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21 June 2019

ITUC expression of solidarity with KCTU President and officials

Dear Brother Kim,

I wish to express support and solidarity to you and your colleagues at the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) on behalf of myself and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) while you are facing a new round of criminal prosecutions.

We are highly concerned that you, together with three of your head office staff are arrested and held in pre-trial detention for staging and facilitating rallies earlier this year. We are informed that you are being accused of multiple criminal offenses, namely obstruction of public duties, public traffic, trespassing, and destruction of public goods.

On March 27 and April 2, ten thousand workers joined the KCTU to oppose the amendments on the Labour Standards Act and Minimum Wage Act that would further flexibilise working hours and undermine trade union positions on time sovereignty. With the arrests, the government continues its judicial harassment of trade unionists in an effort to criminalise legitimate trade union activities in the country. The arrests are clearly aiming to undermine mobilisation for the national demonstration against precarious work in the public sector that KCTU is planning on 3 July and constitute a serious violation of freedom of association.

In addition, we share your concern that the government of Korea has been using slow and lengthy legislative amendment processes to delay ratification of the international treaties that safeguard freedom of association and the right to organise and bargain collectively. This while speedy ratification was a clear commitment from Mr Moon Jae-in during his Presidential election campaign in 2018.

We wish to inform you that with persistent violations of rights and without ratification of ILO Conventions No 87 and 98, Korea remains in the category V (no guarantee of rights) of the ITUC Global Rights Index 2019 launched on 19 June 2019 in Geneva.

The ITUC urges the government of Korea to drop all the charges against you and the KCTU staff and to ratify ILO Conventions No 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association and the right to Collective Bargaining

without further delay.

The ITUC will monitor the prosecutions closely. We stand in strong solidarity with you and the struggle of workers in Korea.

In Solidarity,

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

General Secretary