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M. Omar Faruk Osman
General Secretary
Federation of Somali Trade Unions
(FESTU)
Mogadishu
Somalia

By e-mail: omar@nusoj.org

HTUR/FW

16 August 2011

Solidarity message to FESTU – Nine public transport workers shot dead by militants in South Somalia

Dear M. Faruk,

On behalf of its 305 affiliates worldwide, the ITUC wishes to express its solidarity with the Somali labour movement after having received the appalling news of the killing of nine public transport workers in the town of Afgoye, 30 kilometers south of Mogadishu.

The killing of six drivers and three conductors of mini buses which are used for public transportation for commuters between Mogadishu and Afgoye by the islamist militants of Al-Shabaab is shocking and unacceptable. It is known that Al Shabaab has been financially weakened since a series of recent developments, and is therefore recurring to extortion of public transport workers and business people in the areas they still control. The fact that they accused the public transport workers of not fasting during the holy month of Ramadan after they refused to give in to extortion makes their whole act even more criminal and deplorable.

The ITUC hereby renews its support for the Federation of Somali Trade Unions, and wishes to convey its condolences to FESTU and the families of the workers. It is very much aware of the nearly impossible circumstances in which Somali workers have to try to make a living every day, and reiterates its commitment to assist their unions in their brave and ongoing struggle.

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary