### AC – Plan

#### Governments ought to recognize and unconditional right of workers to strike.

### AC – Democracy Adv

#### Cascading strike restrictions are getting worse

**Xhafa 16** [Edlira Xhafa, Albania · Executive Director, Global Labour University (GLU) Online Academy · International Center for Development of Decent Work, University of Kassel, Germany. "The Right to Strike Struck Down? An Analysis of Recent Trends." https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/12827.pdf]

The survey findings and the review of the ILO and ITUC reports show that most (23 countries8 ) of the 35 countries which are OECD members have enacted legal provisions and/or case-law rulings and/or have adopted practices which restrict the **right to strike** above and beyond established international **standards**. Whereas these **violations** took place in these countries prior to the 2012 debates at the ILO, in the last 5 years 9 countries – Australia, Belgium, Canada, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Spain and Turkey – have introduced legal measures which **violate** the **right to strike**. Plans to introduce a more restrictive **legal framework** are also in the pipeline in the **U**nited **K**ingdom. In addition to violations in the legal framework, 8 OECD countries – Belgium, Canada, Germany, Greece, Mexico, Portugal, Spain and Turkey – have recently adopted practices restricting the right to strike. Figure 3 shows that the areas violated by several countries are: 1) exclusion of groups of workers from the right to strike; 2) prohibition of / restrictions on political and sympathy strikes; and 3) excessive sanctions on legitimate strikes.

The OECD countries have followed the **same trends** revealed by general findings with regard to the practice of the **right to strike** (Figure 3): more countries have adopted restrictive practices in the areas of (1) acts of interference during strikes; and (2) excessive **sanctions** on legitimate strikes.

All emerging countries and economies9 are also reported to have enacted legal provisions and/or have had caselaw rulings which **violate** the **right to strike**. In the last 5 years, restrictive legal measures have been introduced in Brazil and India, while practices which violate the right to strike have been adopted in all the countries. In summary, the violations of the last 5 years can be better understood as a continuation of the attack on the right to strike. Indeed, the survey and the reviewed reports indicate that a restrictive regulatory framework existed in almost all the countries covered by the survey as well as in many other countries prior to the 2012 controversy at the ILC. At the same time, however, there is **noticeable trend** towards further **restrictions** on the right to strike in countries across regions and **regardless** of their stage of **economic development**. Under the guise of ›public **order**‹, ›public **security**‹, ›threat of **terrorism**‹, ›national **interest**‹ and ›**economic crisis**‹, countries have continued to introduce restrictive regulations which violate internationally recognized principles regulating the **right to strike**. The exercise of right to strike is further undermined by threats of **dislocation**, increasingly **precarious work**, arbitrary dismissals and extensive use of non-standard workers to replace **striking workers**.

#### The right to strike is key to global democracy – unions are incubators for resistance to authoritarianism

**Puddington 10** [Arch Puddington is currently Senior Scholar Emeritus at Freedom House. He also previously served as the Senior Vice President for Research at Freedom House. "The Global State of Workers’ Rights: Free Labor in a Hostile World." https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline\_images/WorkerRightsFULLBooklet-FINAL.pdf]

Some 30 years ago, in August 1980, workers in communist **Poland** formed the independent Solidarity trade union movement, thereby challenging one of the totalitarian system‘s fundamental principles: control of labor organizations by the party-state. The strike that led to Solidarity‘s establishment was launched at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk. It quickly spread throughout Poland, and its program escalated from workplace issues to a sweeping demand for **freedom** to create the institutions that undergird a **democratic society**. After a decade of tumult and repression, Solidarity emerged triumphant, compelling the country‘s communist authorities to allow competitive elections that resulted in a landmark victory for the **democratic opposition**. This in turn led to the **domino-like collapse** of communist rule throughout Central and Eastern Europe and, two years later, the breakup of the **Soviet Union**.

The question some are asking today is whether a phenomenon similar to Solidarity might be possible in what is now the world‘s most powerful authoritarian country, China. In recent years, evidence of worker unrest there has steadily **mounted**. Strikes and other forms of labor protest occur regularly; just in the last few months, workers have called high-profile strikes at installations operated by some of the world‘s largest multinational **corporations**. As was the case in Poland, the official labor umbrella group, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), has played an obstructive role by trying to force striking workers back into their enterprises and in some instances acting as **strikebreakers**. There are also signs that some within the ACFTU, unlike in the official Polish union, see a need for change that seems to be lost on the leadership.

The burgeoning workers‘ resistance in China has drawn supporters and participants from many segments of the economy, including cab drivers, teachers, and factory workers. Despite their lack of experience as union activists, they have embraced the tried-and-true tactics of labor protest— sit-down strikes and roadblocks, for example—and have eschewed violence. These youthful workers have also used mobile telephones and the internet to draw attention to their causes. The stories they tell about conditions at the workplace are eerily familiar to anyone who is acquainted with the history of the trade union struggle in Europe and North America: low pay within the context of rapidly expanding inequality, punishing hours, harsh supervisors, and a consuming work routine that discourages family life.

The most recent strike wave has taken many observers outside China by **surprise**. The growth of the Chinese industrial juggernaut gave rise to myths about Chinese workers, who were widely regarded as docile, willing to work remarkably long hours without complaint, uninterested in unions or collective action, inspired by patriotic love for the Communist Party leadership, and unwilling to challenge authority. Among those caught unaware were the owners and managers of multinational corporations whose investments in China have been predicated on the assumption of cheap, compliant Chinese labor. Indeed, the American Chamber of Commerce in China was sharply **critical** of changes to Chinese **labor laws** that were adopted in 2008, issuing a thinly veiled warning that enhanced protections for workers would lead multinationals to look elsewhere for new **installations**.

Unlike the state-owned enterprises in communist **Poland**, the strike targets in modern China are foreign-owned, **private firms**. Accordingly, the strikers do not confront the state directly, and the strikes are thus not regarded as **overtly political**. Still, the increasing willingness of Chinese workers to risk arrest and jail to defend workplace rights is a potent **signal** to the government of the power of independent **worker action**.

The Chinese case is a cogent reminder of the central role played by the struggle for worker rights in the past century‘s broader movement toward democratic freedom. From South Africa to South Korea, Chile to the Czech Republic, the democracy and workers‘ rights movements have been closely linked. This **relationship** was well understood by **fascist**, communist, and authoritarian dictators who feared the strength of **democratic trade unionists**.

