Model Motion 8

Ethical Procurement and Ethical Investment: An Employer's Industrial Relations Responsibility

The Branch Notes:

- The absence of clear and enforceable ethical procurement and ethical investment policies is an important industrial issue affecting workers.
- The responsibility to respect human rights applies equally to public and private-sector employers, multinational corporations, financial institutions and businesses operating through international supply chains.
- The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises establish that businesses must ensure their operations, commercial relationships, procurement and investments do not cause, contribute to or become directly linked to serious human rights abuses including genocide.

The Branch Believes:

- Ethical procurement and ethical investment should form part of employers' industrial relations responsibilities. Workers and trade unions have a legitimate interest in how employers award contracts, enter commercial partnerships and invest pension funds.
- Trade unions must have meaningful engagement with employers to ensure commercial and investment decisions comply with international law, human rights obligations and recognised standards of corporate responsibility.
- Employers must ensure procurement, contracting and investment decisions do not contribute to, facilitate or financially benefit from serious breaches of international law, grave human rights abuses or international crimes.
- Procurement procedures must properly assess the human rights records of contractors, suppliers and business partners.
- Workers' labour and pension contributions should not support companies implicated in serious violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law or peremptory norms of international law.
- Failure by employers to undertake effective human rights due diligence risks exposes workers and their pensions to serious legal, financial, operational and reputational consequences.

This Branch Resolves:

- To instruct branch representatives to raise the issues of EPP and EPI locally as an industrial issue.
- To write to the Executive Committee / General Secretary requesting that the Union develop and adopt a comprehensive model EPP and EPI Policy for representatives to use in negotiations with employers ensuring these issues are incorporated into collective bargaining and workplace negotiation wherever the Union has recognition.
- To submit a motion to the Union's Policy Conference calling for the adoption and implementation of these policies nationally.

Reference:

Ethical Procurement & Ethical Investment Guides:

https://bdsmovement.net/sites/default/files/2026-09/Adopting_Ethical_Procurement_Policy.pdf

https://bdsmovement.net/resources/ethical-investment-policy