

Rotterdam/Hamburg, 4 Oktober 2024



The International Dock Workers Conference

To the dockworkers of the East and Gulf Coast of the USA and their union International Longshore Association, ILA.

Dear Colleagues,

Warm greetings from Europe for your courageous three-day strike from October 1, 2024 for significantly higher wages and against negative consequences for your jobs and working conditions due to automation and digitalization.

Your strike by 45,000 dock workers in 36 ports immediately caused great fear to shipowners and port capitalists. This disgust even reached Europe, when port capitalists in Hamburg and Rotterdam were already concerned at the beginning of your strike about interrupted supply chains, traffic jams at port facilities, etc. in short: about their profits!

Our solidarity also goes to the leadership of your union, ILA President Harold J. Daggert, who faced death threats and harassment; as did other ILA union leaders. This threat is an expression of a dangerous right-wing development and also takes on fascist features when the struggling labour movement needs to be intimidated and criminalized.

We have been informed that your strike has been ended after three days with the extension of the term of the current contract until January 15. And an offer of an income increase of 61.5% over the six-year term. As well as the promise to continue negotiations in the coming months to avoid job destruction. Your demand for an 80% pay increase over this period remains just like it was on the agenda and is fully justified. While the port companies and shipping companies make billions in profits, the working class is supposed to be satisfied with handouts. And that for the heaviest work! Your first strike in almost 50 years has shown that when we dock workers unite, make legitimate demands and organize, we are an undeniable force against the alliance of port companies, ship owners and the capitalist class as a whole.

And special praise was given to the fact that your attack explicitly excluded US military transports from the attack. Here, even after the temporary end of the strike, we need a discussion about the fact that workers - in any port in the world - cannot have any interest in military transports and the direct and indirect support of predatory wars such as in Ukraine, against the Palestinian people, wars in Africa, etc. Workers don't shoot workers - this slogan must break through.

Greetings in solidarity,

Jeroen Toussaint, Rotterdam - Joachim Griesbaum, Hamburg

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(The International Dock Workers Conference is an association of dock workers from various countries/ports in the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Greece. We propose that we forge bonds of solidarity across the Atlantic, so that the dock workers of Europe, the United States, Africa, Asia and Latin America can meet each other.)