

**MICHAEL SOMMER**  
PRESIDENT  
PRÉSIDENT  
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PRESIDENTE

**SHARAN BURROW**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
SECÉTAIRE GÉNÉRALE  
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SECRETARIA GENERAL

His Majesty

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

Manama - Kingdom of Bahrain

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HTUR/MP

19 May 2011

### **Attacks on the trade union movement in Bahrain**

Your Majesty,

On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing 301 affiliated member organisations, with a total membership of 176 million workers in 151 countries and territories, I am writing to you to express our deepest concern at the attacks on the Bahraini trade union movement.

The ITUC has been informed that dismissals of workers for having participated in demonstrations and marches, calling for democracy and reforms, have increased and are clearly focusing the leaders of the trade union organisations. Furthermore, the president and executive committee of the BAPCO trade union have been referred to military court without any explanation.

According to the information, real fears continue to prevail regarding the personal safety of trade union leaders, including Salman Jaffar Al Mahfoodh, General Secretary of the GFBTU. They are being accused by your government and parliament, voiced by the press, to be leading a conspiracy to overthrow the regime. All these false accusations are only an excuse to target the independence and the integrity of the trade union movement.

The ITUC urges you to:

- Immediately withdraw the decision to have BAPCO workers tried in the military court;
- Ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all detained workers;
- Put an end to any acts of harassment, including at the judicial level, against trade union leaders and activists;
- Put a halt to the media campaign against the leadership of the GFBTU and all other activists;
- Reinstate all fired workers and guarantee the return of all trade union representatives to their jobs and allow them to resume their trade union functions;

As a member of the ILO, Bahrain is bound by international treaties, and we remind you that your government must fulfil its obligations and respect trade union rights and fundamental liberties such as freedom of expression.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B.', written in a cursive style.

General Secretary