

Dear comrades,

Dear activists,

We are living in difficult times, and seeing hundreds of combative trade union delegates come together warms our hearts and indicates a concrete horizon of struggle, and for that we thank you.

Firstly the pandemic, then the war in Ukraine, have made it clear before the eyes of billions of human beings that what happens thousands and thousands of miles away from our homes - for those lucky enough to have a roof - directly impacts our lives.

It was true of the virus, which triggered a health crisis in which the collective antibody for which our grandfathers and grandmothers, our fathers and mothers, fought - public health systems - proved far more fragile than our people had hoped.

And not because of the inability of women health care workers. On the contrary, they have demonstrated all their self-sacrifice in defending what is most precious to our peoples: life itself. The fragility of our health care is not the responsibility of female workers, nor is it the result of bad luck. No! It is the product of decades of privatization policies, carried out in all our countries, in all our continents.

IMF and World Bank, with the complicity of the vast majority of our rulers, have not changed their recipes: they continue to lend money to our countries imposing the freezing of public sector wages, greater ease of dismissal in the private sector, introduction or increase of taxes on value added, and cuts on cuts in public spending, starting with consumption subsidies for the most suffering sections of our populations.

Here in Italy, where we are happy and glad this World Congress is being held, at the outbreak of the pandemic we were told "everything will be fine", "we will come out better". False! We are coming out in pieces. At least we are, the working men and women, the unemployed. Certainly not the minority of privileged people who have further enriched their already indecent banquets.

Informal work, precariousness, starvation wages, absence of rights are the figure of the present for millions and millions of workers. More and more blackmailable.

And yet, even in dark times, the sun continues to flood us with its rays.

These rays are the struggles that millions and millions of men and women develop every day, organized in trade unions that make conflict their beating heart and not, on the contrary, "social peace", corruption, co-optation into the system.

From the first trade unions in the United States that managed to penetrate the Amazon dictatorship to the "cartoneros" and "trabajadores sin techo" in Argentina, from the peasants who occupy land and self-manage it in Brazil to the workers in Sri Lanka who strike and take to the streets against the increasing cost of living, facing the harsh repression of the government, there are many battles that allow the light to arrive.

Every seed needs light and water to develop and grow. Until it becomes a strong and vigorous plant. Able to resist the enemy. Who can take on a thousand faces, who can speak a thousand languages, who can use different tactics depending on the geography, but is everywhere the same: the logic of capital that drives every choice of the ruling classes.

Against this common enemy and in order to develop the plant of rebellion and the future, you will always find in us of Potere al Popolo brothers and sisters of struggle.

We are with you!

Good work, happy Congress of the World Trade Union Federation!