way.

Former minister and ex housewife, after ASNS disintegration and divisions, are trying to get the last chance to join trade unions that proved and confirmed their representation in compliance with the law, supported by Democratic Party.

Angry because they were caught in a theft attempt, Ranka Savic and Dragan Milovanovic went to Vranje, to "Yumco", in order to "protect" revolted workers, but



"haiduk" way frequently used by Milovanovic received an adequate response in D. Milovanovic's knock out by "Yumco" workers which reacted to Milovanovic's attempt of physical threat. He just got what he wanted and R. Savic also had a miserable time in the crowd that gathered.

This is certainly not the way to transcend diversities, but knowing D. Milovanovic, we are certain that this won't be the last spanking he will get from workers and members of his Union.

## SESSION OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF YOUTH SECTION OF MWBU „NEZAVISNOST“

## A LOT OF ACTIVITIES AND SEMINARS

A Session of the Coordinating Committee of the Youth Section of MWBU „Nezavisnost“ was held on December 17, 2007. The Work Report for 2007 was reviewed at the Session, in which it was stressed that there were a lot of seminars on the subject of “Expanding the network and attracting new members.” In addition to these topics, Job Safety and IH was also comprised at the seminars, as well as the themes on collective bargaining, sex equality and those referring to Youth Section of UBU “Nezavisnost”. The Youth Section visited colleagues of Trade

Union FTM CGT, France and they also took part in the campaigns “You have the right” throughout Serbia.

The Plan for 2008 was considered at the Session, in which priority shall be given to strengthening the Section's structure, more activities in the regions and continuation of training for young people. A return visit of colleagues from France and continuation of cooperation with IG Metall has also been planned. Dragan Matic, President of MWBU “Nezavisnost” took part in this Session.



## SEMINAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE METAL INDUSTRY TRADE UNION

## YOUNG WORKERS AND TRADE UNION

A Seminar for young people of metal workers' unions was held in Ohrid between November 14 and 15, 2007, with the support of IG Metall and Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The metal workers unions were from the following countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Republic of Srpska, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. The following young people of the Youth Section of MWBU “Nezavisnost” took part in the Seminar: Tanja Ristic, “Metaloprerađa”, Uzice, Marinko Bedic, ATB Sever, Subotica, and Jasmina Petrovic, MWBU “Nezavisnost”.

Mr. Felix Bader of IG Metall, Germany, spoke about the subject of “Young workers



and trade unions – How it works in Germany.” Sabrina Stender, representative of students – apprentices of “Weber Hydraulik” presented unionist activities of young people in her company, and Ivan Curkovic, IG Metall, spoke about political activities of young people (fac-

tory, trade union, party and structures), as well as about young workers' activities.

During the Seminar the participants presented the activities of Youth Sections within their unions and stated that MWBU “Nezavisnost”, Serbia and “SKEI”, Slovenia were the only unions dealing with young workers issues in an organized manner. There was group work after this on the following topics: public relations, how to present one's targets, how to win over new members and how we view mutual cooperation. The participants were handed in a booklet on European Union and European Social Dialogue, being the result of agreement from the previous gathering that took place last year in Belgrade.

## ITUC ILO - TORINO: SEMINAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

## „GLOBALIZATION AND TRADE UNION STRATEGIES IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES“

Ms. Jasmina Petrovic, as the representative of the Youth Section of UBU “Nezavisnost”, attended the Seminar for young people on the subject of “Globalization and Trade Union Strategies in Multinational Companies” in ILO International Training Center in Torino, from November 5 – 10 2007. Trade union representatives from Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Rumania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Albania took part in the Seminar.

After introduction, the participants were informed about the ILO operations and standards through Evelin Toth's presentation. Philippe Gousenbourger of ITUC presented the future structure of young people in ITUC. On the second day of the Seminar the participants visited FIAT and had the opportunity to be informed about the car production process. In the afternoon, the participants in the Seminar talked to representatives of Trade Unions “CISL” (FIM CISL), as from the region, so also from FIAT itself.

On the next day the participants in the Seminar joined a group of participants from the European Trade Union Confederation. Through work organized in groups they treated the subject of globalization impact on national level (unemployment, legislation, social welfare and security).

