

## UGT DEMANDS

# A NEW DIRECTION FOR EUROPE

Europe Day  
May 9th 2012

As a result of a serious crisis, Europe is facing today enormous challenges in terms of political, economic and social development, crucial to the future of the European project and to the strengthening of economic and social cohesion.

However, at this stage it is important not just to consider the devastating consequences that this crisis has had on millions of workers and their families and, in solidarity, to try to reduce the damages, by charging and punishing the real culprits, as UGT has repeated over and over again, and to develop actions in this regard, as evidenced by the signing of the Tripartite Commitment for Growth, Competitiveness and Employment.

It is for us, men and women citizens of the European Project, a question of saving the European Project, which has no future without social governance, making Europe crumble into protectionist policies and into selfish national interests.

In this context, UGT rejected the new Treaty on "Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union." For UGT, this Treaty is similar to the existing policies: more austerity and discipline, obliging Member States to allocate a priority to strict economic rules when most economies are still vulnerable and unemployment is still unacceptably high. It also exerts a downward pressure on wages and working conditions, punishing countries that fail to meet the budget pact, by subjecting them to possible sanctions by the European Court of Justice.

An economic governance that obeys the dictates of a small minority of countries is unthinkable, because worse than a Europe with different speeds is a non inclusive Europe with a "colonial" type governance.

UGT cannot thus help emphasizing the outcome of the French elections, as the end of a "directory" obsessed with austerity and that has subordinates the people, hoping for a new direction for Europe.

The attempt to diminish the role of collective bargaining or even the attacks it has been plagued with, as well as the role of social dialogue at national and European levels, are clear maneuvers that aim at the precariousness of the labour relations systems, weakening the social dimension of Europe and trying to weaken the trade union movement.

UGT considers it unacceptable that the main and almost exclusive tool of adjustment is the wage policy, with the aggravating factor that financial markets remain completely unpunished. We also stress that economic governance simply resulting in a government for austerity will only increase poverty and insecurity, seriously endangering the 2020 Strategy and the European Project itself.

On this date UGT calls on the Portuguese Government, the Member States and all European authorities (in particular the Commission, the Council and the Parliament), to jointly return to the original, supportive and inclusive European project, promoting the welfare of its men and women citizens, guaranteeing workers' rights and developing their protection.

UGT will fight at the national level and together with ETUC for a true economic and social coordination of Europe, believing that only then can it fulfill its true economic, social and political vocation and effectively protect the European Project.

UGT, May 8<sup>th</sup> 2012

