



The CMKOS Council's Report to the 5th CMKOS Congress

Prague, 9th - 10th April 2010

The 5th CMKOS Congress will discuss a.o. the Report of the CMKOS Council on the Confederation's activities between the Congresses. The Report has 117 pages and is available only in Czech language.

For your information please find below the list of chapters of the Report depicting the scope of CMKOS activities and also the translation of the part of the Report concerning the European and international activities of the CMKOS in the given period.

- Implementation of the Resolution of the 4th CMKOS Congress (April 2006)
- Evaluation of the implementation of the CMKOS Programme for the period 2006 - 2010
 - Political and economic environment
 - Public finances reform
 - Economic crisis
 - Evaluation of individual parts of the Programme
 - The CMKOS and workers
 - Legal protection (amendments to Labour Code, preparation of the new Civil Code, activity in the Council of Economic and Social Agreement)
 - Legal consultancy and workers' participation (regional legal consultancies and their activities)
 - Fair wages and salaries (targets and their meeting, expected development, pay rules negotiated in collective agreements, pay gap between women and men and its reasons)
 - Flexibility and mobility (development and trends in collective agreements)
 - Vocational training and life-long learning
 - Taxation
 - The CMKOS and safe work and workers' health
 - The CMKOS and families (social benefits, etc)
 - The CMKOS and social protection of workers (social services, health insurance, etc)
 - The CMKOS and an employee in the labour market (developments in labour market, unemployment, position of women and handicapped in the labour market, expenditures on employment policies, legislative changes, employment of foreigners, problems of agency employment, illegal work)
 - The CMKOS and an employee in the economy
 - Rise of living standards
 - Public services (health service, developments in education and training, conditions in education, life-long learning, transport services)

- The CMKOS and pensions (activities of the government and CMKOS attitudes)
- The CMKOS and promoting of trade union activities (trade unions and public, trade union revue "Sondy", CMKOS information system, training in informatics, CMKOS Centre of Studies and Documentation - library, trade union archives)
- The CMKOS and the strength of trade union international solidarity
 - The CMKOS activities in relation to the EU
 - Ratification of Lisbon Treaty
 - Preparations to the Presidency of the CR in the Council and activities during the Presidency
 - Tripartite Social Summits
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 - European bilateral social dialogue - Social Dialogue Committee
 - EU bodies with tripartite representation - committees, agencies, foundations
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 - CMKOS European Integration Team and dissemination of information
 - The CMKOS activities in the framework of European and world trade unions
 - European Trade Union Confederation
 - International Trade Union Confederation and Pan-European Trade Union Council
 - Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD
 - The CMKOS activities in relation to the International Labour Organisation
 - The CMKOS and trade unions of neighbouring countries, cross-border trade union cooperation
- Evaluation of the activities of the CMKOS Regional Councils of Trade Unions (employment issues, cooperation with state and representative bodies, dissemination of information from regional councils of economic and social agreement, various institutions, committees, councils, meetings and negotiations with deputies and senators, promotion of trade unions, co-action with the CMKOS, cooperation with the regional trade union legal consultancies)
- Information on the activities of advisory bodies of the CMKOS Council
 - Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
 - Association of Retired Trade Unionists
 - Youth Council
 - Inter - Union Association of Apprentice Schools
- Outline of deliberations of the CMKOS Assembly between the 4th and 5th CMKOS Congress

CMKOS and international trade union solidarity

The CMKOS programme for the years 2006 - 2010 set the following tasks:

CMKOS in its capacity as an active member of the European Trade Union Confederation will support efforts to preserve and develop the European social model and intends, within its possibilities, to contribute towards the development of international trade union solidarity and towards strengthening of mutual contacts with trade unions in the neighbouring countries.

CMKOS will continue to cultivate its full involvement into the European social dialogue. It intends to fully co-ordinate the work of its representatives who are active in various EU structures where social partners are involved. It will develop contacts with Members of the European Parliament and will promote its effective representation in the institutional system of the Czech Republic, which is called upon to maintain relations with the European Union.

