



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





# A MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL SECRETARY



Dear Friends,

Last year, UNI executed an ambitious global programme to grow unions, expand collective bargaining and advance workers' rights. This success and ambition were reflected in our 6th World Congress, held in Philadelphia.

Our congress was a success by every measure. The 1,200 union leaders from 109 countries who attended were lucky to be in the United States during what has been called the "hot labour summer." The energy and determination were contagious.

We enjoyed music together; we marched together; and we shared and developed strategies to take on the pressing issues of our time. We showed our solidarity with writers and actors who were striking for their rights to job protection, for creative opportunities and for the fair use of generative AI. We cheered on those unions who negotiated wage increases that matched or even exceeded inflation. These victories gave hope to others struggling to win in a race against takeaways.

We vowed to improve the lives of women through collective bargaining and to eliminate customer harassment of workers in our commerce and care sectors. We committed to hold companies accountable through new, tough rules. And we promised to take action to address the climate emergency.

Most importantly, we showcased our vast work to build power for workers in every sector through innovative and inclusive organizing campaigns spread across the globe.

We shared our experiences and our solidarity – learning from one another and building confidence and scale. Democracy at work is the first step towards ending the grotesque power and wealth imbalance of our world today, and this does not happen without strong unions.

UNI's shared commitment to peace and democracy was also made clear in Philadelphia.

We left the Congress united in our commitment to advance human rights, peace and economic justice in our communities through building workers' power everywhere.

Solidarity!

**Christy Hoffman**  
General Secretary  
UNI Global Union

UNI Global Union builds union power to improve workers' lives everywhere. As the global union federation for service workers, we use our combined strength to expand collective bargaining, advance social and economic justice, hold corporations accountable and transform an unfair global economy.

# 10

Global sectors.



# 50

Global agreements.



# 150

Countries where our affiliates build power for millions of workers.



Victory for Nepalese union wins landmark free health insurance for community health workers.



# RISING TOGETHER IN 2023: A RECORD YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

## 50

Countries with campaigns, trainings and projects.



## 7,100

Media mentions spreading our worker-power message throughout the world.



## 70

Projects to strengthen our movement's capacity.



## 1,200

Trade unionists from 109 countries came together for our 6th World Congress.



## 144

UNI organizers growing unions through our centres, sectors and regions.



## 300

Investors with US\$67 trillion in assets engaged.



## 5,000+

Leaders and activists trained – most of these women.



6th UNI Global Union World Congress  
27 - 30 August 2023  
Philadelphia, United States

**RISING  
TOGETHER**  
PHILADELPHIA



# RISING TOGETHER TO ORGANIZE FOR A JUST ECONOMY

## UNI'S ORGANIZING FUND

UNI's Organizing Fund helps grow unions in every region and in all of UNI's sectors. It supports successful campaigns throughout the world, and it finances our organizing centres along with over 100 organizers globally. The fund is critical to our work, building organizing capacity online and on-the-ground. It is sustained through voluntary contributions from our member unions, and since our 2023 Congress, **individual donors can contribute**. The Organizing Fund makes much of what is in this report possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the following cost-of-living crises exacerbated already staggering levels of inequality. But these phenomena also created an explosive mixture of militancy and hope that spurred an unprecedented number of workers to speak out on the job and organize with their colleagues. Through our sectors, regions and organizing centres, UNI has supported this wave of unionization around the world.

The growth of union membership and power are an antidote to the concentration of the wealth at the top. Unions are necessary to close the gender gap, and they elevate the voices of marginalized and racialized workers. Unions are vital to advance and maintain democracy and human rights around the world.

## UNI'S AMAZON ALLIANCE WANTS TO #MAKEAMAZONPAY

In 2023, we continued to coordinate the global movement to make Amazon a union employer that respects workers' rights. **UNI's Amazon Global Union Alliance** united over 50 unions from 20-plus countries to share strategies, pool resources and show solidarity with one another. Alliance

members have active organizing campaigns in Brazil, Germany, India, Italy, Poland, the United States, the United Kingdom and beyond. And together we spearheaded a **global day of action** to support striking members of the Writers Guild of America who produce content for Amazon's streaming platform.