A number of important qualities distinguish free trade unions from other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that promote **democratic** reform. First, unlike most NGOs, they have a **mass membership**. Second, if they are run **democratically**, they can act as a training ground for democracy activists, who learn how to **campaign** on issues, muster support, and get themselves **elected** to union offices. And third, trade unions are one of the few NGOs that operate simultaneously in the **social**, **economic**, and **political** spheres, making them a potential **counterweight** to the **concentrated** power of economic and political elites.

It is no surprise, then, that a principal **goal of totalitarians** and **dictators** of both the right and the left has been to secure absolute **control** over organized **labor** and transform unions into pliant instruments of the **party-state**. Communist movements of the past, which claimed to draw legitimacy from the working classes, were particularly eager to capture and destroy independent labor organizations.

Today, repressive regimes are still wary of the power of organized workers. In a number of societies, unions and workers remain in the **forefront** of movements that seek **human rights**, **fair elections**, a free press, and laws to stem rampant **corruption**. Unions have played a crucial role, for example, in the effort to bring reforms to Zimbabwe in the face of murderous reprisals by the regime of President Robert **Mugabe**. In South Africa, it was the labor movement that prevented the transshipment of Chinese weapons to Zimbabwe at a time when the government of President Thabo Mbeke went out of its way to befriend Mugabe. In **Iran**, bus drivers and other workers have been important forces in the struggle for **democracy**; threatening statements issued in recent months by the country‘s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have paid special attention to the role of workers in the opposition. In **Guinea**, unions were a critical force in demonstrations that sought **democratic change**, and union members were prominent among those massacred by the country‘s military junta in September 2009. And in **Venezuela**, unions have strongly resisted attempts by President Hugo Chavez to bring the entire labor movement under his **personal control**.

The political leaderships of many authoritarian countries—such as **Russia**, **China**, **Iran**, and **Egypt**—are acutely aware of the Solidarity example and are determined to forestall a repetition on their territory. However, only the most **oppressive regimes**—North Korea and Cuba, for example—exert the degree of tight control that marked previous eras, and relatively few countries respond to trade union activism with the sort of thuggery employed by Mugabe. Just as they have developed sophisticated mechanisms to **muzzle** independent **voices in the media**, control the activities of civil society organizations, and marginalize opposition political parties, modern authoritarian regimes have devised more nuanced strategies to keep organized labor under control. Thus the Communist Party leadership in **China** has developed an approach that combines concessions to striking workers with efforts to restrict press attention to labor **unrest**, prevent labor complaints from reaching **higher authorities** in the state or party, and above all block the formation of a nationwide **workers‘ movement** that could become an **autonomous source of power** like Solidarity.

The problems of workers are not restricted to countries with authoritarian political environments. Societies that otherwise observe a wide array of democratic freedoms—those that tolerate robust debate in the media, are sensitive to the rights of minorities, and have adopted a series of policies to achieve gender equality—may still take steps to limit the power of trade unions as agents of collective bargaining and sources of independent political power. The most glaring example of this phenomenon is the United States. While the country has adopted laws that in principle guarantee the rights of workers to form unions, engage in collective bargaining, and conduct strikes and other forms of workplace protest, these rights have been circumscribed in practice over the past three decades through a combination of court decisions, political initiatives, and government policies.

The status of workers‘ rights must also be viewed within the **context** of a global **decline** in **freedom of association**. Authoritarian governments have singled out the institutions of civil society for special attention in recent years. Targets include democratic political parties, human rights organizations, women‘s advocates, groups that investigate corruption or monitor abuse by security services, organizations that seek legal reform, and groups that champion minority rights or religious freedom—organizations, in other words, that aim to provide ordinary people with a voice or influence on public policy.

#### Establishing an unconditional right to strike is key – it’s the backbone of organized labor activities in every sector

**Pope 18** [James Gray Pope is a distinguished professor of law at Rutgers Law School and serves on the executive council of the Rutgers Council of AAUP/AFT Chapters, AFL-CIO. He can be reached at jpope@law.rutgers.edu. "Labor’s right to strike is essential." https://www.psc-cuny.org/clarion/september-2018/labor%E2%80%99s-right-strike-essential]

The recent teacher strikes **underscore** another, equally **vital** function of the strike: political **democracy**. It is no accident that strikers often serve as midwives of democracy. Examples include Poland in the 1970s, where shipyard strikers brought down the **dictatorship**, and South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, where strikers were central to the defeat of **apartheid**. Even in relatively democratic countries like the **U**nited **S**tates, workers often find it necessary to withhold their labor in order to offset the **disproportionate** power of wealthy interests and **racial elites**. During the 1930s, for example, it took mass strikes to overcome judicial resistance to progressive economic regulation. Today, workers confront a political system that has been warped by voter suppression, **gerrymandering** and the judicial protection of corporate political expenditures as “freedom of speech.” With corporate lackeys holding a majority of seats on the Supreme Court, workers may soon need **strikes** to clear the way for **progressive legislation** just as they did in the 1930s.

But if the **right to strike** is a **no-brainer**, then how did Cuomo and de Blasio justify **attacking it**? “The premise of the Taylor Law,” said Cuomo, “is you would have chaos if certain services were not provided,” namely police, firefighters and prison guards. If that’s the premise, then why not endorse Nixon’s proposal as to teachers and most public workers, and propose exceptions for truly essential services? That’s the approach of international law, and that’s what Nixon clarified she supports. But Cuomo couldn’t explain why teachers and other non-essential personnel should be denied this basic human right. As for de Blasio, he claimed that the Taylor Law accomplishes “an important public purpose” and that “there are lots of ways for workers’ rights to be acknowledged and their voices to be heard.” What public purpose? Forcing workers to accept inadequate wages and unsafe conditions? What ways to be heard? Groveling to politicians for a raise in exchange for votes?

The ban forces once-proud unions to serve as cogs in the political machines of Wall Street politicians. No sooner did Nixon endorse the right to strike than two prominent union leaders rushed to provide cover for Cuomo. Danny Donohue, president of the Civil Service Employees Association, called her “incredibly naive” and charged that “clearly, she does not have the experience needed to be governor of New York.” Evidently Cuomo, who was elected governor on a program of attacking unions and followed through with cuts to public workers’ pensions and wages, does have the requisite experience. John Samuelsen of the Transport Workers Union, which represents more than 40,000 New York City transit workers, also lashed out, saying, “I believe that she will cut and run when we shut the subway down…. As soon as her hipster Williamsburg supporters can’t take public transit to non-union Wegmans to buy their kale chips, she will call in the National Guard and the Pinkertons.”

