

Ayuba Wabba

President
Président
Präsident
Presidente

H.E. Dr. Abdalla Hamdok

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Sharan Burrow

General Secretary
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HTUR/ZM

17 December 2019

ITUC Condemns the Dissolution of Trade Unions in Sudan

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the ITUC, which represents 207 million workers in 163 countries and territories, to strongly condemn the dissolution of trade unions in your country. The ITUC has noted with disappointment press reports that your government has dissolved trade unions, employers' organisations and other professional bodies duly registered and legally operating under the laws of Sudan.

On 14 December 2019, your Sovereignty Council issued a degree to dissolve all trade unions and professional associations in Sudan. Lieutenant General Yasser Al-Atta, member of the Sovereignty Council and who heads the Committee of "Elimination of empowerment", announced this onslaught on trade unions. I am further reliably informed that on 15 December 2019, police, soldiers and other heavily armed security forces raided the offices of the Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation (SWTUF) and barred the leaders, its affiliates and the Sudan Journalists' Union (SJU) from entering their offices. They also seized their properties and froze bank accounts.

The Sovereign Council's conduct is a serious violation of article 20 (1) of the United Nations' Universal Declaration on Human Rights and article 10 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, both of which protect the right to freedom of association. The ITUC strongly condemns this barbaric and undemocratic action by the Sovereign Council of Sudan.

Furthermore, the ITUC would like to remind the Sovereign Council of Sudan of its obligations to respect and promote the ILO Convention on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949 (No. 98), ratified by Sudan in 1957. This right to collective bargaining can only be undertaken by independent workers and employers' organisations that enjoy the rights provided by the Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948 (No. 87). The principles of this Convention provide that "measures of suspension or dissolution by the administrative authority constitute serious infringements of the principles of freedom of association and constitute a clear violation of Article 4 of Convention No. 87".

In this regard, the ITUC demands that the Sovereign Council of Sudan comply with its international, regional and national obligations regarding freedom of association. You must immediately stop the

seizure of trade union offices and properties and allow the duly elected representatives of trade unions and associations to operate in full freedom without undue interference and intimidation.

Yours sincerely,

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

General Secretary