



**ITUC INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION CSI CONFÉDÉRATION
SYNDICALE INTERNATIONALE
CSI CONFEDERACIÓN SINDICAL INTERNACIONAL IGB INTERNATIONALER
GEWERKSCHAFTSBUND**

SHARAN BURROW
PRESIDENT
PRÉSIDENTE
PRÄSIDENTIN
PRESIDENTA

GUY RYDER
GENERAL SECRETARY
SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL
GENERALSEKRETÄR
SECRETARIO GENERAL

Mr. Juan Somavia
Director General
International Labour Office
Route des Morillons, 4
Geneva CH – 1211
Switzerland

By telefax: 41-22-799

HTUR/JB

13 March 2008

Request for ILO intervention in United Arab Emirates

Dear Director-General,

I am writing to request the Office's urgent intervention with the authorities of Dubai and the United Arab Emirates in order to secure the immediate release of 45 Indian construction workers recently imprisoned in Dubai.

According to our information, these workers have been sentenced to six months' imprisonment under charges of holding illegal gatherings, vandalism, and violating public security following their participation in a strike last year for better working conditions. In its ruling the Dubai Criminal Court pronounced that these migrant workers will be deported after having served their jail term. This is another devastating blow for workers' and especially migrant workers' rights in a country where strikes are illegal. This ruling again constitutes a severe violation of Convention 87 on Freedom of Association. The ITUC is extremely concerned about this ruling as Head Judge Jassem Baqer reportedly wants his decision to be considered as a precedent, designed to send a "strong message to workers who resort to illegal methods to get their rights from employers".

We shall of course keep you informed of further developments in this case. In the meantime, we would appreciate it if you would kindly take up this issue with the authorities of Dubai and the United Arab Emirates, and insist that these workers, together with others convicted for exercising their rights to freedom of association and expression, be released from imprisonment, have their expulsion orders repealed, and that any other ongoing sanctions against them be dropped.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Guy Ryder".

General Secretary