CMKOS will support dissemination of information on what the European Union can provide to us within the framework of its joint programmes and initiatives as well as information on how these opportunities can be used. It will actively co-operate in the preparatory work for the Czech EU Presidency, as well as during the entire Presidency period.

CMKOS will lend its support to moves aiming at the creation of a pan-European regional organisation designed to act as part of global unions providing that, within this framework, the European Trade Union Confederation would maintain its specific status of a recognised social partner to the bodies of the European Union and to other European institutions.

As a member of the European Trade Union Confederation and of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, CMKOS will support the historic unification process within the democratic and representative world trade unions (the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the World Confederation of Labour) and will thus contribute to the constitution and development of a new global trade union confederation.

CMKOS activities related to the European Union

The place of CMKOS in the EU institutional system and in the integration system of the Czech Republic

In the period since the Fourth Congress in April 2006, CMKOS has continued to acquire experience that enables it to intensify its actions in relation to the European Union, both at national and European levels. During this period many significant events were organised within the EU, and many significant documents and pieces of legislation were adopted exerting impact on our life. The most visible of them, with a broad impact on workers' life, are the following: negotiations and measures adopted by the EU designed to mitigate and to deal with the economic and social crisis, as well as efforts aimed at the adoption and ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. As far as the Czech Republic is concerned, a very significant event was the Czech Presidency that took place in the first half of 2009.

Ratification of the Lisbon Treaty

Negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty started in June 2007, two years after the unsuccessful referenda concerning the EU Constitution in France and in the Netherlands. The new Treaty was signed in Lisbon in December 2007. Then the process of ratification started, which was temporarily delayed when Irish citizens said "no" to the Treaty in a referendum that was held in June 2008. However, following a period of more than one year, the referendum was repeated and its outcome enabled Ireland to ratify the Treaty. Thereafter, the two remaining countries – Germany and Poland – ratified the Treaty, so that in the beginning of November 2009 the Czech Republic remained the sole country which still did not ratify.

The ratification process in the Czech Republic was very complex. In both Chambers of the Parliament, the Treaty was adopted only after long procrastinations and delays. The Czech Constitutional Court was called upon to examine the Treaty on two occasions. Thereafter the Czech President, Václav Klaus, moved a requirement, as late as on 9 October 2009, for an exemption to the effect that the Czech Republic, similarly as Poland and the United Kingdom,

would be exempted from the applicability of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. A pretext to it was the desire to rule out any attempts to challenge the validity of decrees ruled by president Beneš after the Second World War. However, this exemption also meant that Czech citizens would be unable to enjoy the same rights as citizens of other EU Member States where the Charter is applicable and covers the areas of human, social and other citizens' rights.

CMKOS realised the danger related to the exemption from the Charter immediately and started to act. It arranged a press conference and declared its disagreement with the proposed exemption. At its next session, the CMKOS Council adopted a resolution requesting full applicability of the Charter to Czech citizens and warned that, otherwise, Czechs might become second-rate citizens within the EU. Discussions followed with the Prime Minister, Members of the Parliament and political parties. Our opinion was backed by ETUC and personally by its General Secretary Mr. J. Monks and was submitted to the Swedish President of the European Council. In a situation where the very existence of the Lisbon Treaty was dependent on the signature of the Czech President, we did not succeed to avert the adoption of the exemption. However, the Czech exemption will enter into force, subject to its approval by EU Member States, only in connection with the next amendment of European Treaties – i.e. probably on the next enlargement of the Union. This provides a certain period of time, during which it is still possible to try to change the present state of affairs.

