

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

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Tripartism not working in South Korea, despite government claims

Brussels, 20 September 2006 (ICFTU OnLine): Although the South Korean authorities claim that the situation in the country is acceptable, the government is far from implementing the recommendations of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association according to a recent union mission to the country. The ICFTU, the Trade Union Advisory Committee - TUAC - and a delegation of the Global Unions Federations -GUFs - recently conducted a fact finding mission prior to the 14th ILO Asian Regional Meeting in Busan.

The labour situation in Korea is a matter of grave concern. Serious violations of workers and trade union rights are taking place, union busting is the rule and workers involved in peaceful rallies and demonstrations have often been victims of violence, twice with fatal consequences in the last year. Currently, more than one hundred workers are in prison simply for trying to exercise their fundamental rights.

The ICFTU/TUAC/GUFs mission called on the authorities for an immediate release of the trade unionists detained. It strongly condemned the violation of public servants' right to freedom of association, which includes a series of forced closures of many union offices in 2006. It also focused on the grave situation faced by construction workers, migrants and irregular workers, a category which represents the vast majority of the workforce. It is time for the government of Korea to honour and respect workers' rights as embodied in the ILO core labour standards and to fulfil the commitment given to the OECD in 1996.

To read the full report:

<http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991225044&Language=EN>

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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