Trade Unions in the Global South, from Imperial Rule to the Present Day

9am-5.30pm, Friday 13 June 2014, Congress House, London

To mark the important role that trade unions have played in the recent protests that have affected parts of Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and South East Asia, History & Policy’s Trade Union Forum and the Trades Union Congress will host a one day conference. The conference will reflect on the relationship between trade unions and the state in the Global South, as well as the role of labour movements in popular protests from the end of imperial rule to the present day.

This event is funded by the ESRC. It is free to attend and open to all but space is limited. Spaces will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis. To reserve your place please contact Gareth Curless (g.m.curless@exeter.ac.uk).

Registration and Welcome, 9.00-9.30

Panel One, 9.30-10.20


David Hyde, University of East London. ‘The East African Railway Strike 1959-60: Labour’s Challenge of Inter-Territorialism.’

Coffee Break, 10.20-10.35

Panel Two, 10.35-11.25

Jim Moher, Institute of Contemporary British History, King’s College London. ‘History of Trade Unions in Ireland, North and South.’

Yann Béliard, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle. ‘The Workers’ Dreadnought and the South African Revolt of 1922.’

Coffee Break, 11.25-11.40
Panel Three, 11.40-12.30

Mathilde von Bülow, The University of Nottingham. ‘Local activism versus Cold-War internationalism: the West German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB) and the Algerian war of independence, 1954-1962.’

Larissa Rosa Correa, International Institute of Social History. ‘The boundaries between the international solidarity and the foreign interventionism: Brazilian and American labor relations during the dictatorship in Brazil (1960s and 70s)’

Lunch, 12.30-13.30

Panel Four, 13.30-14.20


Coffee Break, 14.20-14.35

Panel Five, 14.35-15.25

Peter Dwyer, Ruskin College, The University of Oxford. ‘The National Mine Workers of South Africa and the Marikana Strike.’

Pauline Dibben, The University of Sheffield. ‘Trade Unions and employment security in Mozambique: mobilising for change?’

Coffee Break, 15.25-15.40

Panel Six, 15.40-16.30


Roundtable Discussion, 16.30-17.30

Chair: Owen Tudor, Head of European and International Relations Department, the TUC.

Francis Atwoli, Secretary General of the Kenyan Central Organisation of Trade Unions.

Sir Leroy Trotman, General Secretary Barbados Workers’ Union (TBC).

Annie Watson, Former Director of the Commonwealth Trade Union Council.