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European Transport Workers' Federation
Fédération Européenne des Travailleurs des Transports
Europäische Transportarbeiter-Föderation
Federación Europea de los Trabajadores del Transporte

**ADDRESS BY EDUARDO CHAGAS, ETF GENERAL SECRETARY,
TO THE CONGRESS OF FILT CGIL
Milan, 27 November 2018**

Distinguished guests,
Brothers and Sisters,

I want to join Frank Moreels in remembering Sandro Rocchi, a sindacalista vero. Together with Franco Nasso and then with Sandro, the ETF has been stronger with the European commitment of FILT CGIL and we are grateful to them for that. I trust that in a challenging moment for the European and International trade union movement, your Congress will help delivering the strategies to counter the progress of neo-liberal policies and deregulation of transport services.

Transport workers need a strong FILT-CGIL and I must thank you for the active contribute of many of you in our sections' work. I am sure that FILT will continue to be in the front line in Europe.

The current economic and social situation that affects many European countries, and Italy is not an exception, is the predictable effect of more than 30 years of neo-liberal policies. It is the result of internal contradictions in the dominant economic order. The deregulation of the economy, the privatisation of public services, the redistribution of wealth from the bottom to the top and the financialisation of the economy have all contributed to lead us here.

In the ETF we do not believe that the austerity measures being imposed in many countries, with particular violence on the working class, are due to insensitive governments. They are rather premeditated means pushed forward by the international capital, yes with the complicity of governments from the right and from the left, in order to cut wages, rights and social protection, to weaken the trade unions, and to favour the economic power of the banks, insurance companies and big economic groups and multinationals.

This is an ideological fight in front of which the trade union movement cannot hesitate! The answer from the trade unions must come with determination: only a strong mobilization of the working class will permit to revert this situation which is weakening



President Lars Lindgren

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workers' protection, cutting salaries and rights, increasing precarity and exploitation, especially among women and young people.

We need a widespread re-regulation, democratisation and industrialisation of the economy. Labour is not a commodity!

The trade union movement has the responsibility to stand side by side with the workers and oppose with all means and determination the attacks they are suffering. And in particular transport trade unions that have always been in the forefront for the promotion of good working and living conditions of their members, cannot miss the call! We cannot leave for populist movements to be the voice for the jobless, the precarious workers or the exploited.

This is why our Congress has decided that the Fair Transport Europe campaign should continue, aiming at denouncing and eradicating social dumping in transport which is often possible just because the relevant rules are not properly implemented.

In the frame of the general campaign, the ETF is currently engaged in a number of sectorial campaigns resisting the attempts to further deregulate transport to the benefit of the economic interests and in detriment of the citizens and the transport workers:

- In civil aviation, mobilizing air traffic controllers, air crews and ground handlers. You know well how Ryanair is trying to divide the trade union movement. The ETF stands with you in the fight for a fair deal for ALL workers in Ryanair.
- In the railway against the full liberalization of railway services, and against the “driver only operation” which puts profit above safety.
- In maritime transport we continue our work for ensuring decent working conditions and pay for all seafarers, independently of their nationality and an effective implementation of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention in the Fair Shipping campaign.
- In the port sector we have engaged in the preparation of our members for the automation wave that is faced by the sector in order to create the necessary safeguards for job protection and a fair transition. A number of training seminars are taking place empowering our members.
- The road transport section has also been very active with fighting those proposals in the Mobility Package that just seek at legitimizing illegal practices of greedy companies. We need that the existing rules are implemented and where necessary they are changed to defend the workers, not the companies.



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It is important to stress that the ETF all our work is being done not in order to oppose the employment of Eastern European workers in Western European companies but rather to fight with them for a fair and equal treatment to that of their colleagues from Western Europe.

And we are also building our participation in a major European Transport Workers' week of action in 2019 where transport workers from all over Europe will converge to Brussels on the 27th of March making the ETF demands heard loud and clear: we want an end to exploitation, to social dumping and workers' abuses; we demand respect and work with dignity. We want Fair Transport!

Brothers and Sisters

Be it through the campaign against flags of convenience in maritime transport, the actions on road safety, the strategy on global operators, amongst many other forms of solidarity, the ITF and the ETF stand in the front line in the promotion of a trade unionism that values the information and mobilisation of the workers as a fundamental step for ensuring a balance of power that can lead to success.

When we address DHL, Ryanair, Uber, Flixbus, Ikea, XPO, Amazon they know they will not be able to avoid the trade unions. That is why we must mobilize and fight back. It is the strength of our unions, our ability to take action and our mutual solidarity which are decisive. We must therefore get stronger, build alliances inside as well as outside the trade union movement, develop alternative policies and mobilise our members.

Our demands must be to disarm the financial speculators, to democratise the economy, to promote environmentally sustainable investments in the real economy, to create jobs and decent work, eradicate social dumping and to secure high quality social services.

The ETF will stand in the forefront of the European trade union movement which refuses to compromise on fundamental rights and principles.

Brothers and Sisters, wishing you a successful Congress, I hope that it will help to strengthen the cooperation among our organizations, and that we can continue to fight this fight together!

Long live workers solidarity!



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