Preparations for the Czech Presidency of the European Council and participation in the course of events

CMKOS started its participation in the preparations already at the beginning of 2007. The issues concerned herewith were discussed at numerous occasions by both the CMKOS Council and the CMKOS Assembly. In all these activities and during all discussions covering the preparations, CMKOS demanded that the Czech Presidency should lay emphasis not only on competitiveness, but also on strengthening of the participative democracy and the European social model within the EU area, with a view of achieving a proper balance between economic freedoms and social rights of employees and citizens. We also requested that social partners would be, since the beginning, invited to the preparation of key documents relating to the Czech Presidency and would participate in all activities that took place during the Presidency. We demanded the promotion of objectives concerned with the areas of social policy, labour market, restructuring and the expected trends of EU future development. During the period of preparation we urged to include the issue of promoting a further development of the social dialogue within the EU. Our task was difficult, indeed, because of the contents and the chosen structure of preparations approved by the government and of the manner, how the government conceived the notion of “consultations” – i.e. first the government approved its own proposals, then asked for observations and thereafter said that our observations did not fit into the concept envisaged by it. This was the case both during the preparations and during the whole Presidency period.

The preparation within the trade unions included a.o. the organisation of two seminars – one together with the representatives of the German DGB in November 2007 and another together with the French CFDT in March 2008.

In July 2008 trade union centres of the three consecutive Presidency countries – France, Czech Republic and Sweden – formulated and published their joint priorities in respect of the 18th month Presidency period. We were actively involved in the preparation of the respective formulations. The text was discussed by the CMKOS Council, was published and sent to the Prime Minister Mr. M. Topolánek, the Deputy Prime Minister Mr. A. Vondra and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Mr. P. Nečas.

We duly informed our trade union partners in other countries on the close linkage of reforms undertaken by the Czech government with the preparations for the Czech Presidency and warned that similar trends would be promoted to cover the entire EU area.

The problems related to the Presidency were also dealt with during a meeting of leading representatives of trade union centres of countries of the Visegrad group, which was held in Prague in December 2008. The declaration adopted at this meeting urged that the coming Czech Presidency should use all its means of co-ordination for starting a speedy process of economic

growth and that it should involve social partners in this process. At the same time, the declaration warned against misusing the crisis for attacks against the employees' and trade union rights.

CMKOS continued its active efforts after the start of the Czech Presidency. It was instrumental in the submission of the ETUC memorandum concerning the Czech Presidency to the Prime Minister Mr. Topolánek (28 January 2009) and called on him to arrange a press conference following this act. CMKOS made great efforts and finally succeeded to attract attention of the Czech media to this event. The Czech Presidency issued a press report on this occasion and, thereafter, ETUC general secretary Mr. J. Monks, who attended the event, was compelled to issue a protest against misinterpretation of his statements.

During the Presidency CMKOS had to use pressure for enforcing its right to participate in various meetings and conferences organised by the Presidency. The CMKOS actively presented its views at these meetings and also, within the ETUC delegation, at the Employment Summit, Tripartite Social Summits and meetings of the EU macroeconomic dialogue.

The Czech representatives maintained a closed contact with the European Commissioner Mr. V. Špidla and informed him about views held and steps taken by CMKOS in respect of the crisis, as well as about the government attitude. On the basis of these contacts Mr. Špidla discussed in Prague with CMKOS representatives and experts ideas concerning the promotion of employment in the Czech Republic and in the European Union. Mr. Špidla participated also in the deliberations of the Congress of the trade union OS KOVO and discussed with the representatives of the union the crisis situation in this sector, both in the Czech Republic and in other EU countries.

CMKOS representatives in the European Economic and Social Committee were actively involved in the Committee's activities related to the Czech Presidency and in various events organised by the Committee in the Czech Republic.

A number of CMKOS member unions were actively involved in the Presidency activities related to their sectors and branches and participated in the respective meetings.

Very important was also staging the so-called European dialogue, which was organised in collaboration of the German DGB, its Hans Böckler Foundation and CMKOS in Prague, in February 2009. The event was directed at the topic of EU social dimension and at the forthcoming elections to the European Parliament. The attendance included 60 representatives of Czech unions and approximately 300 German trade unionists.

The magazine 'Sondy' paid permanent attention to matters related to the Czech Presidency.

The Tripartite Social Summit

In connection with the Czech Presidency of the EU Council the CMKOS participated, for the first time, in EU Tripartite Social Summits that preceded certain sessions of the European Council. This was the case, within the period in-between CMKOS Congresses, in October 2008 and March 2009. One of the key issues both at the October summit 2008 and the March summit 2009 was the response to the ongoing financial, economic and social crisis. We availed ourselves of this opportunity to challenge the views expressed by the Prime Minister of the Czech Government and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and expressed our views related to the impact of reforms introduced in our country, to the preparations and the progress of our Presidency and to the neo-liberal concept of the Lisbon strategy.