UNI's **"Life in the Amazon Panopticon"** report surveyed more than 2,000 employees in eight countries to raise global awareness about the physical and mental toll of Amazon's extreme surveillance through media coverage worldwide.

Our historic **Summit to Make Amazon Pay** brought together unions, civil society organizations, regulators, elected officials and parliamentarians from 20 countries to develop a common approach to combating Amazon's exploitation of workers, communities and the environment.

UNI was a driving force behind the massive **Make Amazon Pay Day**, where workers from Germany, Italy and the U.S. went on strike together with GMB members at a massive picket in the UK. In Delhi, India, more than 300 workers walked off the job. Unions and allies in over 30 countries protested Amazon's worker rights abuses and environmental degradation. The day of action showed unprecedented solidarity and reach, overshadowing Amazon's own Black Friday campaign on social media.

**"Every day, we face the same challenges in our Amazon warehouse – low wages, high stress and a lack of respect for our rights. Joining this global day of action is not just about us in Germany, but about standing together with our colleagues worldwide to demand fair treatment. We want Amazon to hear us loud and clear: it's time to make changes for the better."**

Rainer Reising,  
Amazon worker from Germany,  
member of ver.di

## ORGANIZING ACROSS UNI'S SECTORS

With the support of USAID, the Ford Foundation and the CARE Fund, UNI laid the foundations for the **Together We Care** initiative to transform the health and care sectors through organizing for collective representation, empowering women leaders and fostering equitable employment. The project, which could touch the lives of one million workers in Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ghana and the Philippines, will grow trade unions, raise wages, improve working conditions and formalize employment.

UNI provided strategic support to member union ALICE's organizing campaign at Czech long-term care provider Alzheimer Home. The campaign led to a **landmark 2023 collective bargaining agreement**, the strongest ever for private sector care workers in Czechia. The agreement applies to the company's 1,500 employees, overwhelmingly women, in 32 care homes across the country.

In Türkiye, **our multi-year organizing campaign** with affiliate Journalists' Union of Türkiye (TGS) resulted in first collective agreements with three major employers in the country – in the face of anti-union repression and government crack downs on a free press. Arbitration at a fourth employer led to pay rises for workers.

UNI has been instrumental in **cross-border organizing of tech and video game workers**, helping to bring workers together at Microsoft–Activision Blizzard King, Spotify, TikTok and others. We worked with Alphabet Workers Union (AWU-CWA) on a global petition drive demanding better treatment for laid-off Google staff, amassing over 1,500 employee signatures. Union membership grew across key countries for the company's operations – Ireland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Workers in Poland and South Korea, two other important countries, formed unions.

In Peru, we backed our affiliate SUTECA's organizing campaign at two major casino chains. Through determined on-the-ground organizing and international solidarity, we were able to get fired union activists reinstated, and the campaign eventually led to the signing of two global agreements in early 2024.

Our World Players Association released the **#Right2Organize Survey and Report on Effective Athlete Representation in Global Sport** in June 2023. The report, with data from 80 player associations in 48 countries from 17 different sports, sheds light on players' collective bargaining challenges worldwide. When the #R2O is upheld, athletes represented by player associations enjoy markedly better conditions because of collective bargaining.





## ORGANIZING THROUGH OUR TELEPERFORMANCE GLOBAL AGREEMENT

In 2023, UNI helped over 55,000 workers turn our December 2022 agreement with Teleperformance into a reality. Through our Organizing Fund, we supported member unions in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Poland and Romania put the agreement into practice. In all these countries, we set up systems for union growth; we trained in-country managers on how to be neutral to union organizing; and we recruited new members through access to employee induction programmes.

As a result, Teleperformance unions are growing. In Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Poland, unions at Teleperformance have roughly tripled in size. In Jamaica, the union jumped from a few dozen members to nearly 1,000 in a matter of months. Union membership in Romania has crossed the 40 per cent line and is now legally recognized. UNI established the foundation for a call centre union in El Salvador by building an organizing team and reaching out to hundreds of workers.

