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**2023 TUC Black
Workers'
Conference
Final Agenda**

TUC Black Workers' Conference 2023

TUC Congress House, London

Friday 26 May, 14.00 to 17.30

Saturday 27 May, 09.30 to 17.30

Sunday 28 May from 09.15

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Motions

1 The cost-of-living crisis and the impact on Black Workers

UNISON believes that the disproportionate and impact of the cost-of-living crisis Black workers and Communities, covering higher levels of unemployment, over-representation in low paid and in-work poverty jobs, poorer housing and cramped living conditions, cuts to universal credit and public services, for example health, education, and local services.

We believe that women are multi-dimensional, complex and the barriers and experiences they face cannot be simply explained by considering single categories, such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or socio-economic status. Black women can and do identify in different ways and face additional barriers when the gender, disability and ethnicity pay gaps intersect and this results in a pension gap

Conference, we call on the TUC RRC to work with the General Council to mount a full-scale fight back with alternative strategies and produce an action plan to implement the recommendations of the TUC Anti-Racism Task Force

Unison

2 Building an Anti-Racist Movement

Conference congratulates the TUC Anti-Racism Taskforce on the work they have done to build the capacity of unions to effectively challenge racial inequality.

As a result, as well as strengthening existing programmes, unions are developing and resourcing new initiatives to identify and advance Black activists, address under-representation, and strengthen networks. Conference recognises this work must be accompanied by a broader programme to educate and involve all members in the struggle for racial equality. The fight for racial justice cannot be left to Black workers alone. There remains an ongoing need for senior leaders to be actively engaged with this work.

Our challenge is to ensure that we keep the momentum going now that the Task Force has come to the end of their two-year term. We cannot risk failing Black workers by allowing progress to unravel or by leaving Black activists to drive forward change.

Conference asks the TUC to:

- i. Continue to support unions in developing their own work on racial justice by offering practical guidance and advice.
- ii. Monitor and report on progress.
- iii. Support unions to develop robust and effective policies and procedures that prevent and respond to all forms of race discrimination and harassment within their organisations.

Union of Shop, Distribute and Allied Workers

3 Tackling Institutional Racism for all workers.

Conference is deeply concerned that Black workers continue to face and suffer from institutional racism, even in trade unions. There has been a plethora of reports (in Health, the Police, and the Fire Brigade to name a few) and initiatives but the deeply rooted nature of racism continues to be pervasive in Britain. This has even led to individuals taking their own lives to escape the “institutional misogyny and racism” as highlighted in the damning independent review of the London Fire Brigade by Nazir Afzal published in November 2022.

Conference calls upon the TUC to fully implement its ‘Manifesto to build an Anti-Racist trade union movement 2022-27’ and for all affiliated unions to make robust use of the TUC’s Equality Duty Toolkit to counter this insidious evil.

Conference call upon the TUC to:

- I. Support all affiliated trade unions to ensure they widely use the Equality Toolkit and the Manifesto 2022-27.
- II. Continue the work of the TUC working party co-ordinated by Mr Roach with regular updates to affiliate unions to share progress and disseminate good practice effectively.
- III. Provide ongoing education and support across the TUC on tackling institutional and systemic racism

National Education Union

4 Racism and under-reporting

Conference notes that 2 out of 5 BAME workers experienced racism at work last year, but 4 in 5 did not report it.

Conference believes that existing mechanisms force the individual to respond to discrimination, raising a formal grievance or bringing a case to an employment tribunal, and do not offer systemic solutions. Conference believes that too often this leads to the employee resigning. Conference notes that bodies like the EHRC do not have the power to inspect employers or apply penalties to employers who do not prevent discrimination.

Conference further notes that the lowest paid are less likely to take a case to an employment tribunal, despite being more likely to experience discrimination. Conference recognises trade unions’ critical role in supporting people to make tribunal claims.

Conference believes that widespread dissatisfaction with the way that incidents are dealt with is not encouraging people to make a report.