CMKOS was also represented in the so called Employment Summit that took place in Prague on 7 May 2009. This platform, too, was used for the presentation of our views on possible solutions of the crisis and for placing emphasis on the need to prevent a situation where its adverse effects would be born by employees who were certainly not responsible for it.

The EU Macroeconomic Dialogue

In connection with the Czech Presidency, the CMKOS representatives participated within the ETUC delegation in the deliberations of the EU Macroeconomic Dialogue in 2008 and 2009. The dialogue was held at two levels, expert and political. The dialogue dealt with various issues related to the crisis and was highly topical.

During all the above negotiations the representatives of the European social partners had ample opportunity to make the governments, the European Commission and other European institutions acquainted with their views on subjects that were under consideration of the EU bodies. CMKOS used the opportunity to present its views.

The European bilateral social dialogue – EU Social Dialogue Committee

During the whole period since the Fourth Congress, CMKOS actively participated in the work of the EU Social Dialogue Committee, both at plenary sessions and in teams where important documents were negotiated, such as the European social partners' work programme for the 2006-2008 period or a Framework agreement on harassment and violence at work. The CMKOS was actively involved in the development and implementation of the European social partners' work programme for 2009-2010. CMKOS representatives were members of negotiating teams dealing with the amendment to the social partners' agreement on parental leave and in the negotiations concerning a new inclusive labour market agreement. They were members of a team which was called upon to elaborate a joint analysis in respect of the recent rulings of the European Court of Justice concerning the cases Laval, Viking, Ruffert and Commission v. Luxemburg.

The CMKOS presented its views and requirements concerning the ongoing reforms in the Czech Republic and the preparations and handling of the Czech Presidency in the EU Social Dialogue Committee.

In co-operation with our employer partners, CMKOS elaborated interim reports on the implementation of the Framework agreement on work-related stress covering the years 2006 and 2007, and a final report on this Agreement, the first and second interim report on the implementation of the Framework agreement on harassment and violence at work, as well as yearly reports and a final report on the implementation of the Framework of actions on gender equality.

In accordance with the request addressed to us by the European Commission we have submitted our views on these subjects at the EU conference on social dialogue organised by the Portuguese Presidency in autumn 2007.

Within a European Social Fund project we developed, together with the Confederation of Industry of the CR, a guide describing the contents and meaning of European agreements adopted by social partners and communicated it to all our unions.

Several workshops and training programmes were organised with participation of our member unions dealing with the implementation of various instruments adopted by the European social partners, such as their joint agreements and action frameworks.

Joint documents adopted by the European social partners were regularly communicated to member unions and were at disposal on intranet and on the CMKOS web site, as well as on the new Czech social dialogue web site (socialndialog.cz).

EU bodies with a tripartite representation – committees, agencies and foundations

CMKOS was represented in all relevant committees and Governing Boards of EU agencies and foundations.

In the Committee on the European Social Fund we supported a new regulation to the effect that a certain percentage of the ESF resources allocated to individual Member States must be assigned to projects of their social partners, including projects directed at their capacity building.

The fact that all documents prepared by the European Commission are discussed by advisory committees, provided a possibility to CMKOS representatives to submit views on issues of our interest, such as on free movement of workers, health and safety concerns, recognition of qualifications, etc. Significant was also participation of a CMKOS representative in an ETUC delegation, consisting of seven members, to the European Commission advisory committee "Pension Forum", which was constituted in 2009.

In the Governing Boards of agencies and foundations the CMKOS representatives, together with other European trade union representatives, insisted that activities and results produced by these tripartite structures should duly take into account employees' and trade union interests, and that

they must be balanced in order not to favour one-sidedly the notion of competitive advantage to the detriment of social concerns and employees' protection. Emphasis was also placed on the requirement to translate all published documents to more languages and thus to make them available not only to English speaking experts but to other interested parties, as well.