Tough talk. Roger Toussaint, the TWU Local 100 president who led a subway strike in 2005 and was jailed for it, once tagged Samuelsen a “lapdog” for Cuomo. But “attack dog” might be more accurate in this case. Presented with a rare opportunity to trumpet workers’ most fundamental right in the glare of media attention, Samuelsen chose instead to drive a cultural wedge between traditionally minded workers and nonconformists, many of whom toil as baristas, restaurant servers and tech workers – constituencies that are fueling the anti-Trump resistance and pushing the Democratic Party to break with Wall Street.

Here we see shades of former AFL-CIO President George Meany, who helped to elect a very different Richard Nixon by refusing to endorse George McGovern, one of the most consistently pro-labor candidates in US history, on the ground that he was supported by “hippies.”

Samuelsen’s descent to Cuomo attack dog is inexplicable except as a response to the crushing pressures generated by the Taylor Law. He stands out from most other public-sector labor leaders not for sucking up to establishment politicians, but for minimizing it. Just two years ago, Samuelsen was one of the few major labor leaders who had the guts to endorse Bernie Sanders over Wall Street’s choice, Hillary Clinton. And when he was elected president of the New York local, it was on a promise to be more effective at mobilization and confrontation than Toussaint. Once on the job, however, he and his slate had to confront the devastating results of the strike ban. In addition to jailing Toussaint and penalizing strikers two days’ pay for each day on strike, a court had fined the union millions of dollars and stripped away its right to collect dues through payroll deductions. No wonder Samuelsen quietly redirected the union’s strategy away from striking and toward less confrontational mobilizations and political deal-making.

A WAY FORWARD

Any way you look at it, striking will be absolutely **essential** if American organized **labor**, now down to 11 percent of the workforce, is to revive. As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka once warned, workers must have “their **only true weapon** – the **right to strike**,” or “organized labor in America will soon **cease to exist**.” Red-state teachers have shown the way, exercising their constitutional and human right to strike in defiance of “law.” Will Democrats and labor leaders celebrate their example, or will they follow Cuomo, de Blasio and the Republicans down the path of suppression?

#### And revitalizing union activity and worker dissent ensures democracy prevails

**Chenoweth 19** [Eric Chenoweth was the founding director of IDEE from 1985 to 1987 and has been its co-director since 1994, overseeing fundraising, publications, and special programs. Among the programs he directed was Civic Bridges in Yugoslavia, which helped civic movements to organize under the Milošević dictatorship, and promoted civil society and democracy in Serbia and other republics of former Yugoslavia. "A Forgotten Legacy: American Labor’s Pioneering Role in Global Support for Democracy." https://freedomhouse.org/article/forgotten-legacy-american-labors-pioneering-role-global-support-democracy]

There is also a growing understanding that trade unions are not historical **anachronisms** but still **essential institutions** both for defending workers from **economic exploitation** and also for protecting basic **democratic** interests and **representation**. We see a revived interest in organizing trade unions here in the **U**nited **S**tates and **Europe**. And there are certainly many countries where a revival of international **solidarity** and direct support for trade unions could bring **democratic change**, from **Hungary to Zimbabwe**. But we need to have a **genuine revival** of trade unionism here and also a realignment back from the abstract “civil society” concept of “democracy promotion” to a more **concrete** support for mass-based **worker and political organizations**. It is such organizations and movements that can both bring about and institutionalize **democratic change**. This is what didn’t happen after 1989.

#### It spills over – democratized labor creates a culture of participation that offsets authoritarian populism

**Spiegelaere 18** [Stan De Spiegelaere is a researcher at the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). "An Unlikely Cure For Populism: Workplace Democracy." https://socialeurope.eu/an-unlikely-cure-for-populism-workplace-democracy]

Trump in the White House, **Orban** in Hungary, the Law and Justice party in Poland, the **AfD** in Germany, **Erdoğan** in Turkey… It seems like the list of challenges to our democracies is becoming **worryingly extensive**. Time to act! And the area where one should act might surprise you: our **companies**.

Democracy lives on **values** of speaking up, **participating** in decision making and being involved. It’s when societies think their voices and votes don’t matter, that democracies are **threatened** in their core. Yet, the place where we spend a good deal of our active days, companies, is quite **authoritarian**. Speaking up is not always values, participating in decision making not welcome and don’t even think about suggesting to vote out your management.

Think about it. Our societies want us to spend about 40 hours a week in **non-democratic environments**, doing as we are told and at the same time be critical, voicing and engaged citizens in the remaining time. No surprise that many resolve this **cognitive dissonance** by **retreating** from political **democracy** altogether, with all due consequences.

**Democracy starts at work**

It’s not the first time our societies are confronted with this limbo between democracy and the capitalist organization of the firm. And many countries have found ways to at least lessen this painful spread by introducing some types of democracy in the companies: employees are given a vote. Not to choose the company management (yet), but to choose some representatives that can talk with the management on their behalf.

**Unions**, works councils and similar institutions take democracy down to the company floors. **Imperfect**, sure, but they give at least a slim **democratic coating** to our rather autocratic working lives. They enable workers to voice their demands, suggest changes and denounce issues without risking personal **retaliation**.

And by doing so, they create an environment in which individual employees feel more comfortable to speak up too about their own work. About how it can be improved, about when to do what. And these hands-on experiences of democracy breed a more general **democratic culture.** According to two recent studies, employees being involved in decision making about their work are **more likely** to be **interested** in politics, have a **pro-democratic attitude,** vote, sign a petition or be active in parties or action groups. And this is what democracy is all about. It’s more than just casting a vote every so often, it’s about being **engaged** and **involved** in decision making that affects you.

The picture is quite clear: if we want political democracy to **succeed** we need citizens to have practical experiences with **participation** and involvement. And where better to organize this then in companies by giving people a vote on their representatives and a say in how they do their day-to-day work. Empowered employees bring **emancipated citizens**. No coincidence the European Trade Union Confederation aims to put this back on the policy agenda.

Populism gives us a **fish**, workplace democracy **teaches us how** to fish

Lacking voice in the workplace, lacking hands on experiences with the (often difficult) democratic decision making, many turn to politicians promising to be their voice. “I am your voice” said Trump to working America in 2016. Similarly, the German AfD stressed to be the voice of the ‘little man’.

They all promise of **restoring ‘real democracy’** by being their voice on the highest level. At the same time, all these populists take measures which break the voice of workers on the company level. Trump is making it harder for unions to organize or bargain collectively. In Hungary, the **Orban** government has limited the **right to strike** and made organizing more difficult.

