



4 October 2019

Mr. Guy Ryder
Director-General
International Labour Organization (ILO)
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Expressing great concern over increasing violation of fundamental labour rights in Algeria

Dear Mr. Director General,

On behalf of IndustriALL Global Union, Public Services International (PSI), International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), we are writing to you again to express our deep concern over the increasing pressure and intimidation against independent unions: many trade unionists have been condemned to prison, and numerous activists, journalists and political opponents have been arrested in Algeria.

The military has extended its control on virtually every area of society in Algeria, and the arrests are an attempt to crush independent unions and the civil society movement for democracy in Algeria. Just this month, Mohamed El Amine Slimani, a youth leader at SNATEG and COSYFOP, was sentenced to prison at a court in Algiers for filming a march by their members; and Nasser Hamitouche, a COSYFOP member from Algiers, has suffered a mental breakdown after being interrogated by security forces for ten hours on 18 September.

Please note that we are calling on the Algerian authorities to immediately release all those detained for their civic and trade union engagement. Trade union rights have become virtually non-existent in Algeria. The authorities must stop the harassment of trade unionists, and guarantee the right of freedom of association, free from violence and threats.

Furthermore, we strongly condemn the fact that Internet access is restricted to stop protestors communicating and organizing rallies, while social media has been flooded with fake news and electronic trolls targeting the protest movement. Freedom of the press is severely restricted and a major news website has been shut down. We recall that the ILO has repeatedly affirmed the importance of freedom of assembly and the full exercise of civil and political rights as integral to protection of the right to freedom of association.

Taking full account of this dire situation, it is more urgent than ever that the ILO impresses upon the Algerian authorities the need to comply with the recommendations of the ILO high-level mission to the country in May of this year, and equally important that the government fulfills its international obligations as clearly stipulated in the set of recommendations from the Committee on the Applications of Standards from June calling to:

- ensure that the registration of trade unions in law and in practice is in compliance with Convention No. 87;

- immediately process the registration of CGATA and SESS and other free and independent trade unions, which have met the requirements set out by law, and allow the free formation and functioning of trade unions;
- annul the decision to dissolve the SNATEG trade union;
- systematically and promptly provide trade union organizations with all necessary and detailed information to enable them to take corrective action or complete additional formalities for their registration; amend section 4 of Act No. 90-14 in order to remove obstacles to the establishment by workers of organizations, federations and confederations of their own choosing, irrespective of the sector to which they belong;
- amend section 6 of Act No. 90-14 in order to recognize the right of all workers, without distinction whatsoever, to establish trade unions;
- take all appropriate measures to guarantee that, irrespective of trade union affiliation, the right to freedom of association can be exercised in normal conditions with respect for civil liberties and in a climate free of violence, pressure and threats;
- ensure impartial investigation and due process rights in order to guarantee the rule of law;
- ensure that the new draft Labour Code is adopted with no further delay and is in compliance with the text of Convention No. 87.

In addition, we call for the reinstatement of all public sector employees terminated solely for their union membership or activity.

Furthermore, we call on the Algerian authorities to guarantee the unconditional release of all those arrested for attempting to exercise their trade union and civic rights and guarantees of their safety and wellbeing.

We look forward to your prompt action and reply.

Yours sincerely,



Valter Sanches
General Secretary
IndustriALL Global Union



Sue Longley
General Secretary
IUF



Rosa Pavanelli
General Secretary
PSI



Sharan Burrow
General
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