

**Akiko Gono**

President  
Présidente  
Präsidentin  
Presidenta

**Luc Triangle**

General Secretary  
Secrétaire général  
Generalsekretär  
Secretario General

**President Bola Ahmed Tinubu**

**Office Of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation,  
Shehu Shagari Complex,  
Three Arms Zone,  
Abuja,  
Federal Republic of Nigeria  
email: [info@osgf.gov.ng](mailto:info@osgf.gov.ng)**

**HTUR/ZM**

**2 November 2023**

**ITUC condemns the arbitrary arrest and detention of NLC President Joe Ajaero by the Imo State Governor, Hope Uzodimma and Police Commissioner**

Dear President Tinubu,

I write on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) which represents 191 million workers in 167 countries, including Nigeria, to condemn the arbitrary arrest and subsequent detention of Joe Ajaero, president of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)

The ITUC is reliably informed that workers gathered at the NLC Imo State secretariat offices on 1 November 2023 to protest the state's non-compliance with the minimum wage agreement. The gathering was violently disrupted by Imo State police with Governor Hope Uzodimma and Police Commissioner's knowledge. Workers were seriously injured by machete wounds and stabbings carried out by forces alleged to have associations with Governor Uzodimma. Mobile phones and computers were confiscated and scores of cars were attacked and smashed by these forces. In the violence, the NLC president, who had suffered severe head injuries, was dragged away and taken to an unknown destination.

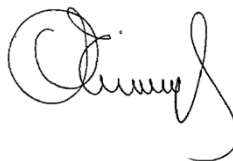
Mr President, as previously stated in our letter of 29 September 2023, we continue to see a surge in acts of anti-union discrimination and violent attacks on the trade unions and their members since your government came to power in May 2023.

The ITUC urges your government to respect, both in law and in practice, the rights of trade unions as provided for under 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), to which the Federal Republic of Nigeria is a party. Article 3 of Convention 87 calls on the public authorities to *"...refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof,"*

The ITUC demands the immediate and unconditional release of Joe Ajaero and all workers held in detention. We further call upon your government to ensure that Imo State and its governor respect the obligations voluntarily accepted by Nigeria by virtue of its Membership of the ILO and ratification of C87 and 98. Your government must ensure that there is no impunity for those who perpetrate violence against workers and their organisations while they exercise their legitimate trade union rights.

Please be informed that we will bring this deteriorating situation regarding the respect for trade union rights in your country to the attention of the Director-General of the ILO.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luc Triangle', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Luc Triangle  
General Secretary

CC: Director General, ILO: [LIBSYND@ilo.org](mailto:LIBSYND@ilo.org)

CC: UN Human Rights: [civilsociety@ohchr.org](mailto:civilsociety@ohchr.org)

cc: African Union Commission: [chairperson@africa-union.org](mailto:chairperson@africa-union.org)

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

CC: Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC): [gsec@nlcng.org](mailto:gsec@nlcng.org)

cc: Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Kingdom of Belgium: [info@nigeriabrussels.org](mailto:info@nigeriabrussels.org)