In continuation of the Seminar on globalization (ILO Conventions, Declarations, OECD Guidelines, corporate social responsibility), the fol-



lowing experts had their exposé: Eddy Laurijssen, ILO Office director in Brussels, Evelin Toth, Marc Ferron, Jordi Vera. Joel Decaillon, ETUC Secretary, spoke about trade union strategies and role of ETUC.

At the end of the Seminar, the participants were awarded Certificates for attendance.



**„NEZAVISNOST“ BRANCH UNION OF TEXTILE, LEATHER AND FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY  
HELD A SESSION OF THE LEADING COMMITTEE**

# INTENSIFIED ACTIVITIES OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY WORKERS

Intensified activities in everyday work of "Nezavisnost" Branch Union of TLF are a base on which the Reports of the TLF Coordinator and President of MWBU "Nezavisnost", Dragan Matic, have been based. The fulfillment of all obligations undertaken at the previous Session of the BU TLF Leading Committee was confirmed. Daily presence in the trustee offices and permanent service are novelties which presented the BU TLF in a new light. Trust in trade union and promises that were made, as well as undertaken obligations brought back belief to TLF members in the need for union organizing. The process of systemic education is expanding and training of a large number of members and a test will be organized in 2008 in order that they present their knowledge about trade union. International cooperation of TLF has commenced and an international support

is expected for "Nezavisnost" Union of TLF, being necessary for this trade union. A new Statute took effect and all trustee offices commenced payment of membership dues according to new distribution. By purchase of new equipment and computers, the BU TLF office will continue its work and activities to the benefit of its members. The Leading Committee confirmed the opinion that it would not tolerate payment of earnings in this company below minimum, in compliance with the Law, and that charges would be brought against employers which violated the Law and didn't observe Collective Agreements.

We expect the signing of Branch Collective Agreement for employees and employers in Textile, Leather and Footwear Industry in 2008, and "Nezavisnost" Union will do its best to this end.



## „RUDNIK“ FROM TOPOLA

# OLD PROBLEMS IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The problems burdening a considerable part of the textile industry affected "Rudnik" from Topola too. After it had gone through a long period of company's inactivity and restructuring process, "Rudnik" found itself at the beginning, now with a new owner but with old problems.

It is difficult to establish the actual reasons for poor operations and it is even more difficult to find a way out of a "tunnel" in which "Rudnik" is presently entrapped.

The "Nezavisnost" Union has committed itself to solving problems on the company level and that employees get pays, being regulated and guaranteed by the Labor Law, and that they exercise at least some of their rights in conformity with the Law. When we speak about minimum and minimal, in line with statutory regulations, in the case of "Rudnik" this seems to be an "impossible mission."

The Executive Management's attempts to remedy the situation were only partly successful for the present and it would be necessary to involve all the participants – the management, owners, workers and trade unions to make a slight, but a significant progress in order to overcome the current difficult social situation.

"We can pay out only the earned salaries, and product quality, quantities and work discipline shall determine the level of earnings. It is expected that pays will be slightly increased according to the production performance", stressed the director of "Rudnik", Milan Dmitrovic, in the conversation with the president of MWBU "Nezavisnost", D. Matic, and Ljubina Banovic of "Nezavisnost" Branch Union of TLF. The non-payment of sickness allowance, payment of earnings below minimum, guaranteed by the Law, blocking of "Rudnik's" cen-

tral account, do not facilitate that employees view the future of "Rudnik" with confidence.

A possibility of bringing charges and debt enforcement represent a constant danger that can occur at any time. It's good that the Executive Management and Trade Unions see a partial solution in the approach to government institutions in the sense of releasing the textile industry from some dues to the State and that the funds obtained in this way should be allocated to pay increase and technical-technological recovery of the textile industry.



## IDENTICAL POSITIONS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND TRADE UNION

A contribution to solving the problems of exporters of garments and ready-made clothing was made by Serbian Chamber of Commerce by organizing a summit of Serbian exporters and by proposing certain measures for their solving.

Textile, garments, leather and shoes industry is a branch of industry employing at this time 55.000 employees, while the number of unemployed from this branch, recorded in the Employment Agency, is almost the same. Ready-made clothing was one of the most important products in Serbia's export in 2006 (on the 4th place after iron and steel, non-ferrous metals, vegetables and fruit). As the Government's strategic objective is to reduce the unemployment rate and increase of exports in 2008, the manufacturers of textile, garments, leather and shoes suggest the implementation of the following measures of economic and legislative policy, the ultimate objective of which is to reduce the unemployment

rate, relating to workers of this structure, by at least 20%, and increase the value of exported goods by 50% in 2008.