Conference calls on the TUC to:

- i. Lobby the government to appropriately fund the EHRC and give it a clear responsibility to proactively act against employers where discrimination is reported, and conduct inspections
- ii. Lobby the government to introduce mandatory ethnicity pay gap reporting
- iii. Continue campaigning for a duty to prevent racism at work

Community

5 Pay parity for Black Asian Minority Ethnic workers – Time to enshrine the ethnicity Pay Gap in Law.

Conference notes that GMB Race, the union's self-organised group in London, sent out a survey to Black Asian Minority Ethnic London workers to collect information about their Pay, Terms and Conditions.

While disappointing, the results are not surprising, including the fact that 52% of respondents thought they received unequal treatment and access to bonuses, overtime, pension, and other plus payments compared to non- Black Asian Minority Ethnic staff.

Conference believes we should all be disappointed and ashamed that ethnicity pay gap reporting has never been enshrined in law, despite a considerable amount of evidence confirming its existence.

That there should be no glass ceiling because of the colour of someone's skin. Pay, promotions and bonuses in all sectors should be underpinned by ability and fairness.

With a cost-of-living crisis hitting households hard, the loss of earnings faced by Black Asian Minority Ethnic workers will push them further into work poverty.

Conference instructs:

- i. The TUC Black Workers' committee to coordinate a campaign on tackling the ethnicity pay gap at a local, regional, and national level.
- ii. This campaign should include charities and civil society organisations who agree ethnicity pay gap reporting must be enshrined into law.

GMB

Amendment

Para 4, insert after "in all sectors": ", including maritime and offshore,"

RMT

6 Race pay disparity

This Conference acknowledges the work being done by Network Rail, and TfL around reducing the Race pay disparity, since publishing their ethnicity figures. Conference notes that there is still a lot of work to be done within these both companies and that whilst their 2021 reports show a slight increase in the recruitment of black and ethnic minorities, there

remained a significant gap in terms of pay differentials, with the gaps growing as you moved up through pay bands.

Conference calls on the TUC to press for all employers to publish their ethnicity figures, and for TUC affiliates to work together to share their good practices on tackling issues of race pay disparity. Conference also calls on TUC affiliates to publicly challenge employers to publish their ethnicity figures and to work with recognised unions to develop strategies to address issues around the employment and reward of black and ethnic workers. Conference also demands that the Government legislates to make it mandatory for all companies to publish their ethnicity figures and address identified pay disparities'

Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

7 Mandatory Equalities Monitoring for all Employers

Amidst attempts by the current government to reduce requirements for employer reporting on workforce diversity and pay, conference recognises the value of equalities monitoring data and advocates for collection and reporting of equalities data to be a legal requirement.

Analysis of Higher Education Statistics Data on student and staff demographics (*Slow Train Coming, EDIMS, 2022*) demonstrates that equalities monitoring in higher education – whilst patchy – makes patterns of (under)representation amongst staff and students visible. UK Music's *Diversity Report 2022* indicates that the number of Black and Global Majority women in music has declined since 2020.

A 2022 report published by the Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity recommends that unions also engage in workforce equalities monitoring data collection and reporting. Furthermore, equalities monitoring is crucial in better understanding the prevalence of invisible disabilities and other less visible inequalities.

Conference calls on the TUC to:

- I. Lobby the UK Government to make equalities monitoring a legal requirement for all employers regardless of size, including unions, and including data on freelancers (including casual non-contracted employees).
- II. Advocate for analyses of equalities monitoring data that looks at intersectional representation across different protected characteristics for a more detailed and holistic understanding of workforce diversity and representation.

Musicians' union

8 Organising Turkish and Kurdish Workers

Conference acknowledges socioeconomic uncertainty and political tension in Turkey has resulted in migration to the UK in recent years.

The 2022 report 'Perspectives of Migrant Workers from Turkey in London's Labour Market' recorded the experiences of migrant workers.

Many surveyed work in the service sector, with 42% of them in the UK on Ankara Agreements that disallow migrants from working as employees but allow them to run businesses. This informal arrangement is open to abuse from employers.