#### Democratic global governance prevents existential threats

**Kolodziej 17,** [Emeritus Research Professor of Political Science @ University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Challenges to the Democratic Project for Governing Globalization, https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/96620/Kolodziej%20Introduction%205.19.17.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y]

The Rise of a Global Society

Let me first sketch the global democratic project for global governance as a point of reference. We must first recognize that globalization has given rise to a global society for the **first time** in the evolution of the human **species**. We are now **stuck with each other**; **seven and half billion** people today — nine to **ten** by **2050**: all **super connected** and **interdependent**. In greater or lesser measure, humans are mutually dependent on each other in the pursuit of their most salient values, interests, needs, and preferences — concerns about personal, community, and national **security**, sustainable economic **growth**, protection of the **environment**, the equitable **distribution** of the globe’s material wealth, human **rights**, and even the validation of their personal and social identities by others. Global **warming** is a metaphor of this morphological social change in the human condition. **All** humans are **implicated** in this looming Anthropogenic-induced **disaster** — the exhausts of billions of automobiles, the methane released in fracking for natural gas, outdated U.S. coal-fired power plants and newly constructed ones in China. Even the poor farmer burning charcoal to warm his dinner is complicit.

Since interdependence surrounds, ensnares, and binds us as a human society, the dilemma confronting the world’s diverse and divided populations is evident: the **expanding scope** as well as the **deepening**, **accumulating**, and **thickening** interdependencies of globalization urge global government. But the Kantian ideal of universal governance is beyond the reach of the world’s disparate peoples. They are **profoundly divided** by religion, culture, language, tribal, ethnic and national loyalties as well as by class, social status, race, gender, and sexual orientation. How have the democracies responded to this dilemma? How have they attempted to reconcile the growing interdependence of the world’s disputing peoples and need for global governance?

What do we mean by the governance of a human society?

A working, **legitimate government** of a human society requires simultaneous responses to three competing imperatives: Order, Welfare, and Legitimacy. While the forms of these OWL imperatives have differed radically over the course of human societal evolution, these constraints remain predicable of all human societies if they are to replicate themselves and flourish over time. The OWL imperatives are no less applicable to a global society.

1. Order refers to a society’s investment of awesome material power in an individual or body to arbitrate and resolve value, interest, and preference conflicts, which cannot be otherwise resolved by non-violent means — the Hobbesian problematic.

2. The Welfare imperative refers to the necessity of humans to eat, drink, clothe, and shelter themselves and to pursue the full-range of their seemingly limitless acquisitive appetites. Responses to the Welfare imperative, like that of Order, constitute a distinct form of governing power and authority with its own decisional processes and actors principally associated either with the Welfare or the Order imperative. Hence we have the Marxian-Adam Smith problematic.

3. Legitimacy is no less a form of governing power and authority, independent of the Order and Welfare imperatives. Either by choice, socialization, or coerced acquiescence, populations acknowledge a regime’s governing authority and their obligation to submit to its rule. Here arises the Rousseaunian problematic.

The government of a human society emerges then as an evolving, precarious balance and compromise of the ceaseless struggle of these competing OWL power domains for ascendancy of one of these imperatives over the others. It is against the backdrop of these OWL imperatives — Order, Welfare, and Legitimacy — that we are brought to the democratic project for global governance.

The Democratic Project

For Order, open societies constructed the global democratic state and, in alliance, the democratic global-state system. Collectively these initiatives led to the creation of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and the European Union to implement the democratic project’s system of global governance.

The democratic global state assumed all of the functions of the Hobbesian Westphalian security state — but a lot more. The global state became a Trading, Banking, Market, and Entrepreneurial state. To these functions were added those of the Science, Technology and the Economic Growth state. How else would we be able to enjoy the **Internet**, **cell phones** and iPhones, or **miracle cures**? These are the products of the **iron triangle** of the global democratic state, academic and non-profit research centers, and corporations. It is a **myth** that the Market System did all this **alone**. Fueled by increasing material wealth, the democratic global state was afforded the means to become the **Safety Net** state, providing **ed**ucation, **health**, **social security**, leisure and recreation for its population. And as the global state’s power expanded across this broad and enlarging spectrum of functions and roles, the global state was also constrained by the social compacts of the democracies to be bound by popular rule. The ironic result of the expansion of the global state’s power and social functions and its obligation to accede to popular will was a Security state and global state-system that vastly outperformed its principal authoritarian rivals in the Cold War. So much briefly is the democratic project’s response to the Order imperative.

Now let’s look at the democratic project’s response to the Welfare imperative. The democracies institutionalized Adam Smith’s vision of a global Market System. The Market System trucks and barters, Smith’s understanding of what it means to be human. But it does a lot more. The Market System facilitates and fosters the free movement of people, goods and services, capital, ideas, values, scientific discoveries, and best technological practices. Created is a vibrant global civil society oblivious to state boundaries. What we now experience is De Tocqueville’s Democracy in America on global steroids.

As for the imperative of Legitimacy, the social compacts of the democracies affirmed Rousseau’s conjecture that all humans are free and therefore equal. Applied to elections each citizen has one vote. Democratic regimes are also obliged to submit to the rule of law, to conduct free and fair elections, to honor majority rule while protecting minority rights, and to **promote** human rights at home and **abroad**.

The Authoritarian Threat to the Democratic Project

The **democratic project** for **global governance** is now at **risk**. Let’s start with the challenges posed by authoritarian regimes, with Russia and China in the lead. Both Russia and China would **rest global governance** on Big Power spheres of influence. Both would assume **hegemonic status** in their respective regions, asserting their versions of the **Monroe Doctrine**. Their regional hegemony would then **leverage** their claim to be global **Big Powers**. Moscow and Beijing would then have an equal say with the United States and the West in sharing and shaping global governance. The Russo-Chinese global system of Order would ascribe to Russia and China governing privileges not accorded to the states both aspire to dominate. Moscow and Beijing would enjoy **unconditional** recognition of their state **sovereignty**, territorial integrity, and non-interference in their domestic affairs, but they would reserve to themselves the right to **intervene** in the domestic and foreign affairs of the states and peoples under their tutelage in pursuit of their hegemonic interests. President Putin has announced that Russia’s **imperialism** encompasses the **millions** of Russians living in the former republics of the Soviet Union. Russia contends that Ukraine and Belarus also fall under Moscow’s purported claim to historical sovereignty over these states. Forceful re-absorption of **Crimea** and control over eastern **Ukraine** are viewed by President Putin as Russia’s historical inheritances. Self-determination is not extended to these states or to other states and peoples of the former Soviet Union. Moscow rejects their right to freely align, say, with the European Union or, god forbid, with NATO.

