

Wednesday, 11 April 2012

Prime Minister Julia Gillard to address opening day of ACTU Congress 2012 on 15 May

Prime Minister Julia Gillard will address the first afternoon session of the ACTU Congress in Sydney next month.

The Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Bill Shorten, has also been confirmed as speaking on the final morning of the Congress on 17 May.

They join other high-profile guest speakers, including former Prime Minister and Treasurer Paul Keating and ex-ACTU Secretary Bill Kelty, who will both address the Congress Dinner on 16 May. The President of the Washington DC-based Economic Policy Institute, Lawrence Mishel, is the keynote international speaker.

Almost 1000 delegates representing workers from every industry and sector in Australia will attend the ACTU Congress at the Sydney Convention Centre from 15-17 May.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said the Congress, which is held every three years, was the largest and most important gathering of Australian unions.

“Delegates will debate and vote on policies regarding the workplace, rights, and campaigns to improve wages, conditions and quality of life for Australian workers and their families,” Ms Kearney said.

“This process sets the union agenda for a further three years.

“The focus of this year’s Congress will be the Secure Jobs. Better Future campaign.

“With about 40% of the Australian workforce employed as casuals, in labour hire, on short-term contracts or in other forms of insecure work, improving their rights, entitlements and protections is a major priority of Australian unions.

“The report of the Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work, chaired by former Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe, will be publicly released during Congress.

“It is expected that this will provide a range of recommended policy solutions to the growing crisis of insecure work.”

The Congress will also elect a new Secretary to lead the ACTU, along with other office-holders.

All media are invited to this important event in Sydney from 15-17 May. The Congress program is now available at www.actucongress.org.au.

Media can register their interest in attending the ACTU Congress 2012 by contacting Michelle Ryan on (03) 9664 7379 or mryan@actu.org.au