

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

Brussels 22/05/2017

Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
Binali Yıldırım

Ministry of Labour and Social Security
Mehmet Müezzinoğlu

Dear Prime Minister

Dear Minister of Labour,

As you may know, ITUC and ETUC organised a second joint mission to Turkey, Ankara, between 3 and 5 May last.

Representing the International and European trade union movements, we emphasised in our different meetings our condemnation of the coup attempt of 15 July 2016, as an attack on democracy, and stated that any terrorist attacks or unconstitutional efforts to seize power and overthrow democracy must be opposed.

But we added that we were deeply concerned at the massive wave of dismissals of workers and public employees, by the Turkish government, in most cases without any basis of proof or evidence, or compliance with the rule of law.

We heard about the hunger strike of Mr. Semih Özakça (dismissed teacher) and Ms. Nuriye Gülmen (dismissed academic), two members of the branch trade union Eğitim Sen of Kesk (one of our four affiliates) who want to be reinstated, after having been dismissed. Now, they have been on hunger strike for 64 days and their health is at a critical stage.

Dear Ministers, we do recognise that Turkey is facing multiple challenges and threats, but we consider that nine months after the failed coup, the state of emergency and the decrees have gone far beyond what is necessary for security reasons and are disproportionate; and that the dismissals and suspensions are destroying the livelihoods of tens of thousands of workers and are becoming a humanitarian problem.

As ITUC-ETUC, we are deeply worried about the lives of these two members and we are trying to secure their right to live. Given the urgency of the situation and the critical health condition of our trade union colleagues, Gülmen and Özakça, we call on you to consider their claims, to meet them and to take the necessary steps to reinstate them both.

Yours Sincerely,



Sharan Burrow
ITUC General Secretary



Luca Visentini,
ETUC General Secretary