

## Trade Union Meetings in India and Bangladesh

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In September 2010, the NGO Shipbreaking Platform travelled to India and Bangladesh with one of the main objectives being to participate in round table discussions with the local trade unions of these two shipbreaking countries. The aim of these meetings was to put together a common statement denouncing the pollution and labour rights abuses committed by the Indian and Bangladeshi shipbreaking industries.

In India, the Platform met with various renowned trade unions and labour movements in New Delhi. Participants included, among others, the New Trade Union Initiative, the International Metalworkers Federation Asia Office, the All India Trade Union Congress, the Centre for India Trade Union and Youth for Safe Food. In Bangladesh, Platform member, Bangladesh Institute for Labour Studies helped facilitate the trade union meetings that were organised in Dhaka and in Chittagong. Participants in these meetings included the Bangladesh Trade Union Centre and the Shipbreakers Union Forum. The common statement was received very well during the meetings and an additional



demand to have the right to organise workers was added.

It was decided that a South Asian trade union meeting would be organised in 2011 with representatives from the trade unions of all the shipbreaking countries, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, to further discuss the common statement on shipbreaking. While in India and Bangladesh, the Platform took the opportunity to meet with the European Union delegations in place in the countries' capitals. They also met with the other Platform member organisations, Toxics Link, BELA, YPSA, and BILS. It was decided that a South Asian trade union meeting would be organised in 2011 with representatives from the trade unions of all the shipbreaking countries, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, to further discuss the common statement on shipbreaking.