It is necessary to conceive adequate measures of economic policy in order to diminish the problem of overrated Dinar exchange rate (due to unrealistic Dinar exchange rate) exporters have recorded a profit decrease and therefore, one should introduce a form of export incentives.

It is important at this time to work on decreasing excessive and uncontrolled imports of textile goods and footwear in such a way that, besides customs inspection, the market inspection will be also involved in solving the problems (strict observance of the Statutory Regulations no. 14/92 of the Republic of Serbia, referring to measures that should be applied prior to putting textiles and footwear on sale). Also, one has to enable that granted subsidies are returned, extension of terms, in order to lessen the pressure on the production.

Customs duties on import of the equipment, not being produced in this country, should be abolished, which equipment is used in the textile industry for upgrading the technical and technological performance of the textile industry.

It is necessary to reallocate the anticipated budgetary funds from the SIEPE marketing activities to manufacture of the articles for which there is a demand in the markets of the neighboring countries and the EU, with which this branch of industry performs 90% of its foreign trade operations.

Also, one has to reduce the compulsory reserve in compensation arrangements, as well as the administration in imports, exports, bank guarantee securing, to the least possible extent, and VAT is to be reduced from 18% to 8%.

The practice of rescheduling debt to the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund and Public Health Service should be continued.

COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S SECTION OF MWBU „NEZAVISNOST“

# NEW WORK PLANS, SEMINARS AND BOOKLETS SOON



A meeting of the Coordinating Committee of Women's Section of MWBU "Nezavisnost" was held in Belgrade on December 7, 2007 in a new composition. The President, Kosovka Gavrilovic submitted a Work Report for the previous period and regional coordinators submitted a Report too. It was agreed that until the Electoral Assembly, which would take place in February 2008, one should make a plan of activities. The coordinator for Raska-Rasina District submitted a proposal that a Seminar should be organized on the subject of Job Safety and Industrial Hygiene and that the database had to be updated too, which was agreed.

Preparation of the material for Women's Section has been planned, where cooperation with the Presidency of MWBU "Nezavisnost" is necessary, and which shall provide adequate funds.

SOCIAL COOPERATIVES AS THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

## THE THIRD MODEL OF OPERATIONS

The second part of the Seminar titled "Social Cooperatives as the Employment Opportunity" was held in Belgrade, and the next one has been planned for the end of November this year, which will be held in Novi Sad. Dr Zaklina Stojanovic of the School of Economics in Belgrade spoke about this subject, and through her exposé, in addition to a brief review of the cooperative movement development in the world and in our country, as well as of its importance, she presented an up-to-date identity of cooperatives, especially stressing the form of organizing economic life in our country. We may consider cooperative movement as the third model of operations (doing business) and it can contribute substantially to entrepreneurship development in Serbia, as well as to employment of a significant number of unemployed people.

The importance of cooperative movement in the world is based on the fact that a considerable part of the population are members of cooperatives, and cooperatives are an important participant in the economy and the market, and in this way they create new jobs and upgrade employment. Key values of cooperative movement are reflected in self-support, democracy, equality, justice, solidarity and self-responsibility. In addition to this, cooperative movement is characterized by ethical values it is based on, and those are honesty, frankness, social responsibility and care for other people. A cooperative is not only an agricultural cooperative, and it is not intended only for a single farmer. For these reasons, the cooperative movement, as the third model of operations, must be in compliance with the new Law, as the old Law of 1996 is inadequate and out-of-date. It is especially important that the cooperative movement model turned out to be successful in the development of women's entrepreneurship. It is important to create an environment for the development of cooperative entrepreneurship in Serbia, but first of all, the State has to assume a favor-

able position regarding the cooperative sector, as well as the harmonization of cooperative rules on the level of European Union.

During the last 150 years the world hadn't devised anything better than the cooperative idea to protect the poor social layers. As the transition brings about more serious problems concerning poverty, thus cooperative movement must be up-to-date, because the economy, motivated exclusively by profit, cannot satisfy all people's needs.

