



ITUC International Trade Union Confederation
CSI Confédération syndicale internationale
CSI Confederación Sindical Internacional
IGB Internationaler Gewerkschaftsbund

Akiko Gono

President
Présidente
Präsidentin
Presidenta

**His Excellency Mr Umaro Sissoko Embaló
President**

Republic of Guinea-Bissau

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HTUR/ZM

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ITUC denounces State surveillance on UNTG-CS leaders Júlio António Mendonça and Yasser Ture

Dear Mr President,

I am writing on behalf of the ITUC, representing 200 million workers in 168 countries, including Guinea-Bissau, to strongly denounce the State surveillance on Messrs Júlio António Mendonça and Yasser Ture, Secretary General and Deputy Secretary-General of the UNTG-CS in your country.

The ITUC is informed that in January 2023, security personnel have been observed surveilling the trade union leaders' homes. This has led to a situation where trade union leaders have had to take costly and burdensome measures to protect their security and privacy including staying away from their homes and families. The security personnel have been observed interviewing people in the neighbourhood asking about the trade union leaders' whereabouts and taking pictures of their homes. Some of the security personnel camped at the gate of Yasser Ture's home for two weeks. The two leaders also received messages threatening their physical integrity.

Mr President, we note that this is not an isolated incident, we have previously raised similar issues with your office in February 2021 and in 2022 without receiving your reply. We note that your Administration disapproved of the duly elected leaders of the UNTG-CS following their election in 2022, in favour of imposing people who were not elected.

We are concerned that your government does not tolerate criticism of its policies including from trade unions, even though these policies affect workers. Criticism from trade unions has led to harassment of trade union leaders.

We demand that your government respect human rights and in particular, the rights of trade unionists to freedom of association and expression guaranteed by the ILO Convention 87. We recall, as indicated by the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA), that 'the rights of workers and employers organizations can only be exercised in a climate that is free from violence, pressure or threats of any kind against the leaders and members of these organizations, and it is for governments to ensure that this principle is respected'.

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Mr. President, the ITUC demands an immediate stop to the surveillance of and threats against trade union leaders and calls upon your government to respect its international obligations and engage in mutual dialogue with the trade unions to resolve the challenges in your country.

Yours sincerely,



Owen Tudor
Deputy General Secretary

cc: African Union Commission: chairperson@africa-union.org

cc: African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR): au-banjul@africa-union.org

cc: Maria Celina Vieira Tavares: (Minister of Labour mfuncaopublica-gbissau@hotmail.com

cc: EU: delegation-guinea-bissau@eeas.europa.eu

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