The European Parliament

In connection with the discussions concerning the proposed new legislation, such as the services in internal market directive, the revision of the Working time directive, or the Temporary agency workers directive, etc. we contacted selected Czech Members of the European Parliament, communicated to them the CMKOS and ETUC views and attitudes while soliciting their support.

The CMKOS devoted full attention to elections to the European Parliament that took place in June 2009. Considering the fact that the European Parliament is the unique directly elected EU body, the CMKOS during its Assembly extraordinary session in April 2009 invited member unions and their members to actively participate in the EP elections and to support those candidates who were prepared to take account of people' needs, would oppose all attempts to misuse the economic and social crisis and would defend workers' and trade union rights. The Assembly invited the general public to participate in the elections.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

The CMKOS is represented in the EESC since 2004 when the Czech Republic joined the EU. At present, CMKOS has four representatives, who are active in the Employees' Group (Group II). The CMKOS members were involved in the EESC activities at all different levels (the plenary sessions, section meetings, Group II sessions) and, within their possibilities and in accordance with the CMKOS views, contributed to the development of various EESC positions on social and economic topics addressed to EU institutions.

The Czech integration system for the EU

The CMKOS was and is represented in bodies which, within the Czech Republic, deal with EU relations and are called upon to formulate views in this direction. After the 2006 elections and appointment of the new government the respective responsibilities were transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Government Office. As a result, conditions for our work and opportunities to promote our observations changed for the worse.

The plenary sessions of the Council of Economic and Social Agreement (RHSD) discussed certain proposals tabled by us, which concerned e.g. the use of structural funds, preparations for the EU Presidency, possible impact of the EU climate and energy packages, the National Reform Programme, the Lisbon strategy and the proposed solutions to deal with the economic crisis.

The RHSD working team for EU issues met eight times since mid 2006 but, on most occasions, often only formally. Certain fundamental issues concerning the envisaged EU measures and their impact on the Czech Republic were discussed also by other tripartite working teams.

However, very often submitted were documents, which were already discussed and adopted by the government and it was impossible to make any changes.

As to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs European integration and coordination group, the CMKOS representatives took part, but rarely achieved positive results. Our observations concerning the discussed EU topics were frequently rejected with reference to the fact that they did not concur with views held by the government and, consequently, that they were not to be taken into account.

All our experience shows that it remains imperative to take advantage of CMKOS membership in the ETUC and of membership of our unions in the European trade union federations, and to fully use our activities within the EU Social Dialogue Committee and the European Commission's advisory committees.

The CMKOS European Integration Team and dissemination of information

During the period since the Fourth CMKOS Congress, the European Integration Team every year prepared summary reports entitled "CMKOS and the European integration". These reports were submitted to the CMKOS Council and Assembly.

Also prepared and submitted to the CMKOS bodies were reports concerning the preparation, measures taken by and evaluation of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council and several reports relating to the elections to the European Parliament.

87 issues of the bulletin "Informace EIT" were published. The new CMKOS web includes a part containing EU information with special emphasis on the European social dialogue. The web site contains, for example, all binding joint documents adopted by the European social partners. Within a project, which was funded jointly by the ESF and MoLSA, an e-learning training course "Employment in the European Union" was developed. The EIT organised a workshop on the implementation of the European social partners' autonomous agreements in 2008.

A successful project on European Works Councils submitted by the CMKOS and based on EU funding was running during the 2006-2007 period. Among its outcomes are a handbook on European Works Councils, and a module on training of members and candidates of these councils.

CMKOS activities within the framework of the European and Global trade unions.

The CMKOS and its member unions actively participated in the activities of international organisations of which they are member. They are: the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC).

The European Trade Union Confederation

CMKOS participated in meetings of the ETUC statutory bodies and took part in their deliberations. It was actively involved in ETUC delegations and in the network of trade union lawyers NETLEX. It was represented in ETUC delegations that were involved in negotiations at European level and participated also in other meetings. For example, upon ETUC request, it participated in a trade union conference attended by ETUC member organisations and organisations from African countries, which was held in October 2007. CMKOS also participated in several multilateral projects.