**“The global agreement is a game changer regarding access to remote workers. Before, it was very hard to reach them, but now we can let everyone know there is a union, the benefits of a union and how they can join.”**

Marcin Zubinskiu,  
Teleperformance Poland employee



Union activists at Teleperformance in El Salvador.

## RIISING TOGETHER THROUGH GLOBAL AGREEMENTS: SECURING RIGHTS AND GROWING UNIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Global agreements are one of the most efficient tools available to grow unions, expand collective bargaining and build our movement's power. They secure workers' rights across multinational corporations' operations and, increasingly, across their value chains. The over 50 global agreements that UNI has signed cover millions of workers in virtually every country.

UNI reached a breakthrough **agreement on global principles with Inka Group**, the parent company of IKEA, that commits the company to neutrality when workers form trade unions. The agreement allows for union representatives to speak to workers in IKEA stores, and it establishes a fair process to settle disputes regarding the agreement's application. UNI and IKEA came to this understanding with the help of the Dutch national contact point to the OECD.

We renewed agreements with banks **Société Générale** and **Credit Agricole**. Both strengthen trade union rights in the face of digitalization and remote work, and further embed UNI's role in the companies' human rights due diligence processes.

Our global agreement with long-term care provider ORPEA helped pave the way for Polish affiliate **OPZZ KP**'s victory in all 14 of the company's nursing homes in the country. UNI organizing centre COZZ also supported OPZZ KP's years-long organizing effort.

# 500,000

Workers in 2023 with rights secured by newly signed or renewed global agreements.



María Teresa Espino Peña and the Securitas Workers Union Peru say that with the support of the global agreement, they were able to negotiate their best contract to date with the security company in 2023.



Amazon workers from Germany, Italy, UK and the U.S. united on Make Amazon Pay Day in Covington.



# RISING TOGETHER ACROSS THE SERVICE ECONOMY: RAMPING UP WORKER POWER IN OUR SECTORS

# 57



Multinational trade union alliances strengthening workers' power in multinational corporations worldwide, and UNI unions take part in 250 European works councils.

# 25+



Global days of action to harness worker solidarity across our sectors and across the world.



Postal workers in Trinidad and Tobago.

UNI has a multi-pronged approach to strengthening unions across the service economy. In all our industries and sectors, we foster union growth through organizing and our global agreements, but we also support unions' efforts to increase power through existing membership. We support collective bargaining, provide research and build cross-border solidarity.

UNI Post&Logistics fought fiercely against attempts to slash public funding, degrade service quality and roll back hard-earned standards in the post. For example, we organized an outpouring of international solidarity for our affiliate in **Trinidad and Tobago**, demanding a pay rise after a decade of wage stagnation.

In Europe, we have stood with member commerce unions fighting back against the troubling trend of franchising to undermine labour standards. For example, UNI helped coordinate a massive protest at **Ahold Delhaize's annual shareholder** meeting against the company's plans to franchise all 183 of its stores in Belgium, a move that would worsen conditions and strip trade union membership from 9,000 workers.

UNI supported U.S. screenwriters and actors who went on months-long strikes **to win a fairer share** of the revenue from a changing entertainment industry. They also led – and won – the first strikes in the world that had generative AI at their core. Leading publications like Variety and Deadline covered UNI's actions on behalf of the writers, including our 35-country day of action.

# RISING TOGETHER FOR DECENT WORK IN THE DIGITAL AGE

UNI is a leading global voice for decent work in the digital age. In 2023, we released first-of-its-kind research on how unions deal with algorithmic management, systems where extreme monitoring and constant surveillance harm workers' physical and mental well-being. Our report, **"Algorithmic Management: Opportunities for Collective Action"** outlines the legal, regulatory and collective bargaining strategies unions have used to fight this abusive technology and advocate for safer work.

