

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

ICFTU OnLine...

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International Union Bodies Condemn Thai Coup

Brussels, 20 September 2006 (ICFTU OnLine): The ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labour today condemned the 19 September military coup in Thailand, led by army head General Sonthi Boonyaratglin. The coup took place while acting Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was in New York for a meeting of the UN General Assembly.

The coup leaders have declared martial law, and suspended the country's parliament, Constitution and Constitutional Court. Heavy restrictions have been placed on the media and gatherings of more than 5 people have been banned, with penalties of up to 6 months' prison.

Thaksin's government had been facing growing discontent, following allegations of corruption and a range of unpopular policies. These include heavy restrictions on trade union rights, particularly in the public sector. A snap election called in April, which was boycotted by opposition parties and millions of voters, had been declared invalid by the Constitutional court.

The military's actions are totally unacceptable, and a return to democracy, with full respect for internationally-recognised human rights, must take place without delay. Elections set for later this year should take place as soon as possible, under the auspices of a properly-constituted electoral commission.

The ICFTU represents 155 million workers in 241 affiliated organizations in 156 countries and territories: <http://www.icftu.org> ICFTU is also a member of Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

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