

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Ports

Working group meeting, 1 March 2017

1 Adoption of the agenda

The Chair asked to the social partners if they could adopt the agenda of the meeting. IDC took the floor to indicate that IDC and ETF are about to adopt Declarations which will criticise heavily the situation in ES, following the Royal Decree adopted by the ES government which was – according to them – "forced" by the Commission (DG MOVE).

IDC added that since 2013, it has continuously proved its commitment to the Social dialogue, both at European and national level. It stressed that the SSDC on ports has delivered on crucial issues such as training and health and safety.

According to IDC, today, though, 6.500 dockers may lose their jobs in ES and so there is a clear worsening of the working conditions of dockers; this is the result of the policy led by the Commission (DG MOVE). In these circumstances, it is not possible anymore for IDC to come to the meetings of the European Social Dialogue. The ES Member of IDC reiterated this message, indicating that the ES government said that it was forced by the Commission (DG MOVE) to act in that way. He said that as long as the situation in ES is not cleared and that jobs are not maintained, he will no longer take part in the SSDC. He concluded by saying that he is aware of the fact that Commissioner Bulc will present on Monday 6 March the situation to the ES Parliament. Same message was provided by the BE and NL members of ETF. ETF and IDC decided to leave the room, adding that they will assess the situation in view of the next SDDC of 29 June.

Before the workers' delegations left, FEPORT replied by saying that the SSDC has delivered well and that it has a competence on European matters, not on national ones. It reiterated its full support to the European Social Dialogue and said that to leave the SSDC will not give a positive signal to the rest of the world. ESPO supported FEPORT's view and added that IDC and ETF should have warned them before the meeting of their intentions to not take part in it.

The ES member of IDC wanted to clarify that it had to intervene since too many jobs are at risk. He said once again that the ES government indicated that it had to act in that manner since it was forced by the Commission. The NL member of ETF said that, in fact, since a couple of years, the Commission does not help with its policy; in these circumstances, the trade unions are left only with the tool of the demonstration.

DG MOVE indicated that, actually, the Commission is keen in trying to make the ports sector flourish; it makes sure that the European legislation is properly observed (Commission's role as guardian of the Treaty) and it does not prevent the national Social Dialogue.

FEPOR T indicated that it will also issue a press-release.

After this, the trade union's representatives left the room.

To note that, after this session, FEPOR T decided in any case to tackle the items that were on the agenda. In particular, the implementation of the project whose financing has recently been adopted by the Commission and the topic on gender issues by DG MOVE.

2. Any other business

The foreseen meetings of the SSDC for ports for 2017 are: Thursday 29 June and Monday 27 November.