

Dear Colleagues,

First of all thank you for inviting us in the “Third Regional Workshop – SD”. It’s a pleasure to be representing our organization in this workshop. My name is Renato Mucaj and I am the President of SPPT. Our union represents postal and telecom sector of Albania. I would like to thank the organizers for involving countries which are not yet members of EU, also are making strong efforts to join the European Union family. We know that our way as a candidate country will be a long way and we see forward to June for the European Union decision about opening the negotiation with Albania.

As Brian said, I would have liked to see also more organizations from Candidate Countries, as far as our countries have started to build up the social dialogue (still have to do a lot for developing this dialogue). Of course, it is imperative that these meetings serve as an exchange of experiences where we learn from many of your countries experiences.

Actually, we do not feel so strange in this environment as we have very good and historic relations with the Greek and Italian Postal Unions, good relations that continues even these days and we are glad to meet with them here again.

I want to address two problems that we as a country have:

- *First in National Level*
- *Second in Postal Sector.*

1st Problem,

In Albania, at the national level, the National Council of Labor of Tripartite has been functioning under the direction of Ministry of Labor, where Government, Employer Representatives and trade unions are member of this council. Many investments have been made by the EU in Albania to develop the social dialogue. Lot’s of money were spent to train the social partners that are members of the National Labor Council.

The new government, which was formed 1 year ago in 2017, made the new ministerial reformation, where for the very first time the Ministry of Labor was eliminated and some of its functions, passed to the Ministry of Finance and Economy. These changes were made without consulting the interested social partners.

There have been two years since the Parliament of Albania adopted the latest amendments to the Labor Code and many of the articles of this Code are out of date referring to a Ministry of Labor that does not exist. Funds that were spent to make a Good Code in accordance to the European Standards should be reinvested again to adopt the code. Finally, our confederates were awakened from sleep and addressed the problem to ITUC, which reacted by sending these concerns to the Prime Minister. The government responded by raising the council and only 2 weeks ago this council held the first meeting. Despite this, many unions and professions remain unrepresented in this council as a consequence of the political choice that is made by the Government for the unions in the council. Postal Sector is not represented by any Union in the Council.

2nd Problem,

Albanian Post-Telecom Union since its founding in 1991 has represented the Albanian Post employees. The Albanian Post is a public institution and remains one of the largest operators employing around 2,200 employees and ranked in the Top 20 employers in Albania, although there are other operators such as DHL, FEDEX, UPS or local companies which operates in the country.

Since 2015 because of political interference we have had problems with the Social Dialogue with the Albanian Post. I do not want to go into much details about that fact, but in the collective agreement since 2015, a union out of the sector has been included. Today we are talking, collective agreement has expired, negotiations have been opened by the company that has a new director, but also these negotiations have been closed in unfair way by eliminating the unions involved in these process, even our union that had signed since 1991 the collective agreement with the Albanian Post. We have sent a letter of complaint to the company last week because the reasons are ridiculous, claiming that we do not have a founding document and proper membership. As I said before, I do not want to go into much details but for us this meeting is a very big support. The joint statement that can come from here, can be shared with the company and our government to show again that they need to develop the social dialogue with trade unions at the company, sector or national level and that they can not prevent our right to represent the Albanian Post employees. Of course we have much to do, but I think that with the support of everyone here while sharing these experiences, we can do more to develop the social dialogue in the Postal sector in Albania.

Thank you again for the invitation!