

# Global Union for Boeing Workers

by **Mike Hall**, Apr 3, 2007

Boeing Co. workers around the world now have a new and stronger voice to deal with the multinational aerospace giant with the formation last week of the Global Union Alliance.

The new alliance is made up of the Machinists (**IAM**)—which represent about 40,000 Boeing workers in the United States and Canada—and unions from five other nations where Boeing has major production facilities.

Says IAM President Thomas Buffenbarger:

Just as Boeing is a global company, the unions representing its workers must act like a global union. No longer can Boeing workers in one nation afford to bargain or organize in isolation. Our goal is fair treatment for Boeing's global workforce, without regard to language, borders or nationality.

Union representatives from Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden and the United States met last week in Portland, Ore., at a summit organized by the IAM and the International Metalworkers' Federation (**IMWF**).

The unions agreed to coordinate their efforts to organize Boeing's workers worldwide—including workers at the company's suppliers—and to increase communication and coordination among the unions on bargaining issues.

The alliance also called on Boeing and its suppliers to abide by and enforce internationally recognized labor standards, including the freedom of workers to join together in unions. In recent years, Boeing has increased its manufacturing operations in **China**, a country with a **long record** of worker repression and government-controlled trade unions.

Says Buffenbarger:

As one of the most successful corporations in the world, it is incumbent on Boeing to set the highest standards when it comes to fundamental human rights, which include the right to form labor unions and to engage in collective bargaining.

The alliance will work to bring in other unions that represent Boeing workers. The company has some 150,000 employees in 70 countries.

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