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Iraq: ITUC Condemns bomb attack on trade union leader

Brussels, 2 February (ITUC OnLine) Khalil Ibrahim Al-Mashhadani, Vice-President of the GFIW (General Federation of Iraqi Workers) as well as General Secretary of the Arab Federation of Building and Wood Workers, was injured in a bomb attack on Wednesday Jan 31st. Prior to the founding of the GFIW with the merger of the former GFTU, IFTU and GFITU, Khalil held the position of President of the former GFITU. The ITUC firmly condemns what it considers to be a targeted attack on a trade union activist.

The ITUC also recalls that Iraq, as a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), has an obligation to respect the fundamental labour standards established by it, particularly Convention 87 on freedom of association, and urged the Iraqi authorities to immediately ratify this convention. I

This case is unfortunately not unique. Dr. Adnan Al-Abed, legal counsellor to the GFIW and Professor of Law at "Al-Nahrain University" was found murdered together with two of his colleagues on Wednesday morning, three days after the three professors were kidnapped by armed militants in front of the faculty of law. Wednesday saw also a car bomb targeting the building housing the GFIW's branch in the Nineveh governorate on Wednesday morning, resulting in injuries to many workers and trade unionists.

It is far from the first time that a trade unionist has been murdered or abducted in Iraq due to their trade union activities. The ITUC strongly urges the Iraqi authorities to ensure that this case is fully investigated and that those responsible are detained and brought to justice. It also calls for immediate steps to be taken to ensure that deliberate targeting of trade unionists is stopped.

Founded on 1 November 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 304 national affiliates.
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