The 11th Congress of ETUC, which took place in Spain in 2007, was an important event. CMKOS and its member unions were represented by a six member delegation. The Congress adopted important documents, some of which were developed with an active CMKOS co-operation.

One of the conclusions adopted by the Congress was to convene an interim ETUC conference in Paris in May 2009. The conference discussed certain ETUC internal matters (statutes, financial questions) and, in particular, challenges concerned with the financial, economic and social crisis. The conference adopted the "Paris Declaration", which formulates trade union views and demands targeted at measures to remedy the current situation.

During the period before and after its Congress, the ETUC conducted a broad campaign for upholding affordable and sustainable public services and creating a firm legal background in support of them, and organised a petition, which was then supported by CMKOS and its member unions under the slogan "Indifference can deprive us of affordable public services". The ETUC succeeded in obtaining more than half a million signatures and has continued in its efforts to enforce the adoption of a European legislation on public services.

The CMKOS and member unions' delegations participated also in European demonstrations, for example concerning the promotion of the binding nature of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (Brussels, June 2007), and equitable wages and salaries (Ljubljana, April 2008). In co-operation with the ETUC, the CMKOS organised a demonstration in Prague against misusing the crisis for curtailing the workers' rights and interests and for putting people first. The demonstration was attended by 30000 participants, including representatives from 18 trade union confederations from eleven European countries. The demonstration was part of a chain of protest activities which, in the course of three days, were attended by 350,000 people across the EU who requested their political representatives and the Czech Presidency and EU bodies and institutions to combat the crisis by accepting due responsibility for the causes and impact of the crisis and for tragic situations of those who have suffered most.

These ETUC activities contributed to the creation of an environment where trade unions assumed a more offensive attitude with a view of defending the protection and development of the European social model. The European industry federations played a vital role in these efforts. ETUC has been involved in the process of creation of new legislation within the European Union and formulated joint demands of member unions. CMKOS experts participated in this process and submitted various observations, for example regarding the debate on flexicurity, the revision of the Working time directive, or amendment of the European works councils' directive. CMKOS experts also took full advantage of these ETUC documents when formulating their observations concerning the proposed Czech legislation.

CMKOS provided regular information to ETUC on the ongoing Czech reforms and on joint actions of the Czech unions targeting adverse social effects of these reforms, as well as on the struggle to preserve the European social model.

As referred to above, the CMKOS provided information to the ETUC and its member organisations on the preparations for the Czech EU Presidency.

CMKOS bodies received regular information on ETUC activities as well as on the participation of Czech representatives in its structures.

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Pan-European Trade Union Council (PERC)

In conformity with the agenda adopted by its Congress, CMKOS lent its support to the historical unification process of representative democratic international trade union centres (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions /ICFTU/ and World Confederation of Labour /WCL/) and contributed in this way towards the constitution of a new global trade union organisation – the International Trade Union Confederation. The CMKOS delegation participated in its founding Congress in Vienna, November 2006, where programme documents were adopted. On the basis of the adopted conclusions the Pan-European Regional Trade Union Council (PERC) was established in March 2007 associating trade unions from the whole European area. Prior to the establishment of the new Council, CMKOS chaired the former pan-European co-ordination council of the ICFTU and in this capacity provided a considerable contribution towards the unification process. Its efforts were appreciated. As a European regional platform, PERC furthers the respect of human and trade union rights, combats all forms of discrimination, and defends decent work and strengthening of trade union representativeness and solidarity. One of its priorities for the promotion of these objectives is trade union education and support provided to trade union organisation, which is the backbone of the trade union future. These two new TU bodies established a close co-operation with the International Labour Organisation. The Czech representatives are involved in PERC activities in the areas of human resources development, informal economy and continue their activities within the ITUC CEE&NIS Women's Network countries. CMKOS was active in the ITUC Decent Work Campaigns.