In contrast to the democratic project, universal in its reach, the Russo-Chinese conception of a stable global order rests on more **tenuous** and **conflict-prone** **ethno-national foundations**. Russia’s proclaimed enemies are the United States and the European Union. Any means that undermines the unity of these entities is viewed by Moscow as a gain. The endgame is a **poly-anarchical** interstate system, potentially as **war-prone** as the Eurocentric system **before** and **after World War I**, but now populated by states with **nuclear weapons.**

Global politics becomes a **zero-sum game**.

Moscow has **no compunctions** about **corrupting** the **electoral processes** of democratic states, conducting threatening **military exercises** along NATO’s east border, or violating the more than 30-year old treaty to ban the deployment of Intermediate-Range **missile launchers**, capable of **firing nuclear weapons**. Nothing less than the **dissolution** of the democratic project is Moscow’s solution for global Order.

China also seeks a revision of the global Order. It declares sovereignty over the **South China Sea**. Rejected is The Hague Tribunal’s dismissal of this claim. Beijing continues to build artificial islands as military bases in the region to assert its control over these troubled waters. If it could have its way, China would decide which states and their naval vessels, notably those of the United States, would have access to the South China Sea.

Where Moscow and Beijing depart sharply are in their contrasting responses to the Welfare imperative. Moscow has **no solution** other than to use its oil and gas resources as instruments of **coercive diplomacy** and to weaken or **dismantle** existing Western **alliances** and international economic **institutions**. China can ill-afford the dismantling of the global market system. In his address to the Davos gathering in January of this year, Chinese President Xi asserted that “any attempt to cut off the flow of capital, technologies, products, industries and people between economies, and channel the waters in the ocean back into isolated lakes and creeks is simply not possible.” Adam Smith could not have said it better. Both Moscow and Beijing have been particularly assiduous to legitimate their regimes. President Putin’s case for legitimacy is much broader and deeper than a pure appeal to Russian nationalism. He stresses the spiritual and cultural unity of Russianspeaking populations spread across the states of the post-Soviet space. A central core of that unity is the Russian Orthodox Church, a key prop of the regime. Reviled is Western secularism, portrayed as corrupt and decadent, viewed by Putin as an existential threat to the Russian World. The Chinese regime, secular and atheistic, can hardly rely on religion to legitimate the regime. Beijing principally rests its legitimacy on its record of economic development and nationalism. The regime’s success in raising the economic standards of hundreds of millions of Chinese reinforces its claim to legitimacy in two ways. On the one hand, the Communist Party can rightly claim to have raised hundreds of millions of Chinese from poverty within a generation. On the other hand, the Communist Party insists that its model of economic growth, what critics scorn as crony capitalism, is superior to the unfettered, market-driven model of the West. Hence capitalism with Chinese characteristics is more effective and legitimate than the Western alternative.

Where Moscow and Beijing do **converge** is in fashioning their responses to the Legitimacy imperative. They **repudiate Western liberal democracy**. Both reject criticisms of their human rights abuses as interventions into their domestic affairs. Dissidents are harassed, incarcerated, or, in some instances, assassinated. Journalists are co-opted, selfcensored, silenced, or imprisoned. Social media is state controlled. Both the Putin regime and the Chinese Communist Party monopolize the public narratives evaluating governmental policy. Transparency and accountability are hostage to governmental secrecy. Civil society has few effective avenues to criticize governmental actions. Moscow adds an ironic twist to these controls in manipulating national elections to produce an elected authoritarian regime.

Whether either of these authoritarian responses to the Legitimacy imperative will survive **remains to be seen**. Beijing’s use of economic performance and nationalism to underwrite its legitimacy is a double-edged sword. If economic performance falters, then legitimacy suffers. Whether top-down nationalism will always control nationalism from the bottom-up is also problematic. In resting legitimacy on nationalism, dubious historical claims, and crypto-religious beliefs, Moscow is spared Beijing’s economic performance test. That said, there is room for skepticism that in the long-run Russians will exchange lower standards of living for corrupt rule in pursuit of an elusive Russian mission antagonistic to the West. The implosion of the Soviet Union, due in no small part to its retarded economic and technological development, suggests that the patience of the Russian people has limits. Demonstrations in March 2017 against state corruption in 82 Russian cities, led largely by Russian youth, reveal these limits. They are an ominous omen for the future of the Putin kleptocracy. Meanwhile, neither Russia nor China offers much to solve the Legitimacy imperative of global governance.

### AC – Inequality Advantage

#### Strikes are key to broad unionization and solve inequality

**Bahn 19** [Kate Bahn is the director of labor market policy and interim chief economist at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth. Her areas of research include gender, race, and ethnicity in the labor market, care work, and monopsonistic labor markets. Previously, she was an economist at the Center for American Progress. Bahn also formerly served as the executive vice president and secretary for the International Association for Feminist Economics. Bahn received her Ph.D. in economics from the New School for Social Research and her B.A. from Hampshire College. "The once and future role of strikes in ensuring U.S. worker power." https://equitablegrowth.org/the-once-and-future-role-of-strikes-in-ensuring-u-s-worker-power/]

In addition to Hertel-Fernandez’s work showing broad support for unions generally and increasing support for bold labor actions, more policymakers and advocates are providing much-needed **proposals** on how to **foster** a robust U.S. labor market and strengthen institutions that would make collective action more **successful**. Emblematic of this is Harvard Law’s Labor and Worklife Program’s Clean Slate Project, led by Sharon Block and Ben Sachs of Harvard University, which gathers academic experts and labor organizers to develop strong proposals that would increase worker bargaining power. Multiple 2020 presidential campaigns have followed suit, with new proposals to boost unions. Conclusion **Unions** in the United States are at their lowest level of density since they became legal around 80 years ago, with 6.4 percent of private-sector workers in unions today. Yet there is increasing **energy** for **bringing back** this **crucial force** to balance the power of capital and ensure the fruits of economic growth are more **broadly shared** among **everyone** who creates it. Strikes are a **compelling tool** for **dealing** with rising U.S. **income and wealth inequality**—just as they were in an earlier era of economic **inequality**, when unions first gained their legal **stature** in the U.S. labor market.

