

## ICFTU-Online

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### Burma: International trade unions urge stronger EU measures

Brussels, 20 April 2005 (ICFTU OnLine): The ICFTU and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) today urged the European Union (EU) to take stronger measures against the Burmese military regime, when it reviews its "Common Position" on Burma in the coming days.

Citing continued use of forced labour and a range of other major human rights violations by the junta, the trade union bodies wrote today to EU External Relations' Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner. In their letter\*, the trade union bodies called on the EU to order an end to investment and other business involvement in Burma by EU-registered companies, including financial transfers and transactions, and to ensure that arms produced in EU Member States are not sold to Burma by third countries.

The union move follows stringent criticism of the Burmese regime by the UN Commission on Human Rights last week, as well as a strong statement last March by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office (ILO), which confirmed that measures adopted by the ILO Conference in 2000 remained fully in place and that the "wait and see" attitude of many ILO Members had "lost its raison d'être".

While international trade union organisations are concerned that current EU measures against the Burmese junta are themselves inadequate, the ICFTU understands that certain EU Member States are opposed to a strengthening of these measures.

\*Letter to EU Commissioner <http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991221553&Language=EN>

The ICFTU represents 145 million workers in 233 affiliated organizations in 154 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a partner in Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

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