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Gaza: ITUC Deplores Descent into Violence

Brussels, 15 June 2007 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC deplores the descent into violence in Gaza, following days of conflict between Hamas and Fatah fighters, costing the lives of some 90 people, many of them civilians. "Our immediate thoughts are with the innocent victims of the violence and their families. On top of this the potential for long-term political separation of Gaza and the West Bank, with Gaza in particular under the rule of the gun, is of grave concern", said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "The Palestinian people have already been facing tremendous hardship, and developments this week can only make matters worse". The Palestinian economy is in a state of virtual collapse, with massive unemployment and growing poverty prevalent throughout both the West Bank and Gaza.

The ITUC is particularly concerned at reports that the Gaza offices of its Palestinian affiliate the PGFTU are amongst the facilities taken over by Hamas fighters. Hamas must immediately withdraw from the PGFTU offices and all the other buildings which they have taken, and both Hamas and Fatah should put their guns aside and work together to ensure that democracy and the rule of law prevail.

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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