**Informal Economy in the Sectors of Food, Tourism, Trade and Craft**

The General Federation of Food, Tourism, Trade and Craft (La Federation Generale d’Alimentation, du Tourisme, de Commerce et de l’Artisanat) includes 15 sectors:

1. Tourism
2. Trade
3. Travel agencies
4. Cafes, bars and restaurants
5. Canned food
6. Dairy
7. Coffee roasting
8. Salt extraction
9. Bakeries
10. Mills
11. Distribution of alcoholic beverages
12. Soft drinks
13. Pastries
14. Pasta
15. Handicraft

Membership has doubled since the revolution going from 40 thousand to almost 80 thousand members, around 40% of which are women.

Most sectors are plagued by employment fragility, especially the sectors of cafes, pastry, bakery and mills, where employment contracts, pay slips, payroll declarations, occupational health and workplace safety are totally absent.

These sectors are also characterized by the employment of women, who accept the minimum, and endure mistreatment from the employers, including violence, sexual harassment and other forms of abuse and gender discrimination. These phenomena emerged to the surface after the revolution, with scores of women joining the union and speaking out about the humiliation, the violence and sexual harassment that they endure.

The Tunisian economy has been characterized in the late 90s, by the fragility of employment. Employers used the loopholes in the Labor Law Code, particularly Article 6-4 which stipulates that the worker can only be confirmed in his/her job after 4 years of service. During that period, employers resort to all legal and illegal ways to sever the employment contract before the completion of the required 4-year period, thus avoiding full integration of the worker in the system.

The number of fragile sectors is also very high, and we only have 51 sectoral agreements to regulate all sectors in Tunisia. This number is insufficient in view of the large and increasing number of sectors due to the development of the world economy that led to the emergence of new sectors that are not regulated by any sectoral agreement. This in turn has led to a great imbalance in wages, since these are calculated according to the SMIG, or the Minimum Industrial Wage Guaranteed, which is itself very low, due to the dire situation of the Tunisian economy, caused by the dire political situation in Tunisia before the revolution. The UGTT (General Union of Tunisian Workers) has strived to organize the new sectors by advancing new labor laws, but was faced with rejection, because employers wanted to keep control over these sectors. In all honesty, we were unable to reach within these sectors due to the low rate of union affiliation, which is the basis of our strength. It is important to note that the Federation presented two new draft agreements, one was the Collective Sectoral Agreement for Department Stores, in response to the growing number of this kind of retail stores such as Carrefour and Giant. The second was the Collective Sectoral Agreement for Poultry Slaughterhouses.

However, the revolution was accompanied by an intensification of union membership in all the sectors that fall under sectoral agreements, and those not yet regulated by any collective agreement. The Federation of Food, Tourism, Trade and Craft took it upon itself to organize these sectors and already started submitting new draft laws to the overseeing authority, namely the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Federation also initiated a number of special agreements and statutes for a number of sectors, one of which was the Agreement relative to Fairs and Entertainment Companies.

The Federation also organized a number of meetings at the Regional Labor Inspection Administration and the General Labor Inspection and Reconciliation Administration, in order to organize sectors that fall under the jurisdiction of the Labor Law Code. The goal was to integrate these sectors within other established sectoral agreements, to ameliorate organizational and financial conditions of sectors with similar characteristics. For example, we insisted to integrate companies of the meat business into trade agreements, until such time that specific sectoral agreements are established (Red Meat Agreement). We did the same for livestock nutrition compound companies by integrating them into the Mill Agreement, due to the similarity of these activities, until such time that a specific agreement is established. We did the same thing for sugar manufactories, which we integrated in the pre-established pastry agreement.

Many food industries have also been organized, and a number of unions have been established within those industries. We are also committed to negotiate agreements for dried fruits businesses, sea food freezing and processing units, and other fruit processing and packaging units.

We also have to point out the growing role of women in the tourism sector, in which women have played an active role especially after the revolution, the revolution of freedom and dignity. Women membership and involvement has increased, with women now occupying leadership roles as General Secretary or Deputy Secretary General. Women are now equal to men, and rightly so since they represent half the society, and they work side by side with men in all industries. The UGTT does not hinder the involvement of women, but rather calls on her to take on greater responsibilities.