A society disregarding people's need to become cooperative members and thereby protecting individual and group interests is condemned to lag behind. Trade unions have to take the opportunity, namely, the implementation of cooperatives through legislation and practice, to the benefit of those who lost their jobs, and among them is a large number of union members.





SYMPOSIUM IN VRNJACKA BANJA ORGANIZED BY FES FOUNDATION

# THE GOVERNMENT AND TRADE UNIONS KEEP GETTING THEIR LINES CROSSED



A Symposium (Seminar) was held in Vrnjacka Banja from November 6 – 8 2007, organized by FES Foundation, on the subject: Application of Labor Law, Strike Law and problems with passing a new Law, as well as reforms in the area of pays in public services. The participants in the Seminar, representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Serbian Employers Union and two representative trade unions, UBU "Nezavisnost" and "CATUS" set forth their observations and problems in the application of the Labor Law.

## INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS TO THE LABOR LAW BY THE „CMWUS” – IRRESPONSIBLE

The observations of Labor Inspectors, concerning previous application of the Labor Law and their suggestions, were interesting. Special attention has been devoted to the "CMWUS" initiative for the amendment to Article 191. of the Labor Law. The representatives of

UBU "Nezavisnost" supported a consistent application of the Labor Law. Initiating the procedure of amendments to the mentioned Law without signed General Collective Agreement and Branch Collective Agreements represents an irresponsible act, especially because this happens to be the initiative of the "CMWUS".

## A NEW STRIKE LAW TO BE PASSED BY THE END OF 2008.

Discussions about the application of the Strike Law and enacting a new one were much more interesting. Namely, the 1990 Strike Law from the time of the SFRY is still in force, with some amendments. The Ministry, employers and trade unions have negotiated the passing of a new Strike Law for 3 years already, but three key items were problematic. The discussion at this Symposium will certainly have an impact on the passing of a new Strike Law by the end of 2008.

The representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Snezana

Bogdanovic and Rajka Danilovic, presented a Draft of Bill on Salaries in public services to the participants. It was clear to all participants in the discussion that the reform of salaries in public services was conditioned by the MMF and the World Bank, but the participants in the Symposium had different opinions of the solution to this problem. The Government's opinion was that pay groups and scales should be adjusted, but trade unions and employers consider the solution to the problem from different standpoint.

## GOVERNMENT'S „SIS” AGENCIES

Each new Government and coalition, being formed, employed their party supporters in public services, with the remaining ones, which brought about the forming of an enormous administrative apparatus in public services that could not be supported by the budget. A good example is Government Agencies. No one knows how many government agencies have been formed so far for "ALL AND EVERYTHING" and where there was a need and where there was not and how many planned to be formed. It is good that there was a discussion about pays in public services, so that more discussions about this topic should be expected in the next period as in trade union organizations, so also in Employers Associations and the Socio-Economic Council. Closing the Symposium, the FES Foundation representative Milan Jevtic stressed the readiness of this Foundation to organize a new Symposium soon, because it turned out that the discussions at such gatherings conducted to finding acceptable solutions in a very short time.



## PRIJEPOLJE

# TUMULTUOUS EVENTS IN TK „LJUBISA MIODRAGOVIC“



People's saying: "Distrust those that are marked by the Creator" is important especially when a person who experienced such bad luck by concurrence of circumstances, controls other people, their lives and their family's lives in a certain way. Such "insane people" are increasingly present in a group of employers, company owners, to which the rights of people, workers, union representatives and trade unions is an unknown category. Serbian legislation regulated this area more or less successfully and workers, trade unions and employers have to apply and abide by the regulations.

Unfortunately, in many companies, this phenomenon that one does not obey laws and that workers are menaced and mistreated is becoming frequent. Instead of providing regular and good wages for workers, warm workrooms, safe working environment, a large number of employers treat employees in an arrogant and primitive way, and they especially criticize workers representatives – unionists, indicating the irregularities that employers enforce. Such employers resort to "performances" in which they try to demonstrate force and power, but, in fact, they "sink" more deeply into primitivism and arrogant conduct. Educated and enlightened trade union representatives with nice manners have been trying to initiate a social dialogue, they refer to laws, corporate culture, International Conventions on the protection of workers and their rights, but in vain.

