

Who are we ?

● The International Workers Committee Against War, Exploitation, for a Workers' International (IWC) was set up at the World Conference held in Mumbai (India) on November 19, 20, 21, 2016 gathering delegates from 28 countries.

● The IWC was set up on the basis of the Mumbai Manifesto against war, exploitation and precarious labour which was endorsed by labour activist and trade union and political organisations officers from 46 countries (*)

● Its continuations committee is composed of labour activists from all political/ trade union backgrounds:
Innocent Assogba (Benin),
Alan Benjamin (USA),
Colia Clark (USA),
Constantin Cretan (Romania),
Berthony Dupont (Haiti),
Ney Ferreira (Brazil),
Daniel Gluckstein (France),
Rubina Jamil (Pakistan),
Apo Leung (China),
M.A. Patil (India),
Mandlenkosi Phangwa (Azania),
Sergio Pineda (Mexico),
Klaus Schüller (Germany),
Jung Sikhwa (Korea),
John Sweeney (Great Britain),
Mark Vassilev (Russia),
Nambiath Vasudevan (India).

(*) Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Azania, Belarus, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Korea, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

CHINA/HONG-KONG

Three questions to Chan Ka Wai, Executive Director, Labour Action China, Hong Kong

Three prison sentences of activists on December 2 and the 8 arrests on December 8. What do you think of the situation in HK?

First of all, both events are in the same issue. The Chinese Government wishes to devastate the resistant force in Hong Kong by the controversial Ordinance of Public Order. In the past, it was almost not used anymore, but now it is heavily used to limit the civil rights and to charge the activists. Moreover, it is a way to stop active social activists to join in the Legislative Council election next year because most of them have a criminal record with more than 3-month imprisonment.

The severe attack against the resistant force in Hong Kong will create a relatively silent situation, but it will accumulate the anger of the society, especially the young generation. Both the Chinese and Hong Kong Governments are so worried about the rebellions of young people. They can do nothing but suppress the movement at this moment. But suppression will eventually bring rebellions and protests. Bloody protests and bloody suppression will come interactively.

Cathay Airways management no longer accepts collective bargaining. The union of hostesses and stewards FAU called for solidarity.

The pandemic has adversely attacked the Hong Kong economy as a whole. It is true that the aero industry is under severe attack. But the business also takes its difficult time as an opportunity to clear out trade union activists. Moreover, most trade unionist are against the Extradition Bill and against the brutal suppression by the government and the police as well. So the Government becomes hostile to the trade union movement. For instance, the Chief Executive's explicit discredit of the medical professionals about their participation in the strike in February this year. The Chief Executive even requests publicly the Hospital Authority, the sole

employer of all medical professionals in public hospitals and clinics, to victimize the medical professionals who joined in the strike.

The international community should make their voices strong enough to support the new trade union movement and the social movement in Hong Kong as well. The International Labour Organization may take initiative to investigate the suppression against trade unions as it breaches the two cardinal principles, the right to free association and the right to collective bargaining.

What is the employment situation in mainland China nowadays?

According to the government statistics in China, the unemployment rate drops down persistently in the second half of 2020. In October 2020, the unemployment rate is 5.3 %. Many people question that the figure is under-stated. Moreover, how about the labour benefits and the exact employment situation in different age groups? Both are not reported in the government statistics.

Young unemployment is very serious in China. It is reported that in June 2020, the unemployment rate of the person aged from 20-24 reached 19 % and went worse in August 2020. The drop down of unemployment rate may result from constant decline of labour force in China. Another problem is that more workers become informal workers due to the change in economic structure, for instance, a rapid growth of delivery workers. But labour protection and social security entitlements are unclear to them. They also do not know if they are employees of their delivery companies.

Moreover, the studies in different places in China show that more than 50 % of the workers under study reported less income after resumption of work and around 30 % reported more workload. Less payment with more workload may be a big problem to workers in China today. They are not unemployed but surely seriously exploited. ■