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Car Industry

Solidarity from CITA

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This is a message of solidarity sent by participants in the International Council of Car Workers (CITA) to the European Conference of Workers in the Car Industry, held at the International Institute for Research and Education in Amsterdam on May 28-29, 2011. We have also published [Declaration of the European Car Workers' Conference](#) an overview at [Creating cross-border links between militants](#) and [Ford Blanquefort, an example](#) from the same event.

Dear colleagues,

As participants in the International Council of Car Workers (CITA), we give greetings and wish you much success for your European meeting of car workers. Thank you for your invitation. Unfortunately, for reasons of timing, we cannot be with you.

At the 6th international Council of Car Workers, in late 2009 in Germany, with 450 participants from 17 countries, we adopted an international program of struggle for car workers. It took into account a comprehensive restructuring of the global industry and the consequences of the battle of mutual destruction of the carmakers for car workers and their families.

In fact, tens of thousands of jobs have been destroyed, wages have been reduced, in particular in the United States, Russia, Spain and Italy, not to mention the closure of the Opel plant in Antwerp. In Europe, Opel has reduced its workforce by 10,000, or 20%. Opel workers in Bochum (Germany) have been informed of massive layoffs of about 1,200 jobs.

The initial impact of the world economic and financial crisis was attenuated by partial unemployment and, often, an increase in compensation. With scrappage schemes and significant discounts an even deeper collapse of production was avoided in many countries. But now, the increase in exploitation, the concentration of car companies and considerable job destruction has become more apparent.

In many companies, daily struggles are on-going against increased exploitation, for higher wages and so on. The huge expansion of production capacities, particularly in the BRICs, is based on each group's hope of outdoing its competitors. We must therefore expect new restructurings related to closures of factories, massive layoffs and so on.

Against the various attempts at division by management, it is necessary to forge the unity of workers around the whole world!

In the factories, political debate is lively and not only on the immediate issues of work. Because the capitalist system is showing its overall decay, like its inhuman energy policy, indifferent to deaths, like the nuclear disaster in Japan, its economic and financial crises and its wars in Afghanistan, Libya, Ivory Coast and so on.

The Fukushima nuclear disaster brought hundreds of thousands of people onto the streets in Germany. The international working class should get even more involved in the fight for the preservation of the natural environment. Among other things, this question is very important in our activities because the crisis of the environment and the exploitation of workers have the same cause: the pursuit without end of the maximum profit. The fight to save the bases of life for humanity, the struggle for a better future, without exploitation and oppression, requires class

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awareness and organization. Our Council has always said: we will think beyond the system of capitalist profit and we will discuss a social alternative.

We hope that your meeting will be a success and we want to take this opportunity to invite you also to our 7th Council of Car Workers from May 7-20, 2012 in Munich, Germany (more information can be read on our site: www.automobilarbeiterratschlag.de))

Militant greetings and solidarity,

Fritz Hoffman, Ulrich Ittermann, Birgit Schumann

(participants in the International Council of Auto Workers)