#### And they’re labor’s strongest weapon

**Press 18** [Alex Press is an assistant editor at Jacobin and a freelance writer based in New York. "It’s time to acknowledge that strikes work." https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2018/05/31/its-time-to-acknowledge-that-strikes-work/]

While labor **activists** refer to the ability to **strike** as “**labor’s strongest weapon**,” Americans’ willingness to strike has drastically subsided in the past few decades. As economic analyst Doug Henwood recently pointed out, the average number of days of “idleness” — the official term for days lost to work stoppages — was nearly 24,550,000 between 1947 and 1979. In the years since 2010, the average is 708,000, a 97 percent drop. The steep decline is a sign of a labor movement on the back foot, as union membership declines, wages stagnate, and job instability increases. Throw in a conciliatory regime of labor law, one that prioritizes “labor peace” and outlaws secondary strikes — not to mention the incorporation of no-strike clauses into contracts, which stipulate high fines and even imprisonment should workers strike anyway — and you get our recent, largely strikeless, present.

But strikes **work for a reason**. As Chris Brooks, a Labor Notes staff member, put it, workers’ power lies in their ability to withdraw their labor. “The only reason our **communities function** is because workers **show up** every day,” Brooks said. But, he added, in the wake of the recent strike wave, “workers are recognizing they have **leverage**” when they withdraw their labor. The recent successful strikes bear out that argument: In those states where teachers have struck, they’ve won **concessions** from GOP-dominated legislatures that would never have otherwise been willing to budge.

#### The productivity costs are offset by inequality and democratic decline – both turn econ and outweigh the link

**Doucouliagos 19** [Chris Doucouliagos Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, Deakin Business School and Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University. "Unions do hurt profits, but not productivity, and they remain a bulwark against a widening wealth gap." https://theconversation.com/unions-do-hurt-profits-but-not-productivity-and-they-remain-a-bulwark-against-a-widening-wealth-gap-107139]

Some advocates of **laissez-faire capitalism** argue that trade unions are bad for **productivity**. “With few exceptions,” according to one American economist, George Reisman, “unions openly combat the rise in the productivity of labour.”

Other **economists disagree**. “Unionisation and **high** worker **productivity** often go hand-in-hand,” say Harley Shaiken and David Madland. “**Fairness** on the job and **wages** that reflect marketplace success contribute to more **motivated workers**.”

So who’s right?

To answer this question, my colleagues Richard **Freeman** and Patrice **Laroche** and I surveyed the **global evidence** from more than **300 studies** on the **economic impact** of unionisation.

We conclude that unions do not, overall, **reduce productivity**, though it varies according to specific circumstances.

Unionisation does make businesses less profitable for the owners. But importantly, it also reduces income **inequality**, a useful social function given the problems that flow from a widening **wealth gap**.

National differences

Productivity refers to the efficiency of turning inputs into outputs. It’s a key measure of economic performance. A nation’s productivity raises its per capita GDP.

The evidence from Australia is too thin to draw a credible conclusion (there are just a handful of studies), so our overall findings reflect evidence from other nations.

That evidence is mixed. In Britain, for example, union influence has reduced company productivity. In the US, unionisation appears to be associated with higher productivity in the construction and education sectors, but has made no difference in manufacturing. In developing countries, the overall effect is generally positive.

Such differences can be explained by variations in labour market institutions. These include employment protections, minimum wages and unemployment benefits. Laws influence social attitudes, and vice versa, which in turn affect relative negotiating power and whether unions and employers value cooperation over conflict.

In theory, the more labour and capital **cooperate**, the more **productive** an enterprise is likely to be, providing higher **wages** and greater **job security** to workers and higher profits to shareholders. Less cooperation means **lower productivity**.

Taking a share of profits

The evidence shows **unionisation** is associated with **lower profits**, because unions secure higher wages and benefits for their members.

By reducing the profitability of an investment, unions may discourage further investment as owners of capital seek higher profits elsewhere.

Further, unions can hurt business when they exercise their power to disrupt (through strikes and other industrial action). Union corruption might also add to business costs.

But unions are by no means **all bad for business**. In representing worker interests, they can help make a company a more **attractive** place to work, reducing **turnover** and increasing employees’ commitment to business success. Higher union **wages** and **benefits** also attract more job applicants, allowing **management** to select the **best workers**.

But a benefit to society

Most importantly, from a societal point of view, unions reduce pay **inequalities**. They increase the relative pay of lower skilled workers. They help to establish pay norms that extend beyond **unionised companies**.

**Inequality** is **bad** for economic **growth**, because it discourages **investment** in **education** and **innovation**.

It is bad for **democracy**. It widens social divisions within societies and reduces participation and political **engagement**. It drives the rich to oppose democratic reforms that might lead to **wealth redistribution**.

#### 3Inequality-driven collapse escalates global hotspots. It’s existential.

Mathew **Maavak 21**, Author at Atlas Institute for International Affairs, external researcher (PLATBIDAFO) at the Kazimieras Simonavicius University in Vilnius, Lithuania, “Horizon 2030: Will Emerging Risks Unravel Our Global Systems?,” Salus Journal, Vol. 9, No. 1, April 2021, pp 2-17

But what exactly is a global system? Our planet itself is **a**n autonomous and selfsustaining **mega-system**, marked by periodic cycles and elemental vagaries. Human activities **within** however are not system **isolates** as our **banking**, **utility**, **farming**, **healthcare** and **retail** sectors etc. are increasingly **entwined**. Risks accrued in **one** system may **cascade** into an **unforeseen crisis** within and/or without (Choo, Smith & McCusker, 2007). Scholars call this phenomenon “emergence”; one where the behaviour of intersecting systems is determined by complex and largely invisible interactions at the substratum (Goldstein, 1999; Holland, 1998).

The ongoing **COVID**-19 pandemic is a case in point. While experts remain divided over the source and morphology of the virus, the contagion has ramified into a global **health** crisis and **supply chain nightmare**. It is also tilting the **geopolitical** balance. China is the largest exporter of intermediate products, and had generated nearly 20% of global imports in 2015 alone (Cousin, 2020). The pharmaceutical sector is particularly vulnerable. Nearly “85% of medicines in the U.S. strategic national stockpile” sources components from China (Owens, 2020).

An initial run on respiratory masks has now been eclipsed by rowdy queues at supermarkets and the bankruptcy of small businesses. The entire global population – save for major pockets such as Sweden, Belarus, Taiwan and Japan – have been subjected to cyclical lockdowns and quarantines. Never before in history have humans faced such a systemic, borderless calamity.

