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INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)

ICFTU OnLine...

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Ukraine: Trade Unions Allege Election Intimidation of Workers

Brussels 25 November 2004: The ICFTU is deeply concerned about the situation in Ukraine following the Presidential elections, including allegations of fraud and partisan utilisation of the "state apparatus" to the extent that legitimacy of the results officially declared by the National Election Commission of Ukraine are in question.

The ICFTU has received reports of violations of democratic and human rights during the election campaign. Several workers, including teachers, miners and transportation employees, are reported to have been put under extreme pressure by their employers to vote for candidate Viktor Yanukovych. The ICFTU understands that public sector employees were "requested" - sometimes under the threat of losing their jobs - to vote for Yanukovych and to support his election campaign. Reports from various international organisations, including the OSCE, provide clear indications of fraudulent behaviour during and after the election process. The people of Ukraine are entitled to answers to the many questions surrounding the elections, and guarantees that the democratic will of the people will be respected.

The ICFTU is calling on the Ukrainian authorities to provide full clarification concerning the conditions under which the election process took place, to answer the allegations of fraud, and in particular to investigate reports of blackmail and pressure being placed on workers to vote for Yanukovych. It calls upon the country's Supreme Court, which has officially been seized of the issue, to fulfil its mandate with full independence and objectivity. Supporting the call of its affiliate the Confederation of Free Trade Unions Ukraine (CFTUU) for a thorough review of the election process (link to CFTUU letter - <http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991220860&Language=EN>), the world's largest trade union organisation underlined that, confronted with such a situation, full respect for democratic principles and procedures is essential to the country's future, and to avoid damaging and potentially lasting divisions.

The ICFTU represents 148 million workers in 234 affiliated organisations in 152 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a member of Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

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