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Mr. Scott Davis
Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of
the Board
United Parcel Service, Inc.
55 Glenlake Parkway, NE
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HTUR/FW

30 September 2010

UPS dispute in Turkey

Dear Mr. Davies,

On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which represents more than 176 million workers through its 301 affiliates in 151 countries and territories, I wish to express my grave concern over the serious violations of trade union rights at UPS in Turkey.

The ITUC was appalled to learn that 160 workers who work for UPS and its sub-contractors in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, have been dismissed in recent months after having registered their membership with the union, TÜMTIS, which is affiliated to the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), and the national union centre Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (TÜRK-İS), which is in its turn affiliated to the ITUC. Other workers have been continuously harassed and intimidated by the local UPS management in order to either prevent them from joining, or make them resign from the union. In July there even was a shooting incident, when the manager of a sub-contractor fired shots outside the offices of a public notary in Izmir, where he had tried to force workers to resign their union membership.

TÜMTIS has submitted 136 lawsuits for workers' reinstatement. The Turkish Ministry of Labour and Social Security's inspectors have already found that eight workers were wrongfully dismissed and the remaining cases are being investigated.

These acts of anti-union harassment and dismissals clearly violate fundamental workers' rights as enshrined in Conventions 87, on Freedom of Association, and 98, on Collective bargaining, of the Geneva-based International Labour Organization (ILO). It furthermore contravenes European standards, which Turkey is bound to respect if it continues to aspire EU membership. Moreover, the actions taken by the Turkish UPS management and its subcontractors are damaging the reputation of your company, which advocates in its Code of Conduct the promotion of a sound relationship between trade unions and the management. Finally, the ITUC finds it unacceptable that UPS is, under these circumstances, one of the official sponsors of the 2012 Olympic Games in London, and wishes to draw your attention to the fact that this matter has been discussed at the most recent Congress of its British affiliate, the British Trades Union Congress.

While we welcome the negotiations which were recently initiated, and which will continue with a new meeting scheduled next Saturday 2 October, between the union and the Turkish UPS management, we understand that the presently proposed arrangement only allows for a small group of workers to be reinstated (the condition being that they are directly employed by UPS in Turkey) and that it gives no scope for rehiring subcontracted workers, notwithstanding the fact that UPS and its subcontractors are jointly liable under Turkish Labour Law.

TÜMTIS seeks to represent all workers who were fired for joining their union at UPS. It aims at peacefully continuing its legitimate union activities at UPS workplaces and eventually seeks to collectively bargain as soon as it meets the legal threshold (50 per cent plus 1). The ITUC supports the union's demands that

1. all the sacked workers are reinstated;
2. steps are taken to ensure that no further victimisation of union members takes place at UPS and its sub-contractors and
3. local UPS management establish a sound industrial relationship with TÜMTIS

We hope a solution of this dispute will come within reach as soon as possible and look forward to hearing from you on this serious issue.

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary

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