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Ms Christine Lagarde, Managing Director
International Monetary Fund

Mr Loukas Papademos
Prime Minister of Greece

Mr Evangelos Venizelos
Minister of Finance, Greece

GS/JH/km

Brussels, 7 February 2012

Dear Ms Lagarde, Mr Papademos and Mr Venizelos,

I am writing to express the ITUC's total opposition to the latest demands affecting workers' rights in the current negotiations between the Government of Greece and its creditors together with the EU, IMF and ECB.

It would seem that the IMF and the European Union are pushing for deregulation of labour rights in the private sector, enhanced wage flexibility including reductions in the minimum wage, further redundancies and legislative changes to facilitate employment reductions, and different forms of interference in freely determined collective bargaining processes.

These developments ignore established social dialogue procedures and internationally recognised workers' rights. They constitute interference in independently agreed collective agreements and not only smash fundamental rights guaranteed by international law but are anti-democratic.

Furthermore, by worsening the climate for productive industrial relations and social dialogue in Greece and introducing a further degree of austerity exceeding any acceptable degree, they will make it even less likely that the current economic policies in Greece can succeed in job centred growth. Rather the growth in informal and insecure work is already becoming evident.

I urge you to cease attempting to impose the current reforms and to seek instead a productive dialogue based upon a pro-growth strategy to build a consensus-based economic recovery in Greece. In this regard I point to the agreement recently settled in Spain as a balanced approach to securing jobs, moderating wages and profit and allowing for real growth.

Sadly the path you are set on will only continue to force political unrest as people are left with no option but to fight for democratic rights and freedoms.

The ITUC is as always willing to discuss a more rational approach where bargaining rights are used to resolve issues but when Governments and international institutions collaborate to legislate away rights and destroy social dialogue, collective agreements and job and income security then we stand in solidarity with workers in Greece.

We will ourselves be commencing a series of public hearings in the coming weeks through the organisation of high-profile ITUC forums including eminent international figures as well as the workers directly hit by this kind of assault on their rights, organised in Greece and in other crisis-endangered countries.

Yours sincerely,

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

General Secretary

cc: Mr Juan Somavia, Director-General, International Labour Organisation