

Akiko Gono

President
Présidente
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To all ITUC Affiliates

**To all Regional Organisations, PERC, ATUC
To all Global Union Federations and TUAC**

Luc Triangle

Acting General Secretary
Secrétaire général par intérim
Geschäftsführender Generalsekretär
Secretario General en Funciones

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5 June 2023

Workers' rights in Qatar, more and faster improvement needed!

Dear colleagues,

As widely reported, the ITUC has expressed concerns in recent days and weeks about the position of migrant workers in Qatar after the men's World Cup at the end of 2022. In the run up to the 2023 International Labour Conference, the ITUC expressed concerns about the reform programme in Qatar to the government of Qatar and to the Director-General of the ILO. As a result, a meeting was organised on 3 June, under the auspices of the Director-General of the ILO, with the Government of Qatar's Minister of Labour.

The ITUC – together with a number of Global Union Federation (GUFs) – raised freedom of association and the right to operate for Global Unions in Qatar, the implementation of the legal changes adopted in Qatar since the conclusion of the ILO Commission of Inquiry in 2017, and issues such as occupational health and safety, compensation for work-related illness and injury, underpayment and non-payment of wages, the freedom to change employment and travel freely.

It was recognised that, while progress had been made which was an example to other countries in the region, more was needed to ensure decent work for migrant workers in Qatar.

The meeting on 3 June was the result of a letter sent by the ITUC to the Government of Qatar. The latter confirmed during the meeting that further steps will be taken to enhance the system to remove the non-objection certificates; to engage the GUFs stronger in the national committee on the non-discriminatory minimum wage; to initiate the legal process to make the joint committees mandatory and more effective; to study and move towards the possible ratification of OSH conventions in order to extend the ratification of fundamental labour standards and enhance their application in national laws, policies and programmes; and explore the establishment of an OSH institute.

The ITUC considers that although these steps are important, more needs to be done and at a faster pace. A first step must be the guaranteed right to operate and act by all global unions in Qatar.

A proposal was made by the Director-General of the ILO to meet by the end of July 2023 in Qatar with the concerned Global Unions, the ILO and the Minister of Labour of Qatar.

The ITUC acknowledges the invitation and is ready to give engagement and dialogue a chance. The agenda for the meeting in July 2023 must include discussion on commitments by the Government of Qatar to:

- Allow the Global Union Federations and ITUC to officially register, and to operate independently, in Qatar to help protect migrant workers and assist them in their quest for justice and in the exercise of their rights under the ILO core conventions.
- Realise the right to Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining for migrant workers, through an agreed pathway, in compliance with the promise made to the ILO in 2018 to align with the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

As a pre-condition to re-start the engagement in good faith and trust, the commitments should be underpinned by timebound plans with clear milestones and results to be achieved.

Yours sincerely,

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

Luc Triangle
Acting General Secretary