Over 65% of respondents had experienced discrimination, bullying, withheld pay and physical violence. Many work long hours for low pay, sometimes as low as £3 per hour.

Despite these appalling working environments only 3% of the Turkish and Kurdish workers who took part in the research were members of a trade union. The movement must do more to engage and represent them.

Conference calls on the TUC Race Relations Committee to meet with representatives from these communities to discuss how best to ensure they are aware of their rights, encouraging them into trade union membership. Further to highlight the exploitation of Turkish and Kurdish migrants in the UK by inviting a speaker from GIK-DER to address the 2024 TUC Black Workers Conference.

Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen

9 Community Tensions

Conference notes the recent community tension in Leicester, which ended in violent scenes throughout September and early October.

Community cohesion must be at the heart of our collective efforts to ensure that we are able to effectively challenge issues like the cost-of-living crisis and wider systemic racial inequalities that face us all.

Conference welcomes the efforts of the community leaders who helped to bring some calm to the disorder, but the incident in Leicester triggered copy-cat unrest in other cities in the UK.

Therefore, Conference instructs the incoming Race Relations Committee to work with the TUC to organise a campaign for city councils to review their community cohesion strategies, and for this to include a consultation process to determine experiences and views from trade unions, organisations, NGO's on how local authorities might deliver a fully funded meaningful Community Cohesion Vision and Strategy. This will help identify any extremist groups or organisations who seek to create tension in local communities.

Communication Workers Union

10 Tackling Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Hate

Conference asserts that Islamophobia and other forms of racial and religious hatred is abhorrent and must be challenged wherever it exists.

Conference condemns the fact that anti-Muslim hatred continues to play out in the workplace, media, and the streets, as well as in society, and that this is having a damaging effect on the lives of many Muslims and their communities.

Conference further asserts that Islamophobia is rooted in racism that feeds into dehumanising and bigoted attitudes of the Muslim community. It creates harmful stereotypes and perceptions of the Muslim community and other forms of racial injustices.

Conference believes that campaigning for racial and religious justice must be a priority for the trade union movement.

Conference calls on the TUC to:

- i. work with affiliates on strategies for tackling Islamophobia and other forms of racial and religious hatred within workplace policies and practices.
- ii. incorporate actions for tackling Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred into the work of the Anti-Racism Implementation and Oversight Group.

NASUWT

11 Supporting migrant workers

Conference notes:

- i. Images often depicted by the mass media of migrant workers is one of people who come to take from the British society without any meaningful contributions but here to claim benefits. What is often omitted from this narrative is migrant workers pay huge amounts of money for visa applications to the tune of £2,200 per a person in a household and if you are family of five you are paying more than £11,000 a go and this time of economic and cost of living crisis, migrant families are putting themselves in huge debt spiral
- ii. We know that successive inflows of workers from around the world have made enormous contributions to the economic and social life of British people.
- iii. Processing centres for people seeking refuge are not fit for purpose.

Conference resolves to:

- a) provide a platform /space for migrant workers to express their views and tell their own stories
- b) make public the hidden cost of living for migrant workers and their families
- c) campaign for safe routes of travel for migrant workers
- d) establish a database of supportive organisations who can mobilise at short notice to support migrant workers and campaign to close migrant processing centres

University and college union

12 Organising and Supporting Migrant Workers in the Hostile Environment

PCS has proudly fought Pushback & Windrush scandal, deportations, and detentions such as the recent concerns in Marston and, are actively fighting the Rwanda Plan. Once status gained conditions remain challenging.

The Government's Hostile Environment towards migrants, including subsequent scandal of Windrush generations continues to escalate. Migrant workers arriving in the UK after horrendous journeys to safety or subsequently given status to work find increasing hostility, facing issues getting housing, health, for those fleeing domestic violence without recourse, and expenses to remain. The Post Brexit EU Settlement Scheme also contributes to this and impacts Black Workers with EU citizenship, often via historic European colonies.

