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Global Unions
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Stephen Cotton,
ITF

Vice Chair
Christy Hoffman,
UNI Global Union

Secretary
ITUC

The Council of Global Unions (CGU) demands Hong Kong authorities withdraw the investigation against Elizabeth Tang, respect human rights, and end the assault on legitimate trade union rights in Hong Kong

18 April 2023

The CGU, on behalf of the 200 million workers around the world we represent, expresses its unwavering solidarity with Elizabeth Tang, General Secretary of the International Domestic Workers' Federation (IDWF), who has been subjected to alleged charges of collusion and arrest by the Hong Kong National Security police, and is now on bail awaiting developments in her case.

The CGU strongly condemns the arbitrary arrest, detention and travel restrictions imposed on Elizabeth Tang by the Hong Kong authorities.

We demand that the government of Hong Kong withdraw the investigation against Elizabeth Tang and drop the charges against all other trade unionists, democracy activists, and human rights defenders who have been pursuing legitimate rights protected under international human rights treaties and labour standards.

Elizabeth is a leader of the global labour movement. She served as Executive Director of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions until 2011; led a global network of domestic workers in a campaign that led to the 2011 adoption of ILO Convention 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers; and built the IDWF into the only global union both representing and led predominantly by women workers.

We demand an end to the assault on fundamental rights and freedoms in Hong Kong, which has been intensified since the adoption of the National Security Law (NSL) by the Hong Kong government on 30 June 2020. The Chinese and Hong Kong authorities must respect and fulfil their international human and labour rights obligations including obligations under ILO Convention 87.

We stand in solidarity with Elizabeth Tang and all trade unionists and democracy activists in Hong Kong who are facing grave threats to their fundamental rights and freedoms, and call for an immediate end to the assault on human rights and democracy in Hong Kong.

The CGU shall pursue all actions necessary to defend the freedoms and human rights of Elizabeth and other trade unionists and democracy activists.

Together we - as fellow, democratic representatives of workers worldwide - stand side-by-side with Elizabeth today, tomorrow and forever.

Withdraw the false charges. Respect human rights. End the suffering.

Stephen Cotton, Chair of the CGU and General Secretary of the ITF, commented, “the treatment of Elizabeth [Tang] is not just an affront to human rights and democracy in Hong Kong, it is an attack on the rights and freedom of workers around the world. For decades, Elizabeth has been a loyal friend and brave leader of workers despite the increasing threats and challenges she has faced. We shall do everything in our power to free Elizabeth and defend trade unionism in Hong Kong.”



In solidarity,



Stephen Cotton
General Secretary,
International Transport Workers' Federation



Christy Hoffman
General Secretary,
UNI Global Union



Owen Tudor
Deputy General Secretary,
International Trade Union Confederation



Sue Longley
General Secretary,
International Union of Food,
Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant,
Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers'
Associations



Atle Høie
General Secretary,
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Ambet Yuson
General Secretary,
Building and Wood Worker's
International



Rosa Pavanelli
General Secretary,
Public Services International



Anthony Bellanger
General Secretary,
International Federation of Journalists



David Edwards
General Secretary,
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Veronica Nilsson
Acting General Secretary,
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Benoît Machuel
General Secretary,
International Arts and Entertainment Alliance

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