

Ayuba Wabba

President
Président
Präsident
Presidente

Sharan Burrow

General Secretary
Secrétaire générale
Generalsekretärin
Secretaria General

Mr Nasir El-Rufai
Governor
Kaduna State Government House
Sir Kashim Ibrahim House 44
Polytechnic Road Badiko, Kaduna
Kaduna State
Nigeria
By email

HTUR/ZM

19 May 2021

ITUC condemns state-sponsored violence against protesting workers in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Dear Governor,

I am writing on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing 200 million workers in 163 countries, including Nigeria, to condemn the attack on workers and trade union leaders that occurred during a protest action on 18 May 2021 following a series of unfair labour practices perpetrated by your state government.

The ITUC is reliably informed that on 17 May 2021, workers in Kaduna State, led by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), embarked on a peaceful protest action following the refusal by your government to address their grievances, which include unlawful dismissals, non-payment of redundancy packages, and acts of anti-union discrimination.

We are reliably informed that you hired hooligans to violently disrupt the protest action on 18 May 2021. The Kaduna police only intervened when the hooligans were overpowered by the protestors. You are also quoted in the media boasting of planning to arrest our president, Mr Ayuba Wabba, who is also the NLC president, for what you call "economic sabotage". This showed total ignorance, on your part, of the purpose of a protest action, and your intention to criminalise a peaceful protest action is hereby condemned.

Mr Governor, Nigeria is a party to the ILO Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949 (No. 98). The two conventions' principles prohibit your government from interfering in workers' activities, which include strikes and protest actions. Nigeria is also a party to the Tripartite (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No.144), which requires tripartite consultations between government, workers and employers.

We demand that your government respect the principles of freedom of association and engage in social dialogue with trade unions to find an amicable solution in order to address the challenges in this respect, and that it refrain from instigating violence against our members during this eve of the International Labour Conference 2021.

We will continue to monitor the developments in this matter and hope to receive your favourable reply.

Yours sincerely,



General Secretary

cc: Dr Chris Ngige, Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment; info@labour.gov.ng
cc: Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; info@nigeriabruussels.eu
cc: Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC); gsec@nlcng.org