

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)

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New ICFTU report submitted to the WTO:

RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE UNION RIGHTS OF PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS IN JAPAN

BRUSSELS, 24 January 2005, ICFTU Online: The ICFTU released a new report today on core labour standards in Japan. This report coincides with Japan's trade policy review at the WTO this week, and reveals shortcomings in the application and enforcement of core labour standards, particularly with regard to restrictions of trade union rights in the public sector and discrimination.

The set of labour laws applying to public sector workers sets restrictions with regard to organising, collective bargaining and the right to strike. The right to collective bargaining is strictly limited for clerical workers and administrative workers, and their wages are set by law and regulations. Meetings and consultations of public sector unions do not lead to binding agreements and have no concrete effects on the determination of wages and working conditions. Furthermore, public sector workers do not have the right to strike. They can be dismissed, fined or imprisoned for up to three years if inciting any strike.

The report further notes the existence of discrimination against women in wages and employment. Women earn around 65% of male wages and are concentrated in temporary and part-time work, which provides inferior pay and working conditions compared to salaried posts. Women have less access to regular employment and senior positions, and the Japanese wage system continues to be characterised by a two-track personnel system, with a managerial track including mainly men, and a clerical track.

To read the full report:
<http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991221158&Language=EN> /

The ICFTU represents 148 million workers in 231 affiliated organisations in 150 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a member of Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

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