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ILWU Statement on the Presidential Memorandum on Advancing Worker Empowerment, Rights, and High Labor Standards Globally

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(San Francisco, CA) –The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) applauds President Joe Biden’s announcement of the Presidential Memorandum on Advancing Worker Empowerment, Rights, and High Labor Standards Globally (The Global Labor Directive) which centers workers' rights and conditions in how U.S. government agencies conduct international diplomacy.

The Global Labor Directive is an important step in reversing decades of labor-hostile trade deals and economic policies that put the interest of business over workers that has resulted in attacks on workers' rights at home and around the world, fueling corporate overreach and abuse leading to soaring rates of inequality, and an erosion of democratic rights.

President Biden’s policy will utilize diplomacy to promote labor rights and worker organizing around the globe, enable swift responses to violence and threats against trade union leaders, activists, and organizations, and utilize trade practices to advance labor rights.

This policy recognizes the important role that labor unions around the world play in increasing wages, improving health and safety conditions, combating racial and gender inequities, and strengthening democratic institutions and civil society.

“President Biden doesn’t just talk the talk, he walks the walk,” said ILWU International President Willie Adams. “He has demonstrated his commitment to labor by standing alongside workers on the picket line and utilizing the power of his office to protect the rights of workers throughout the world with the full force of government policy. Workers share a common interest regardless of where we live. We rise and fall together.”

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