Our work on algorithmic management highlights UNI's broader commitment to sharing effective negotiation strategies related to technology in the workplace. In Europe, for example, we collaborated with experts to study how **employers' software systems** collect extensive personal data on employees' work habits. We are challenging Amazon's employee surveillance practices under EU data protection laws.

UNI's General Secretary Christy Hoffman has become one of the global labour movement's most prominent advocates for the right to negotiate over technology on the job. Her insights on the impacts of negotiations by U.S. writers and actors on generative AI have been featured in **major media outlets**. She has also been a speaker on digital workers' rights at various forums, including a keynote at the **AI in the Public Interest** conference.

Looking forward, UNI secured resources in 2023 for an international health and safety project focusing on digitalization and new technologies.



"To see so many people come out in support of our fight, from all corners of the world, is truly humbling. We are immensely grateful to every single person who took action and helped send such a powerful message of global solidarity."

Michael Winship,  
WGA East President



The South Korean Webtoon Creator Union takes part in the day of action for striking U.S. writers.



# RISING TOGETHER FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

At the start of the pandemic, we intensified our focus on occupational health and safety. Since then, we have expanded our research and activism to include the impact of technology on worker well-being and developed strategies for addressing workplace safety through a gender perspective.

UNI also released a groundbreaking **32-country survey of cleaners** that examined health and social problems caused by unpredictable and disruptive work schedules, including night shifts. These effects include isolation, difficulties in maintaining relationships, strained social lives, poor sleep schedules, exhaustion and adverse impacts on physical and mental health. UNI and its affiliates used this research to push employers and **governments** to reconsider night work.

“Being on the night shift is a life of insecurity.”

Female Peruvian cleaner

UNI's comprehensive 2023 **report on third-party violence** shows that workers are suffering from high and unacceptable levels of abuse and violence at work – even after the pandemic. Case studies from around the world show that workers need government and policy intervention as well as protections secured through collective bargaining and global agreements.

On International Women's Day, UNI's Equal Opportunities department published a guide to helping trade unionists approach **health and safety with a gender perspective**. The guide highlights the impact of psychosocial risks for women and sexual and reproductive health, among other topics. It also contains practical exercises for trade unions to explore these issues, whether in meetings, in workshops or on the job.

# RISING TOGETHER FOR CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Launched global investor network with

**US\$15.3**



billions in assets under management.

Began the implementation  
of the Pakistan Accord.



UNI engaged with over 300 investors, with US\$67 trillion in assets under management (AUM). We met directly with over 60, who manage nearly half of those assets, including a key **meeting with the Norges Bank Investment Management**.

Together with the Committee on Workers' Capital (CWC), we launched the **Labour Rights Investor Network**, to advance investor action on freedom of association and collective bargaining. By the end of 2023, 44 investors with US\$15.3 trillion AUM had roles as either participants or observers in the network.

The International Accord for Health and Safety in the Textile and Garment Industry celebrated its tenth year in 2023. Along with IndustriALL, UNI reached a new legally binding three-year agreement in 2023 with global fashion brands that continues the **health and safety programmes in Bangladesh and Pakistan**. The new agreement opens the door to establishing programmes in other countries as well. Our work with the Accord led to UNI and IndustriALL being honoured in the **2023 Vogue Business 100 Innovators List** for its visionary leadership in sustainability.

# RISING TOGETHER FOR EQUALITY AND DEMOCRACY

Equality and democracy are at the core of our mission and are threads that run through all of UNI's work.

In 2023, our Graphical & Packaging sector hosted a conference focusing on **defending democracy and human rights from the extreme right**. We resolutely supported Myanmar's labour movement in its resistance to a brutal military junta. UNI was one of the first global union federations to call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

The **Unions Help Refugees** programme in Poland helps Ukrainian workers fight back against exploitation and unscrupulous employers.

Our Equal Opportunities department held workshops and sponsored mentoring programmes for over 2,000 women in every corner of the globe. We published a study on Afro-Colombians and LGBTI+ workers as part of a project to turn narratives of discrimination and into actionable demands for equity.