The origins of troubles and problems are "deep" and difficult to resolve. The representatives of "Nezavisnost" Trade Union stated loudly and clearly that our common demands didn't end with Sekulic's dismissal from his position, but on the contrary, we started taking actions in

order that your wages would be increased and we fought for safeguarding of all the other rights you were deprived of.

The "Nezavisnost" Trade Union expects the appointing of a new Director and the commencement of negotiations concerning all employees demands directed to company's management.

The primary objective is workers safety at work, regular pays, prescribed by the law, respect, but not disdain.

The "Nezavisnost" Trade Union warned the Director of TK "Ljubisa Miodragovic" in due course that it wasn't wise and smart to take actions being contrary to Serbian laws and that disrespect of trade union representatives and harassment of employees must have sanctioning of such activities as a result.

Also, we pointed out that there were certain actions in the employer's conduct and business operations that could be considered as criminal liability and in which the financial police authorities also showed interest. Inspectors of the financial police authorities from the town of Uzice inspected the regularity of operations of TK "Ljubisa Miodragovic", and according to unconfirmed information, we expect that criminal charges would be brought against ex director Radovan Sekulic.

All this would not have happened on the condition that warnings of "Nezavisnost" Union were understood with good intentions and that there was employer's interest in the settlement of relations with employees and "Nezavisnost" Union through dialogue and observance of the law.

The duty of "Nezavisnost" Union is and will be to protect employees and our members.

In the negotiations with the new director the first demand has to be the payment of outstanding wages, settlement of debts to the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund and Public Health Care Fund, and that the wages paid out to employees cannot be lower than minimum pay that was agreed on at the meeting of the Socio-Economic Council of Serbian Government.

Workers support is necessary for "Nezavisnost" Union in order to identify itself as the only trade union ready to support workers in the most difficult situations and that we attain the projected goals through concerted efforts.

We advise employees that they should trust our Union and should not perform any individual, imprudent actions, because in this way they would violate the law and get notice of dismissal, which the employer just expects to happen.





„FES” SUPPORT TO JOINT SEMINARS OF MWBU „NEZAVISNOST” AND CMWTUS CONTINUED

# EUROPEAN INTEGRATIONS AND TRADE UNION

Confirming its strategic commitment, the MWBU „Nezavisnost”, supported by „Friedrich Ebert” Foundation, organized a Seminar for MWBU membership and women colleagues of CMWTUS from Vojvodina. This is a continuation of joint activities of Women's Section of MWBU and CMWTUS. The treated topics reflected a lasting and long-term commitment of MWBU for EU. The explanation of EU history and origin, as well as the foundations on which the EU is based, have been presented in an illustrative way, especially highlighting the competences covered by the EU.

The participants were interested in the issues concerning the conditions and require-

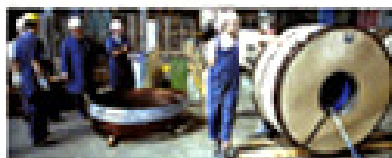


## MAY I ASK YOU?



MWBU

NEZAVISNOST



## ACTION



CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS, BECOME FRIENDS WITH MWBU „NEZAVISNOST”

The Action launched by MWBU „Nezavisnost” aims at determining the level of corporate relations in companies and getting the answers, employee and management opinions, evaluating the situation in companies of the metal industry sector in Serbia in which our Union has its trustee offices.

## MAY I ASK YOU?

The privatization process in Serbian Metal Industry is in the final phase. Those privatized and unprivatized companies operate with more or less success, and it is not difficult to provide the indicators of their business success or failures. Our Union wishes to convert things that are often not seen and which we notice through our daily work into an official form.. This area is corporate management which exists mainly in foreign companies on the territory of Serbia. It is noticeable that successful operation of a company has a strong support in the level and quality of corporate relations and culture that developed in a company. Where there is a good communication and social dialogue between managers, company owners and trade unions, i.e. employees, regulated internal relations, dialogue culture and good communications contribute to preventive actions in order to prevent problems, and if they arise, they are solved quickly and efficiently with full agreement of both the management and union. The data that would be obtained through employee poll are important as for unions, so also for the management.