The CMKOS also participated in other regular activities and campaigns. In co-operation with its member unions it provided its contribution to the yearly publication concerning the violation of trade union rights, organised events on the occasion of the International Commemoration Day (ICD) for Dead and Injured Workers (28 April), participated in the 1st World Women's Conference of the ITUC, etc. It is involved in the preparations of the second ITUC Congress, which is scheduled for June 2010.

Documents published by the ITUC in cooperation with the TUAC with a view to promote the social dimension in the global economy, in particular on the occasion of G7 and G20 summits and meetings of international financial institutions (IMF, the World Bank), were communicated to the government and to the Czech national bank.

The Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD

Due to its limited capacity, the CMKOS participated in selected TUAC meetings only, and did not participate within its expert working groups. However, CMKOS used the entire TUAC expertise very extensively.

It is necessary to appreciate the fact that TUAC fully supported our criticism of the OECD neo-liberalistic Economic Outlook for the CR in 2008 without any consultation with the CMKOS and

provided a one-sided support to the reforms, as proposed and implemented by the Czech right-wing government. As a result of CMKOS and TUAC pressure, the OECD delegation solicited CMKOS observations during its mission undertaken in 2009.

CMKOS activities in relation to the International Labour Organisation (ILO)

CMKOS representatives were regularly represented in the meetings of the supreme ILO body – the International Labour Conference – where they were actively involved both in plenary sessions and in the work of committees negotiating the texts of proposed new conventions and recommendations. CMKOS representatives also took active part in Eight European Regional Meeting of the ILO and in other ILO meetings, as well as in some other activities organised by the ILO Office for workers' activities (ILO-ACTRAV).

The CMKOS Legal Department and the Department for European and International Relations regularly prepared observations concerning reports on the application of conventions and recommendations in the Czech Republic. However, the Czech government demonstrated a lukewarm attitude towards obligations ensuing from ratified conventions, in spite of the fact, that the Czech Republic was deputy member of the ILO Governing Body in the 2005-2008 period and has been a titular member of that body in the 2008-2010 period. This is why CMKOS used its mandate in accordance with the ILO Constitution and conducted its own initiatives. This was the case concerning the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention No.151 protecting public employees exercising the right to organise and in respect of Convention No. 154 on the Promotion of Collective Bargaining (1981). CMKOS prepared a detailed analysis of the contents and meaning of both these conventions examining the compliance of the Czech legislation with them. However the Topolánek government rejected the CMKOS proposal aiming at ratification of these conventions.

Reference can also be made to the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention No. 87 and to the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention No. 98, where CMKOS approached in writing the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs calling attention to the recent rulings of the European Court of Justice concerning the Viking and Laval cases. The two rulings are expected to have an adverse impact on the application of these two key ILO conventions and, therefore, CMKOS appealed on the government to uphold full recognition of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining at EU level.

Of special importance were arguments put forward by the CMKOS representatives in the ILO Committee on Application of Conventions and Recommendations at the ILC session 2008, where non-compliance of the Czech Republic with Convention No. 111 on the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention was discussed. The conclusions adopted by the Conference committee and approved by the plenary sitting contained an urgent appeal addressed to the Czech government to take measures to remedy the situation and to inform the ILO accordingly. Member governments are expected to act on the basis of such conclusions. Upon CMKOS request discussion of the ILO conclusions was included in the plenary RHSD meeting, but the government demonstrated a complete disregard of them. The Czech government did not meet its obligation to provide a report by end of October 2009 and did not comply with its promise announced at the 98th ILC in 2009 to provide a detailed report on measures taken to remedy the criticised items of non-fulfilment.

In order to provide more information on the International Labour organisation, the CMKOS Department for European and International Relations established a special section at the CMKOS web site dealing with various ILO activities. In addition to basic information on the Organisation and its structure and objectives, the general public has at its disposal Czech versions of the basic ILO documents – the ILO Constitution, the Declaration of Philadelphia, the Declaration on Fundamental Rights at Work, the Tripartite Resolution on Multinational Enterprises, the Resolution on Tripartism and Social Dialogue, the Declaration on Social Justice for a fair Globalisation, and the Global Jobs Pact.

