



What is a Global Agreement ? A DP DHL Workers' Guide



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What is a Global Agreement ?

It is a voluntary agreement between a global company, such as Deutsche Post DHL (DP DHL) and a global union, like UNI Global Union or the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), on behalf of its members. The agreement covers labour aspects and workers' rights.

The minimum requirements in a Global Agreement (GA) are for the company to honour the core labour standards of the International Labour Organisation such as :

- Freedom of association (the right to join a union) and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (the right to bargain)
- Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour
- Effective abolition of child labour
- Elimination of discrimination in respect to employment and occupation (particularly discrimination against union members)

However, global unions strive to go further and establish provisions for how these standards will be implemented in practice, including, for instance, a commitment from the employer that it will not oppose unionisation or a guarantee of access to the workplace.



What's in it for me ?

There are benefits for workers and for unions.

For you: Greater protection of your rights as a worker, these may include freedom to choose a union, minimum standards to ensure a living wage, health and safety measures and social protection.

For your union: Strengthening of your union through access to workers, better organising opportunities, union recognition, bargaining rights and enhanced social dialogue channels.

GAs do not replace Collective Agreements that unions bargain with the company on a national basis but they do provide opportunities for workers in countries where they do not have a collective contract to organise and bargain collectively. This means more opportunities for workers to have a say in things that affect their jobs, in demanding proper social dialogue and consultation and in using their collective strength to ensure their issues are high up on the company agenda.

Why would DP DHL sign it ?

Signing a GA gives credibility to DP DHL's CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) commitments. It also helps prevent conflict at the workplace. It is a tool for meeting some of the investors' requirements as well as for minimising risks in terms of reputation and assuring compliance with ILO standards. It builds trust with workers and dialogue within the company to improve quality and productivity.

A Global Agreement means :

- **Workers' rights**
- **Bargaining rights**
- **Better working conditions for all workers**

What's the process ?

Usually a global alliance of workers from the same multinational, such as DP DHL, asks the company to adhere to a GA that is signed by the Company management and the Global Union on behalf of its members.

When the GA is signed, all people employed by DP DHL are informed about it and what it entails. The GA is then implemented and monitored. Monitoring systems can take different forms, ranging from a simple agreement between the company and the Global Union to meet when necessary to a fully fledged internal audit systems operating at all levels in the company as well as joint monitoring mechanisms and funds.

However, the most important monitoring body is you! You can report to your union and to the Global Union any developments, changes or actions which may not be in accordance with the spirit of the agreement. They can then bring up the question with the company.

Who's involved ?

You as a worker are involved through the global alliance at DP DHL and in cooperation with your union and UNI Global Union and the ITF. It is only by building worker strength that the company will realise the importance of signing a GA.

On the DP DHL side, it is the senior management at the headquarters in Bonn, Germany, that is involved in signing the agreement and ensuring it is implemented and monitored at all levels. This means that all business units globally and their managers are informed about the GA and its significance and the need for them to implement it and make it real.

Who has already signed a Global Agreement ?

- G4S
- Volkswagen
- Chiquita
- Telefónica
- Carrefour
- IKEA
- DANONE
- H&M
- France Telecom
- Bosch
- Securitas
- ...

More information at:
www.respect4workers.org



Why do we need to work now for a Global Agreement?

Workers are often afraid to join unions and lose their jobs if the company finds out they are a union member but they would join if they knew they were protected and the company respected workers' rights. Workers have also told us they want to have collective contracts; individual contracts mean they get less pay and have less job security than those workers represented by a union. There is clear evidence that

if we do not have workers' rights recognized everywhere, companies tend not to respect them and move work to places where the conditions are not protected by union representation and bargaining.

Doing nothing is not an option for us as workers, we must work together to get global recognition of workers' rights.

How do we get started?

Join the DP DHL workers alliance (at: www.respect4workers.org) or ask your union for more information.

By doing so you will be part of the network of DP DHL workers around the world that is asking the company for a GA. It will also enable you, once the agreement is signed, to be part of the implementation and monitoring process.

Encourage your colleagues to join the alliance too.



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