Therefore, our Union launched the Action called “May I ask you?” in companies where this Union has its trustee offices aiming at presenting the results obtained after employee and management poll on several levels. First of all, this information is necessary in order that we perceive, in a realistic way, employee opinion of the situation in a company and it is the most important for the management and trade unions in a company, being the subject of the poll. Also, integrated results on regional level would be used and forwarded to Socio-Economic Councils, where they exist, and finally, all of them would be integrated on the Republic level and used for the development of sector dialogue in Serbian Metal Industry. The contents of the Questionnaire has been phrased by the experts of the Education, Research and Privatization Center of UBU “Nezavisnost” and “Stop Mobbing” Association, as well as by MWBU “Nezavisnost.”

ments for becoming a member of European “Family”. The steps toward European Union can be shorter, longer, faster or slower, but it is quite clear what is expected from candidate countries, and those countries are the ones that enable by joint efforts the integration into the EU through their activities and quality of work performed. A considerable time period was devoted to Institutions existing on the EU level, as well as to its competencies, especially reviewing the funds that candidate countries could use for financing the activities on the way to European Union. Mr. Robert Molnar of Serbia’s European Movement gave an expert and detailed lecture on all stated topics.

Ana Vujinov spoke about the EU policy focused on the equality of sexes and she presented her views of the occurrence and reasons that influenced the EU to assume special positions and views and elaborate statutory regulations associated with sex equality. The EU adopted 13 directives so far, pertaining to sex equality, since 1970 until today. In addition to other things, these directives enabled equal treating of men and women relative to: approach to jobs, trainings, promotions and working conditions, including equal pays and social security, as well as guaranteed rights to maternity leave.

It has been stressed that EU Institutions should monitor effectively the implementation of all policies decided on by the EU and to develop special supervision mechanisms.



## SESSION OF THE IMF CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN SALVADOR – BRAZIL

# STOP TO UNSAFE WORK



The IMF delegates gathered in the former capital of Brazil to discuss about the topics and issues concerning metal workers. Over 400 delegates of the IMF Central Committee from all countries of the world were present at the Session. The Session was held on November 28 and 29, 2007. The major topics were problems faced by workers and determining the IMF guidelines and actions in the future. Moreover, the observance of the Statute was considered too, where the IMF Work Report as from 2005 until now was submitted by Marcello Malentacchi, IMF Secretary General.

The members of the Executive Committee were replaced, and a new Deputy of the Secretary General elected. Due to retirement of colleague Brian Fredericks, he was replaced by Fernando Lopez of CNM CUT Union, Brazil.



Due to non-observance of the Statute, several organizations were excluded from membership and some were warned. The place and date of the 32nd IMF International Congress were scheduled, which would take place from May 24 – 27, 2009 in Goteborg, Sweden.

However, the major topic of this meeting was unsafe work. This topic is becoming an increasing problem in all countries and on all continents. Pays below minimum, poor working conditions, non-observance of human and workers rights, discrimination and workers exploitation, as well as ruining their organizations, are the most serious consequences of unsafe work. After a debate, lasting several hours, about the situation concerning unsafe work in various regions and stating the problems faced in an action against unsafe work, a conclusion was reached that trade unions had to continue the activities directed against this form of pres-

sure exerted on employees and trade unions. Stronger international cooperation and solidarity are necessary and the IMF shall sublime all proposals and propose a strategy in the action against unsafe work.

A general conclusion was that the action for equalizing employee rights to the same working conditions and equal wages for the same work had no alternative, because unsafe work means uncertain life without prospects, future and existence.

At the end of the Session, the Central Committee adopted several statements and resolutions associated with non-observance of workers rights in some companies. In the organization of IMF and Metal Workers Unions of Brazil, IMF members, a global protest march was organized against unsafe work along central streets of Salvador. Besides several hundred of domestic workers, the delegates of IMF Central Committee took part in the march that lasted for 3 hours.



At this Session, the MWBU "Nezavisnost" was represented by Aleksandar Todic, MWBU Secretary, and Mileta Gujanic, Vice-President of MWBU "Nezavisnost". This opportunity was taken for conducting certain bilateral talks associated with the activities of MWBU "Nezavisnost", as well as with the current economic situation in Serbia. The delegation of MWBU "Nezavisnost" talked to colleagues from Austria, USA (USWA), Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, IMF representatives, so that future cooperation was agreed in these talks.

