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Global Unions Call for Immediate End to Repression in Turkey

Global Unions, collectively representing over 200 million union members, including in Turkey, stand in solidarity with the people of Turkey.

Our organisations wish to reiterate their serious concern at the repeated use of brutal and excessive measures including rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannon by government security forces against people peacefully exercising their rights.

Global Unions and their members believe that the right to peaceful demonstration and freedom of assembly are basic elements of genuine democracy. However, instead of respecting that right, the Erdoğan Government appears to engage in repression as a regular practice. For example, still fresh in our minds are the 2013 May Day celebrations, which turned to bloodshed after attacks on demonstrators by the security forces.

We are doubly concerned that since the 2011 elections, fundamental trade union rights have been denied both legally and illegally, and that there has been a marked increase in such practices. Laws have been adopted that establish greater barriers to trade union recognition and discourage rather than encourage the exercise of trade union rights. There has been inaction against employers who deny workers' fundamental rights, abuses have persisted in the judiciary system, strikes that meet the criteria for being legal have been prevented, and violent attacks have been carried out on trade unionists. These developments have been coupled with limits on freedom of assembly and expression that constitute serious attacks on fundamental human rights and democracy.

The Global Unions unreservedly support the international solidarity actions that start on 21-22 June and urgently call on the government of Turkey to address the following:

- End violence and repression against peaceful protests and to address the demands made by the protestors;
- Ensure that those responsible for the thousands of injured people and the deaths of Mehmet Ayvalıtış, Abdullah Cömert, Ethem Sarısülük and Mustafa Sarı are held accountable for their actions, including through removal from their posts and prosecution before the law;
- Guarantee the right to freedom of assembly in all public areas, including Taksim square;
- Ensure that trade unionists and other workers who exercise their right to freedom of assembly are not dismissed;
- Immediately release citizens who have participated in peaceful protests and drop all charges against them;
- Immediately release KESK trade unionists, detained journalists and media workers and all others unjustly held for legitimate acts of protests and opposition;
- Remove all the legal and practical barriers against the exercise of trade union rights and the right to strike;
- Ensure that injured protestors have access to adequate health care;
- Put an immediate end to all threats made against journalists, performers and media workers and citizens who have lawfully exercised their right to protest, and
- End prohibitions and restrictions on the use of social media.

BWI
www.bwint.org



EI
www.ei-ie.org



IAEA
www.iaea-globalunion.org



IndustriAll
www.industriall-union.org



IFJ
www.ifj.org



ITF
www.itfglobal.org



ITUC
www.ituc-csi.org



IUF
www.iuf.org



PSI
www.world-psi.org



TUAC
www.tuac.org



UNI
www.uniglobalunion.org



Turkey and its people deserve much better. They deserve democracy and the protection of all their human rights, including trade union rights. It is urgent that the Turkish government moves in that direction in the crucial days and weeks ahead.



Ambet Yuson
General Secretary,
Building and Wood Workers' International
(BWI)



Sharan Burrow
General Secretary,
International Trade Union Confederation
(ITUC)



Jyrki Raina
General Secretary,
IndustriAll



Benoît Machuel
General Secretary,
International Arts and Entertainment Alliance
(IAEA)



Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary,
Education International (EI)



Philip Jennings
General Secretary,
UNI Global Union



Elisabeth Costa
General Secretary,
International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)



Rosa Pavanelli
General Secretary
Public Services International (PSI)



Stephen Cotton
General Secretary
International Transport Workers'
Federation (ITF)



John Evans
General Secretary
Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD
(TUAC)



Ron Oswald
General Secretary
International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel,
Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers'
Associations (IUF)