



UNITED STEELWORKERS
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION



RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 5

Global Unity and Activism

WHEREAS, increasing inequality and concentration of wealth threaten the stability of democratic institutions and the human rights of working people around the world; and

WHEREAS, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted inequalities between rich and poor nations in access to vaccines and life-saving technologies, while at the same time highlighting our dependence on global supply chains; and

WHEREAS, the threat of climate change requires urgent and effective measures to reduce our dependence on carbon-based energy sources; and

WHEREAS, China's domination of key supply chains including critical minerals, solar panels, batteries and other essential technologies, and its repression of labor rights including forced labor, poses a serious and immediate threat to our national and economic security; and

WHEREAS, Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine further underscores the threat posed by authoritarian and anti-democratic governments to workers and to democracy; and

WHEREAS, right-wing politicians have also sought to divide and weaken the labor movement and democracy itself in the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, the mobility of capital, without effective democratic regulation or control, enables multinational corporations and wealthy investors to pit workers in different countries against each other; and

WHEREAS, the failure of political parties in many industrialized nations to address the impact on the working class of "free trade" agreements, dumping of manufactured goods, currency manipulation and deindustrialization has fueled the rise of right-wing political movements that promote racial and religious hatred and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, multinational corporations in pursuit of greater profits continue to drive down real earnings of workers, weaken their health care coverage and threaten them with outsourcing despite the union's good-faith bargaining and willingness to accommodate, where warranted, demands for flexibility and cost savings; and

WHEREAS, even those global corporations that generally respect workers' rights in their home countries increasingly violate those rights when they operate in other countries; and

WHEREAS, our union continues to promote the labor movement by engaging in political and organizing activities with working families; students and young workers; environmentalists; indigenous, African-descendant, and immigrant communities; women's rights advocates; TwoSpirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and Allies (2SLGBTQIA+, recognizing indigenous TwoSpirit as coming first) activists; senior citizens' groups; academics; and religious, civil and human rights defenders as well as trade unionists; and

WHEREAS, corporate-driven globalization can only be countered by a worldwide democratic movement for economic and social justice that fights for good jobs, improved wages, working conditions, health care, retirement security, human rights, social inclusion and environmental standards; and

WHEREAS, our union continues to organize unorganized workers of multinational companies in North America and to strengthen the capacity to coordinate bargaining within companies and industries; and

WHEREAS, global solidarity campaigns since the 2017 Convention have provided concrete assistance to USW members and global partners in organizing and bargaining disputes with Americas Gold & Silver, ArcelorMittal, Bridgestone/Firestone, Caterpillar, Constellium, Dow Dupont, DS Smith, Fenner Dunlop, Goodyear, Grupo Mexico/Asarco, Hecla, HCL, Kumho, Lafarge, Liberty Steel, National Grid, NFI Group, NLMK, Owens-Illinois, Rio Tinto, Securitas, Sibanye Stillwater, Sofidel, Tecnocap, Vale, and 3M.

WHEREAS, Workers Uniting – the global union uniting two million members of USW and UNITE the Union in Canada, Ireland, the U.K, and the U.S. around a common program of industrial solidarity, political action to combat global austerity policies, member-to-member coordination around equalities, youth, women, and health and safety, and global cooperation – maintains its commitment to defend trade union and human rights against the attacks of right-wing governments and demand respect for international labour standards and by governments and corporations; and

WHEREAS, our union supports the work of global unions including IndustriALL Global Union, the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), and UNI Global Union, to build effective networks of unions in multinational companies that enable them to share information about working conditions and prepare for coordinated bargaining; and

WHEREAS, IndustriALL played a key part in creating the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, a legally enforceable agreement signed in 2013 by over 170 global apparel companies and recently re-negotiated; and

WHEREAS, our union stands in solidarity with Bangladesh garment workers, and has launched a campaign demanding Mark's / L'Équipeur and its owner Canadian Tire pay living wages in its global supply chain; and

WHEREAS, our union maintains strategic alliances with labor unions around the globe, including The Australian Workers' Union (AWU) and the Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy

Union (CFMEU) in Australia; the Unified Workers' Central (CUT) and the National Confederation of Metalworkers (CNM/CUT) in Brazil; the Industrial Union of Metalworkers (IG Metall) in Germany; the Authentic Workers Front (FAT) and the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Allied Workers of the Mexican Republic (Los Mineros) in Mexico; and

WHEREAS, since the election of Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, President and General Secretary of the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Allied Workers of the Mexican Republic (Los Mineros) to the Mexican Senate in 2018 and his return to Mexico from forced exile, the USW has continued to strengthen its alliance with Los Mineros to build industrial solidarity in North America, using the Mexican labor law reforms and the enforcement mechanisms of the USMCA; and