We acknowledge TUC's work Standing for Migrant Workers Everywhere and resources for organising Migrant Workers.

Conference instructs the TUC Black Worker's Committee to:

- i. Build on existing work and develop a course on representing Migrant Workers, and establish regional Migrant Worker Networks
- ii. Campaign for a National Migrant's History Month to acknowledge the contributions of migrants to the UK
- iii. Lobby government to provide support for migrant workers fleeing domestic violence currently subject to no recourse including trafficked workers.
- iv. TUC to develop a Migrant Workers Conference and work with unions to develop Migrant Worker Networks

Public and Commercial Services Union

13 Immigration, asylum, and racism in media reporting

Equity's Race Equality Committee (REC) notes its significant concern that the Home Secretary is actively encouraging the UK media to use racist and xenophobic language to describe those seeking asylum in the UK. Despite attempts in the Nationality & Borders Act 2022 to undermine the right to seek asylum, this right remains whilst the UK remains a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention. Thus, the use by the Home Secretary and significant elements of the UK media to describe those seeking asylum as 'illegal immigrants' prior to the processing of asylum claims is not only incorrect it is accelerating hatred and contempt for a highly vulnerable group of people.

As of result of the current situation, we call upon conference to:

- I. Support the NUJ to ensure that all members working across media outlets following the guidance in its *Race Reporting Guide*.
- II. Support the work of bodies including the Runnymede Trust in their campaigning to protect and enhance the lives of asylum seekers and refugees which includes advocacy for the right to work whilst seeking asylum.
- III. Ensure that the newly elected Race Relations Committee (RRC) of the TUC adopts this work as part of its twelve-month mandate.

Equity

14 Ending the hostile environment.

Conference notes with concern that the Windrush Compensation Scheme is 'not fit for purpose' given that only 1% of appeals are successful. Figures revealed through a Freedom of Information request showed that out of 3,479 claimant appeals in 2021, only 42 resulted in a settlement.

Conference notes this low appeal success rate is unsurprising given that the Windrush scandal was perpetrated by the Home Office, and by having them run the Compensation Scheme is like marking their own homework. These figures show the need for an inquiry

into the scandal and for taking the compensation scheme out of the government's hands and having it run by an independent body.

Conference therefore calls for:

- I. a statutory judge-led public inquiry into how the Windrush scandal came about and the failings of the compensation scheme.
- II. the Windrush Compensation Scheme to be run independently of the Home Office.
- III. a Windrush Act which will place a duty on public bodies to reduce race disparities in areas such as education, criminal justice, work, health, and community cohesion.
- IV. This legislation to also establish a commonwealth community cohesion fund to tackle disparities and rebuild social and economic ties of communities damaged by the Windrush scandal.

National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

15 Environmental, Social and Governance Framework (ESG)

An Environmental, Social and Governance Framework (ESG) is a set of standards measuring a business's impact on society, the environment, and how transparent and accountable it is. ESGs have been adopted by a number of companies in this country and are also a subject for debate at European Works Councils.

Conference believes:

We cannot ignore or wait to be led on this subject. Decisions are being made today about initiatives that affect our Black and Asian Ethnic Minority (BAEM) members, such as:

- I. Health and Safety
- II. Racial Bias
- III. Unbiased CVs
- IV. Ethnicity Pay gap reporting
- V. Social Value
- VI. Gender balance

Conference calls on the TUC Race Relations Committee, to:

- a) recognise that it is imperative that affiliate unions formulate a view on ESGs, in order to advocate for positive initiatives for BAEM, whilst responsible and ethical companies can also be an attractive prospect for investors in the future and thus protect our members' jobs.
- b) lead a campaign on raising awareness, ensuring ESG decisions and initiatives do not impact negatively across BAEM workforce in the United Kingdom.

Unite the Union

16 Best practice guidance

Conference welcomes the 'Still Rigged' report commissioned by the TUC anti-racism taskforce into racism in the labour market, and in particular the recommendation that a collective response is needed to address the issues raised.

