

**Ayuba Wabba**

President  
Président  
Präsident  
Presidente

**Mr. Guy Ryder**

**Director General**  
**International Labour Organization**  
**Geneva, Switzerland**  
**Email: ryder@ilo.org**

**Sharan Burrow**

General Secretary  
Secrétaire générale  
Generalsekretärin  
Secretaria General

**Lex/PKD**

**28 June 2021**

**Request for intervention to protect the independence of trade unions and their members against threats by the Government of Belarus**

Dear Director-General,

We write to bring to your attention serious threats issued by the representative of the government of Belarus, Madam Irina Kostevich, against the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BKDP) during the examination of the case of Belarus on Convention 87 in the Conference Committee on Application of Standards (CAS) at the 109 Session of the International Labour Conference.

In the CAS session, Madam Kostevich characterised the BKDP as a destructive organization and an enemy of the current government causing damage to the State.

This threatening characterization does not only seek to create an atmosphere to harass, intimidate and silence the Union, it is also contrary to the fundamental principles of the ILO as contained in the Declaration of Philadelphia which firmly assert the equality of workers' and employers' representatives with governments in free discussions and democratic decision-making to promote a common welfare.

Since the threat, the OJSC "Grodno Azot" Chemical Company has dismissed seven (7) members of the Belarusian Independent Trade Union (BNP) and not renewed their contracts. Members of the BNP in the OJSC "Naftan" Oil Refinery have come under increased and intense pressure to denounce their membership of the Union. And the House of Gennady Bykov, the Deputy Chairman of the Belarusian Free Trade Union (SPB) and founder of the SPB and BKDP was searched by the Minsk Municipal Department of Internal Affairs.

We are deeply concerned that the threat against the BKDP and the retaliatory attacks on the independent unions for their activities reflects a motive to deploy further attacks that will destabilize the union and disable it from effectively and genuinely representing its members.

We call on you to intervene and to urge the government to stop the anti-BKDP attacks and those against its officers and members. We also urge to closely monitor the situation.

We also request that you forward this letter to the Committee on Freedom of Association.

Yours sincerely,

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

General Secretary

CC: Marc Leemans  
Chairperson, Workers' Group,  
Conference Committee on Application of Standards(CAS)  
109 Session of the International Labour Conference