Similarly CMKOS translated documents concerning the above case of the non-compliance of the Czech legislation with the ratified Convention No. 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation and enabled all interested parties to have access to them.

CMKOS runs a database of Czech versions of ILO Conventions. All Conventions ratified by the Czech Republic (64 of them) are on the CMKOS web site and further texts are continuously supplemented. With the exception of ratified Conventions where official Czech versions are also published in the Statute Book, they are unofficial translations which nowhere else can be found.

CMKOS and trade unions in the neighbouring countries

Friendly contacts with unions in neighbouring countries were and are continuously nurtured. The CMKOS delegation participated in the Congresses of partner trade union centrals in Slovakia, Germany, Austria and Poland. There is a long tradition of contacts with the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic (KOZ SR) with the exchange of official delegations, consultations concerning problems related to the reforms undertaken in both countries and mutual support in protest actions.

Very significant was manifestation of solidarity undertaken by representatives of the neighbouring trade unions in connection with our protest activities.

CMKOS actively participated in trade union activities within the Visegrad countries, and attended a high-level meeting of their representatives in Poland in 2007. CMKOS organised a similar meeting in Prague in December 2008.

We can refer also to a successful trade union co-operation with the neighbouring countries at the regional level, which was implemented by the existing joint Interregional Trade Union Councils: with Saxony (Labe/Nisa – regional TU councils of the Liberec and Ústí n/L districts), with Bavaria (BoBa – regional TU councils of the Plzeň and Karlovy Vary districts), Upper Austria (the Danube/Vltava – regional TU council of the Southern Bohemia district), and Lower Austria (regional TU council of the Southern Moravia district). This co-operation was extended to include participation in the Eures-T network, i.e. partnership of employment services dealing with dissemination of information in order to promote the European cross-border labour market mobility. The regional council representatives are also involved in the committees that monitor EU operational programmes of co-operation with respective regions of Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria.

Mentioned should also be the excellent co-operation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in such areas as organisation of conferences, round tables, seminars and workshops on up-to-date topics, for example potential reform of the pension system, impact of the global crisis, etc.

Appeal to the Czech President, Deputies, Senators and all future Governments

CMKOS/ETUC Eurodemonstration Prague, 16th May 2009

Not long ago at this very place at the Hradčanské square the US President Barack Obama raised hopes in people and talked about the security of the world.

Today, at the same historical place, tens of thousands of people openly express strong protest against unfair abusing of the crisis against people.

We appeal to you: do not allow suffer most severely those who did not cause the crisis!

Do not make the crisis a pretext for changes in the labour legislation which would bring unprecedented curtailment of workers rights, including the option of firing people without stating reasons!

In the case of the Czech Republic it is proved that the present Labour Code is not the cause of economic problems of the country and individual companies!

Reject such an amendment to the Labour Code which would become a noose for workers!

Help to maintain jobs by public contracts. Support the combination of shortened work with social benefits through EU and state budget means!

Protect people from financial speculators sponging on them - adopt a law against usury!

Correct the social system distorted by reform so that it helps during the crisis to protect unemployed and families with children!

Do not permit hazarding with the pension system!

Do not adopt new risky law on pension savings!

Do not permit devaluation of laid aside pensions and further weakening of public finances!

Do not support the opt-out - a partial privatisation of public pension insurance, which during the crisis would be a big hazard for the pension system!

Money for our pensions does not belong on the speculative stock market!

Do not permit the crisis to become a pretext for liquidation of public services in health care, social care, education and other fields!

Use social dialogue, similarly as it is used in other EU Member States!

Take seriously trade union economic and social analyses which repeatedly in comparison with others proved their quality and accuracy!

Act, decide and rule for the benefit of citizens and not in the interests of speculative profit of financial, lobbyists' groups and tax havens! Not long ago in London representatives of G-20 promised that to the world.

These days, at demonstrations in Madrid, Brussels, Berlin and Prague, we appeal on behalf of 60 million of trade unionists in Europe affiliated to the ETUC to politicians to assume responsibility for the fates of people most severely hit by the crisis.