Collective bargaining can produce significant results for Black workers. In the theatre and commercials industries, our Bectu Sector race action plans, designed to assist employers in recruiting a more diverse workforce, are supported by more than 250 companies and remain a work in progress. The development of a new discrimination complaints procedure, in conjunction with the Advertising Producers Association, has provided a vehicle for freelance workers and workers hired on short contracts, to raise complaints. Networking programmes, developed with unions and resulting in recruitment opportunities, have been a successful way to improve diversity across the creative industries. Across all sectors, gathering accurate data is a useful tool for addressing underrepresentation.

Conference calls on the TUC to produce best practice guidance, specifically focused on:

- I. The existence of bullying and harassment policies for handling complaints of racism
- II. The development of recruitment and promotion pathways
- III. Promoting the need for ethnicity pay gap reporting
- IV. Highlighting how accurate data can be a useful tool to support collective bargaining

Prospect

17 Health inequalities

Earlier this year, a report from the NHS Race and Health Observatory revealed that racism, racial discrimination, and barriers to accessing healthcare led to huge health inequalities for Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people in England.

Before Covid-19, the gap in health life expectancy between the richest and poorest areas was around 19 years. For women in the most deprived areas of England, life expectancy fell between 2010 and 2019.

Recent government data, shows that in the year ending March 2019, Pakistani (76%), Bangladeshi (75%) and Black (62%) ethnic groups had the highest percentages of households in the two lowest income groups in the UK.

Conference notes that a recent Lancet study found how widely the determinants of health and health-related quality of life outcomes varied between older white British people and those who belong to minority ethnic groups, with the disparities often being greater for women than men.

Conference calls on the Black Workers Committee to campaign for:

- I. a cross-government strategy to reduce racial health inequalities
- II. access to rehabilitation services, which is a significant barrier for BAME people who could benefit from rehabilitation.
- III.
- IV. the commencement of the socio-economic duty, section 1 of the Equalities Act 2010

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

18 FBU firefighter cancer campaign – DECON

Conference notes recent research commissioned by the FBU and carried out by Professor Anna Stec and the UCLan team, which shows firefighters can be up to four times more likely of being diagnosed with a cancer than the general public as a consequence of exposure to contaminants.

Conference further notes that coupled with the industrial risk, there is already an existing higher incidence of certain cancers in black and minority ethnic communities. A lack of data has resulted in poor understanding of the prevalence and experiences of cancer in black and minority ethnic groups.

Conference notes that in July 2022, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, World Health Organization re-categorised the occupation of firefighting as carcinogenic. Data collected via the Firefighter Cancer and Disease Registry indicates that firefighters are being diagnosed with rare cancers and at a young age in comparison with the general public.

Conference calls on employers to carry out regular health monitoring of firefighters on an annual basis, continuing after retirement.

Conference additionally calls on the Westminster government to commission more research looking at possible fire toxins exposures in the other sectors, including information on PPE provision, decontamination, and storage practices.

Fire Brigades' Union

19 Black presenters and correspondents in the broadcasting industry

This Conference notes the lack of make-up artists, hair stylists, and lighting technicians who are skilled in showing Black presenters and correspondents at their best in the broadcasting and photographic industries. Inadequate or insufficient lighting can also put Black presenters at a disadvantage to their white counterparts. This creates a barrier to Black on-screen representation.

This Conference also notes the work which has been done by Equity and Bectu since 2020 in recognising and beginning to address this problem.

This conference calls on the TUC Black Workers' Committee to work with the relevant unions to continue to highlight and campaign on this issue with employers and broadcasters. Conference also calls upon the TUC to lobby for employers to provide approved training to address this issue so that on-air Black talent can be shown on the same professional basis as their white colleagues.