COVID-19 represents a classic **emergent crisis** that necessitates real-time response and adaptivity in a real-time world, particularly since the global **Just-in-Time** (JIT) production and delivery system serves as both an enabler and **vector** for **transboundary risks**. From a systems thinking perspective, emerging risk management should therefore address a whole spectrum of activity across the economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal and technological (EEGST) taxonomy. Every emerging threat can be slotted into this taxonomy – a reason why it is used by the World Economic Forum (WEF) for its annual global risk exercises (Maavak, 2019a).

As traditional forces of globalization unravel, security professionals should take cognizance of emerging threats through a **systems thinking** approach.

METHODOLOGY

An EEGST sectional breakdown was adopted to illustrate a sampling of extreme risks facing the world for the 2020-2030 decade. The transcendental quality of emerging risks, as outlined on Figure 1, below, was primarily informed by the following pillars of systems thinking (Rickards, 2020):

• Diminishing diversity (or increasing homogeneity) of actors in the global system (Boli & Thomas, 1997; Meyer, 2000; Young et al, 2006);

• Interconnections in the global system (Homer-Dixon et al, 2015; Lee & Preston, 2012);

• Interactions of actors, events and components in the global system (Buldyrev et al, 2010; Bashan et al, 2013; Homer-Dixon et al, 2015); and

• Adaptive qualities in particular systems (Bodin & Norberg, 2005; Scheffer et al, 2012)

Since scholastic material on this topic remains somewhat inchoate, this paper buttresses many of its contentions through secondary (i.e. news/institutional) sources.

ECONOMY

According to Professor Stanislaw Drozdz (2018) of the Polish Academy of Sciences, “a global **financial crash** of a previously **unprecedented scale** is **highly probable” by the mid**-20**20s**. This will lead to a trickle-down **melt**down, impacting **all areas of human activity**.

The economist John Mauldin (2018) similarly warns that the “20**20s** might be **the worst decade in** US **history**” and may lead to a Second Great Depression. Other forecasts are equally alarming. According to the International Institute of Finance, global debt may have surpassed $255 trillion by 2020 (IIF, 2019). Yet another study revealed that global debts and liabilities amounted to a staggering $2.5 quadrillion (Ausman, 2018). The reader should note that these figures were tabulated before the COVID-19 outbreak.

The IMF singles out widening **income inequality** as the **trigger** for the **next** Great **Depression** (Georgieva, 2020). The wealthiest 1% now own more than **twice as much wealth** as **6.9 billion people** (Coffey et al, 2020) and this chasm is **widening** with **each** passing **month**. **COVID**-19 had, in fact, **boosted** global billionaire wealth to an unprecedented $10.2 trillion by July 2020 (UBS-PWC, 2020). Global GDP, worth $88 trillion in 2019, may have contracted by 5.2% in 2020 (World Bank, 2020).

As the Greek historian Plutarch warned in the 1st century AD: “An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all republics” (Mauldin, 2014). The **stability** of a **society**, as Aristotle argued even earlier, depends on a robust **middle element** or middle class. At the rate the global middle class is facing catastrophic debt and unemployment levels, widespread **social disaffection** may **morph** into **outright anarchy** (Maavak, 2012; DCDC, 2007).

Economic stressors, in transcendent VUCA fashion, may also induce radical **geopolitical** realignments. **Bullions** now carry **more weight than NATO’s security guarantees** in Eastern Europe. After Poland repatriated 100 tons of gold from the Bank of England in 2019, Slovakia, Serbia and Hungary quickly followed suit.

According to former Slovak Premier Robert Fico, this erosion in regional trust was based on historical precedents – in particular the 1938 Munich Agreement which ceded Czechoslovakia’s Sudetenland to Nazi Germany. As Fico reiterated (Dudik & Tomek, 2019):

“You can hardly trust even the closest allies after the Munich Agreement… I guarantee that if something happens, we won’t see a single gram of this (offshore-held) gold. Let’s do it (repatriation) as quickly as possible.” (Parenthesis added by author).

President Aleksandar Vucic of Serbia (a non-NATO nation) justified his central bank’s gold-repatriation program by hinting at economic headwinds ahead: “We see in which direction the crisis in the world is moving” (Dudik & Tomek, 2019). Indeed, with two global Titanics – the United States and China – set on a collision course with a quadrillions-denominated iceberg in the middle, and a viral outbreak on its tip, the seismic ripples will be felt far, wide and for a considerable period.

A reality check is nonetheless needed here: Can additional bullions realistically circumvallate the economies of 80 million plus peoples in these Eastern European nations, worth a collective $1.8 trillion by purchasing power parity? Gold however is a potent psychological symbol as it represents national sovereignty and economic reassurance in a potentially hyperinflationary world. The portents are clear: The current global economic system will be weakened by rising **nationalism** and **autarkic demands**. Much uncertainty remains ahead. Mauldin (2018) proposes the introduction of Old Testament-style debt jubilees to facilitate gradual national recoveries. The World Economic Forum, on the other hand, has long proposed a “Great Reset” by 2030; a socialist utopia where “you’ll own nothing and you’ll be happy” (WEF, 2016).

In the final analysis, COVID-19 is not the **root cause** of the current global economic turmoil; it is merely an **accelerant** to a **burning house of cards** that was left **smouldering** since the 20**08** Great Recession (Maavak, 2020a). We also see how the four main pillars of systems thinking (diversity, interconnectivity, interactivity and “adaptivity”) form the mise en scene in a VUCA decade.

ENVIRONMENTAL

What happens to the **environment** when our **economies implode?** Think of a debt-laden **workforce** at sensitive **nuclear and chemical plants**, along with a concomitant **surge in industrial accidents**? **Economic stressors**, **workforce demoralization** and rampant **profiteering** – **rather than** manmade **climate change** – arguably pose the **biggest threat**s **to the environment**. In a WEF report, Buehler et al (2017) made the following pre-COVID-19 observation:

The ILO estimates that the annual cost to the global economy from accidents and work-related diseases alone is a staggering $3 trillion. Moreover, a recent report suggests the world’s 3.2 billion workers are increasingly unwell, with the vast majority facing significant economic insecurity: 77% work in part-time, temporary, “vulnerable” or unpaid jobs.