WHEREAS, the USW condemns the attacks of the Bolsonaro government in Brazil on trade unions and advocates of worker and human rights, racial equality and environmental justice. We are proud to stand with Workers' Party leader Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in defense of Brazilian democracy; and

WHEREAS, the USW has provided training and support in the areas of health and safety, collective bargaining, membership mobilization, organizing and women's empowerment through the Women of Steel to support the growth of the Liberian trade union movement in the rubber, mining and forestry sectors where we have common employers, leading to collective bargaining agreements that have strengthened health and safety protections and helped to prevent child labor; and

WHEREAS, we recall the pioneering leadership of our former President Lynn R. Williams in establishing a linkage between labor rights and trade agreements, insisting that governmental suppression of labor rights "constitutes not only a social deprivation for the workers concerned, but an economic disadvantage for American workers"; and

WHEREAS, the former Prime Minister of Sweden leader of the Metalworkers' Union IF Metall, Stefan Löfven, has proposed a "Global Deal" for decent work and inclusive growth with the goal of establishing genuine social dialogue to enhance economic stability and shared prosperity, which could lay the groundwork for negotiating global agreements that respect fundamental rights and reduce inequality; and

WHEREAS, the USW, together with democratic unions in Mexico, opposed NAFTA from the inception because it promoted a corporate-driven strategy of economic integration with disastrous impact on jobs and wages, labor rights, and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the USW fought for and won fundamental changes in the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, including the Rapid Response Mechanism which requires facility-specific sanctions on companies that violate worker rights and which is now making it possible for manufacturing workers in Mexico to organize democratic unions, win collective bargaining agreements, and begin to reduce the wage disparity between workers in Mexico and the rest of North America;

WHEREAS, the labor rights provisions of United States and Canadian free trade agreements with Central America, Colombia, Korea and Europe fail to address fundamental worker rights violations. In Colombia, trade unionists continue to be murdered with impunity and government policies systematically undermine collective bargaining; while in Korea, the

government continues to violently repress workers' efforts to exercise their rights to strike, bargain and organize; and

WHEREAS, we demand that all trade agreements include fully enforceable labor and environmental rights based on the USMCA/CUSMA standard, eliminate undemocratic Investor-State Dispute Settlement provisions, create enforceable rules against currency manipulation, strengthen rules of origin, and safeguard "Buy American" and "Buy Canadian" procurement policies; and

WHEREAS, we call for the strengthening of critical supply chains in North America through stepped-up enforcement of anti-dumping and countervailing duty provisions, rigorous scrutiny of Chinese and other foreign investments that may threaten national security in critical materials and technologies; and massive investment to develop self-sufficiency in critical sectors; and

WHEREAS, the USW continues to support the efforts of the Publish What You Pay Coalition to require that multinational mining and petroleum companies disclose all of their payments to foreign governments; and to support the implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian Steelworkers have played a key role in the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability, which has won legislation to establish a Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise; unfortunately, the government has not given this office the promised mandate and powers required to effectively help communities harmed by Canadian companies defend their rights, access remedy or seek justice; and

WHEREAS, Canadian Steelworkers, through the Steelworkers Humanity Fund, have played a key role in building international alliances that have strengthened the efforts of labor and social movements in developing countries to defend human rights; and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center has provided critical support for the efforts of the USW and the global unions to develop partnerships with unions in many developing countries to defend fundamental labor and human rights.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. Our union will continue its successful fight to build international solidarity among workers and their unions to challenge right-wing governments and corporations and achieve social and economic justice and a sustainable environment for all.
2. Our work to establish mutually beneficial global alliances in all of our sectors with key trade union partners that share the commitment to build workers' power to challenge multinational corporations through global organizing, bargaining and political action campaigns will not cease.
3. At home and abroad, our union will continue to build coalitions with activists - including working families; students and young workers; environmentalists; indigenous, African-descendant, and immigrant communities; women's rights advocates; 2SLGBTQIA+ activists; senior citizens' groups; academics; and religious,

civil and human rights defenders as well as trade unionists to demand respect for fundamental human rights and democracy.

4. We will build alliances to ensure that all trade agreements and the structure of the global economy will include enforceable core labor standards. These standards must include the right to organize or join a union without reprisal, the right to bargain collectively and to strike without the threat of being replaced, a prohibition on forced and child labor, minimum wages, hours of work and occupational health and safety. Through our global alliances, we will work to ensure that the institutions of the global trade union movement actively engage in the fight against unfair and anti-democratic trade and investment agreements.
5. We will continue to develop practical strategies to engage our members in transnational organizing, bargaining and solidarity, and work to educate them on the ways labor rights violations and declining living standards in other countries adversely affect our workplaces and communities.