National Union of Journalists

20 “The Lack of Racial Diversity in Leadership Positions”

Conference is alarmed that we still see a lack of racial diversity in leadership positions and this underrepresentation demands explanation. A damning report by the recruitment consultancy, Green Park, found that ethnic minorities were still being side-lined in FTSE-100 companies and far more likely to take up roles which did not provide conventional routes to top-tier executive jobs. Conference urges that there must be action, rather than mere conversations, to give staff of diverse heritage the opportunity to progress through the ranks and break through the existing barriers which prevent them from securing leadership roles. BME Leaders are the inspirational voice for their local communities and the powerful driving force to improve the experiences, engagement, and overall health of BME communities.

Conference calls upon the TUC to:

- i. Develop measurable strategies to increase and support more colleagues from diverse background in navigating the professional environment.
- ii. Promote achievable initiatives that empower BME communities to radically improve proportionality within leadership structures.
- iii. Address the root causes of low promotion rates among workers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.
- iv. Promote the importance of an inclusive working environment—where BME workers feel valued and respected as individuals.

Royal College of Podiatry

21 Allyship in UK workplaces

Racism, as well as other forms of discrimination, harassment, and marginalisation, remains a daily reality for workers across the UK. In August TUC research revealed that two in five Black workers have experienced racism at work in the last five years, with the most reported form of harassment being racist jokes or banter – experienced by 27% of respondents.

Racist workplace cultures and attitudes are unacceptable. However, all too often, the role of challenging racism falls upon Black staff.

This must change. Anti-racism is everyone's responsibility, and no one should overlook injustice in the workplace.

It is vital that a body of work is undertaken to promote understanding of inequality in UK workplaces, and to encourage people to be allies for all their colleagues who face oppression, marginalisation, and a lack of representation.

This work must ensure positive, pro-active measures are taken to build understanding of and commitment to allyship among working people, and ensure discriminatory systems, behaviours and attitudes are challenged by everyone.

This Conference calls on the TUC and all affiliates to support the development of allyship training, resources, and campaigns in workplaces across the UK, to challenge racism and discrimination at work and build solidarity among working people.

Royal College of Midwives

Amendment

Add at the end of paragraph 4

Equality Reps are a key component to achieve allyship as they empower others to tackle racism, discrimination and harassment. This highlights the need for the government to introduce a statutory duty to give all Equality Reps the right to paid time out for their union duties and undertake relevant training.

Equity

Amendment

The CSP wholeheartedly supports this and adds that micro-aggressions - a statement, act or discriminatory behaviour towards a marginalised group - must be included in allyship and anti-racism training. CSP research shows that 75% of micro-aggressions are from colleagues and around a third of our members experiencing micro-aggressions on a weekly basis.

CSP

Amendment

It is vital that a body of work is undertaken to promote understanding of inequality in UK workplaces, and to encourage people to be allies for all their colleagues who face oppression, marginalisation, and a lack of representation. Equality Reps are a key component to achieve allyship as they empower others to tackle racism, discrimination and harassment. This highlights the need for the government to introduce a statutory duty to give all Equality Reps the right to paid time out for their union duties and undertake relevant training.

Royal College of Podiatry

22 Trade Unions fighting for Racial Justice in the Workplace.

The difficulties which Black trade union members have in obtaining redress for discriminatory behaviour are complex and challenging and in the Civil Service terms and conditions under which Prison Officers are employed, there is evidence that Black staff along with staff who have a disability are discriminated against in terms of promotion and are more likely to be disciplined in the workplace.

The TUC has acknowledged that 'Black workers often find themselves more likely to be subject to disciplinary action, not because of their conduct, but due to the racially biased attitudes on the part of management.' Furthermore, the TUC Anti-Racism Taskforce General Council Report 2022 identifies understanding racism, race and the law, strategic litigation and organising as key elements for all trade unions in combatting racism.

While larger trade unions have the resources to deliver specialist training, smaller trade unions such as the POA find this a challenge and as such the POA call upon the TUC to deliver accredited two day in person workshops followed up by a single day 12 months later to experienced reps, targeted at smaller trade unions to be allocated for all affiliated trade unions which have a membership of less than 50,000 members.

Prison Officers' Association