Shouldn’t this phenomenon be better categorized as a societal or economic risk rather than an environmental one? In line with the systems thinking approach, however, global risks can no longer be **boxed** into a **taxonomical silo**. **Frazzled workforces** may precipitate **another** Bhopal (1984), **Chernobyl** (1986), Deepwater Horizon (2010) or Flint water crisis (2014). These disasters were notably **not** the result of manmade **climate change**. Neither was the **Fukushima** nuclear disaster (2011) nor the **Indian Ocean tsunami** (2004). Indeed, the combustion of a long-overlooked cargo of 2,750 tonnes of **ammonium nitrate** had nearly **levelled** the city of **Beirut**, Lebanon, on Aug 4 2020. The explosion left 204 dead; 7,500 injured; US$15 billion in property damages; and an estimated 300,000 people homeless (Urbina, 2020). The environmental costs have yet to be adequately tabulated.

Environmental disasters are more attributable to Black Swan events, systems breakdowns and corporate greed rather than to mundane human activity.

Our JIT world aggravates the **cascading potential** of risks (Korowicz, 2012). Production and delivery delays, caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, will eventually require industrial **overcompensation**. This will further **stress** senior executives, **workers**, machines and a variety of computerized **systems**. The trickle-down effects will likely include **substandard products**, **contaminate**d **food** and a general **lower**ing in **health** and safety standards (Maavak, 2019a). Unpaid or demoralized sanitation workers may also resort to indiscriminate **waste dumping**. Many cities across the United States (and elsewhere in the world) are no longer recycling wastes due to prohibitive costs in the global corona-economy (Liacko, 2021).

Even in good times, strict protocols on waste disposals were routinely ignored. While Sweden championed the global climate change narrative, its clothing flagship H&M was busy covering up toxic effluences disgorged by vendors along the Citarum River in Java, Indonesia. As a result, countless children among 14 million Indonesians straddling the “world’s most polluted river” began to suffer from dermatitis, intestinal problems, developmental disorders, renal failure, chronic bronchitis and cancer (DW, 2020). It is also in cauldrons like the Citarum River where pathogens may mutate with emergent ramifications.

On an equally alarming note, depressed **economic conditions** have traditionally provided a waste disposal **boon** for **organized crime** elements. Throughout 1980s, the Calabria-based ‘Ndrangheta mafia – in collusion with governments in Europe and North America – began to dump radioactive wastes along the coast of Somalia. Reeling from pollution and revenue loss, Somali fisherman eventually resorted to mass piracy (Knaup, 2008).

The coast of Somalia is now a maritime hotspot, and exemplifies an entwined form of economic-environmental-geopolitical-societal emergence. In a VUCA world, indiscriminate waste dumping can unexpectedly morph into a Black Hawk Down incident. The laws of unintended consequences are governed by actors, interconnections, interactions and adaptations in a system under study – as outlined in the methodology section.

Environmentally-devastating industrial **sabotages** – whether by disgruntled workers, industrial competitors, ideological maniacs or terrorist groups – cannot be discounted in a VUCA world. Immiserated societies, in stark defiance of climate change diktats, may resort to dirty **coal** plants and **wood** stoves for survival. Interlinked **ecosystems**, particularly **water** resources, may be **hijacked** by **nationalist** sentiment**s**. The environmental fallouts of **critical infrastructure** (CI) breakdowns **loom like a Sword of Damocles over this decade**.

GEOPOLITICAL

The primary catalyst behind **WWII** was the **Great Depression**. Since history **often repeats itself**, expect **familiar bogeymen to reappear** in societies roiling with **impoverishment** and ideological clefts. Anti-Semitism – a societal risk on its own – may reach alarming proportions in the West (Reuters, 2019), possibly forcing Israel to undertake reprisal operations inside allied nations. If that happens, how will affected nations react? Will security resources be **reallocated** to protect certain minorities (or **the Top 1%**) while larger segments of society are exposed to **restive forces?** Balloon effects like these present a classic VUCA problematic.

Contemporary **geopolitical** risks include a possible **Iran-Israel war; US-China military confrontation over Taiwan or the S**outh **C**hina **S**ea; **No**rth **Ko**rean **prolif**eration of nuclear and missile technologies; an **India-Pakistan** **nuclear war**; an Iranian **closure** of the Straits of **Hormuz**; fundamentalist-driven **implosion** in the **Islamic** world; or a **nuclear confrontation** between **NATO** and **Russia**. Fears that the Jan 3 2020 assassination of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani might lead to WWIII were grossly overblown. From a systems perspective, the killing of Soleimani did not fundamentally change the actor-interconnection-interactionadaptivity equation in the Middle East. Soleimani was simply a cog who got replaced.

#### Ensuring the right to strike solves democracy and inequality

**Kiai 17** [Mr. Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, took up his functions as the first Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in May 2011. He is appointed in his personal capacity as an independent expert by the UN Human Rights Council. "UN rights expert: “Fundamental right to strike must be preserved”." https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21328&LangID=E]

The **right to strike** is also an intrinsic **corollary** of the fundamental right of **freedom of association**. It is **crucial** for millions of women and men around the world to assert collectively their rights in the workplace, including the right to just and favourable conditions of work, and to work in dignity and without fear of intimidation and persecution. Moreover, protest action in relation to government social and economic policy, and against negative corporate practices, forms part of the basic **civil liberties** whose respect is **essential** for the meaningful exercise of trade union rights. This right enables them to engage with companies and governments on a more equal footing, and Member States have a positive obligation to protect this right, and a negative obligation not to interfere with its exercise.

Moreover, **protecting** the right to **strike** is not simply about States fulfilling their **legal obligations**. It is also about them creating **democratic** and equitable **societies** that are sustainable in the long run. The concentration of power in **one sector** – whether in the hands of government or business – inevitably leads to the **erosion of democracy**, and an increase in **inequalities** and **marginalization** with all their attendant consequences. The right to strike is a check on this **concentration of power**.

I deplore the various attempts made to erode the right to strike at national and multilateral levels. In this regard, I welcome the positive role played by the ILO’s Government Group in upholding workers’ right to strike by recognizing that ‘without protecting a right to strike, freedom of association, in particular the right to organize activities for the purpose of promoting and protecting workers’ interests, cannot be fully realized.’

I urge all stakeholders to ensure that the **right to strike** be fully **preserved** and **respected** across the globe and in all arenas”, the expert concluded.

### Right must be unconditional

1. **If right to strike isn’t unconditional, then certain people such as medical workers will be overworked and abused.**
2. **Spill over: Corporates will use similar arguments stating that striking makes them lose a tiny bit of money. With corporate lobbying, if the right to strike isn’t unconditional, more and more trades will lose the right to strike.**