# RISING TOGETHER IN PHILADELPHIA: OUR CONGRESS CAPTURED A GLOBAL MOMENT IN OUR MOVEMENT

Over 1,200 trade union leaders from 109 countries united in Philadelphia to forge a stronger global labour movement and set UNI's course for the next four years. Under the banner "**Rising Together**," our 6th World Congress reflected a growing global labour militancy that is buoyed by the hope of transforming our economies.

During the August 2023 event, we sang together; we danced together; and we rallied together. We created a lasting solidarity, and we ratified a platform to advance the shared goals of the UNI movement – growing unions through organizing and expanded collective bargaining; holding multinational corporations accountable through effective and legally binding instruments; ensuring that workers' rights are at the core of the digital transformation; standing against racism and discrimination of any form; defending democracy around the world; and supporting a just transition for service workers in the face of a climate crisis.

We re-elected Christy Hoffman as our General Secretary, and Gerard Dwyer, National Secretary-Treasurer of Australia's Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, took the helm from Rubin Cortina as our new World President.

More than a meeting, the Congress was a moment – a moment of revitalization, of unity after years of pandemic-induced separation and a moment of recommitment. We left ready to fight, ready to win, and as Christy said, ready to "make 'Rising Together' our mantra for the next four years."

The August 2023 meetings also included our World Women's Conference and the global meeting of our Finance sector.

## WOMEN RISING

The message of the 6th UNI Global Union **World Women's Conference** was clear: Women are rising together to struggle for workers' rights, women's rights and civil rights. Throughout the meeting we heard from a chorus of powerful voices on issues such as the effect of digitalization on equality, gender-based violence and health and safety with a gender perspective. We celebrated successes and progress, such as the ten years of UNI Equal Opportunities' mentoring programme, and we elected a new president, Carol Scheffer from CWU (Ireland).

**"In all our countries the women who have come before us have laid the foundation upon which we build our solidarity, and it is now for us to carry on their legacy. Women united are an unstoppable force."**

Carol Scheffer,  
CWU and UNI World Women's President



"We need to organize to hold corporations to account, support working people as we deal with climate change, and create decent work. One decent job should be enough to support our material needs and social needs, like being able to care for those we love."

Gerard Dwyer,  
UNI World President and National Secretary-Treasurer, SDA



"Too many people in this world are left behind. And we're going to change that. We must continue to repeat the demand for shared prosperity, not grotesque inequality; for peace and democracy, not fascism or war; for dignity at work, and for safe, green jobs and unions for all."

Christy Hoffman,  
General Secretary UNI Global Union



"We faced several challenges while we organized – resistance from management and intimidation of workers, among others – but each one of them has only strengthened us and made us a strong union today in Uganda and Africa."

Jane Katsube,  
Leader at HTS and Breaking Through Award winner



"We hope the growth of Japan's economy translates into workers' wages increasing; there is an urgent need to protect livelihoods from rising prices, and to protect the value of labour from declining real wages. "

Keita Ogawa,  
Central Executive Committee Member, JAW



"Our job internationally is to tell these corporate bandits that the world belongs to all of us not just the billionaires."

Bernie Sanders,  
U.S. Senator



"To those who say to workers, know your place. We say workers' place is at the bargaining table."

Julie Su,  
U.S. Acting Secretary of Labor



"Globalizing struggles for democracies and justice is a milestone for the trade union movement and UNI Global Union."

Edwin Palma Egea,  
Vice-Minister of Labour of Colombia



"We need the ability to organize and strike to be successful, because in the end, strikes work."

Frank Werneke,  
Chairman of ver.di





*UNI Global Union extends its heartfelt gratitude to all contributors who have played a pivotal role in achieving our successes. This includes our dedicated affiliates, who have run organizing campaigns and supported the Organizing Fund, and our invaluable SSO partners and other donors such as Care Fund, DGB, FES, Ford Foundation, Mondiaal FNV, Open Society Foundation, RLS, SASK, Union to Union, USAID, among other generous donors. Their collective commitment has made our success possible.*



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