

## RESOLUTION 68

# Resolution in Support of FLOC and Justice for Tobacco Harvesters

Submitted by Farm Labor Organizing Committee  
Referred to the Organizing Committee

**WHEREAS**, Reynolds Tobacco Co., a wholly owned subsidiary of Reynolds American Inc. based in Winston-Salem, N.C., is the second-largest tobacco company in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the many farm workers harvesting tobacco utilized by Reynolds suffer such hardships as long hours of stoop labor in the fields, harassment in their work, abject poverty, miserable housing in their labor camps and the denial of basic labor and human rights protections; and

WHEREAS, each year countless numbers of tobacco farm workers are affected by green tobacco sickness, caused by an overexposure to nicotine and other harmful chemicals found in tobacco leaves. Many of these workers receive little or no medical attention. The vast majority of tobacco farm workers in North Carolina and the South harvesting tobacco are not covered under workers' compensation insurance; and

WHEREAS, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO has launched a campaign to gain dignity, respect and safe working conditions for tens of thousands of tobacco farm workers in North Carolina and the South through a FLOC labor agreement. A FLOC contract will ensure justice for these tobacco harvesters. FLOC now represents thousands of immigrant workers employed by members of the North Carolina Growers Association (NCGA); and

WHEREAS, FLOC wants Reynolds to honor its responsibility for the conditions and compensation of the workers in the fields that produce their

tobacco. Even though Reynolds does not directly employ these workers, Reynolds has a fundamental responsibility for how tobacco farm workers are paid and how they are treated, since Reynolds sets the terms for its contract growers; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Susan Ivey, the CEO of Reynolds American Inc., has repeatedly refused to meet with FLOC to discuss improving the conditions of the tobacco farm workers harvesting tobacco used by Reynolds;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AFL-CIO calls on Reynolds American CEO Susan Ivey to meet with FLOC to discuss conditions in the tobacco fields as soon as possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the AFL-CIO will communicate directly with CEO Ivey by letter and other means, calling on her to meet with FLOC and continue these activities until FLOC is satisfied with the company's response; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the AFL-CIO will mobilize its affiliated national and international unions, state federations and central labor councils and area federations to communicate directly by letter and other means with CEO Ivey, calling on her to meet with FLOC; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the AFL-CIO commits itself, its affiliates and AFL-CIO state and central labor councils and area federations to justice for tobacco farm workers in the South and to engage in activities to support FLOC until FLOC informs the AFL-CIO that its goals have been achieved.