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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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### New Report on Workers' Rights in Barbados

Brussels, 17 September 2008 (ITUC OnLine): A new report by the world's largest trade union body, the ITUC, on core labour standards in Barbados has been issued today to coincide with the country's Trade Policy Review at the WTO.

The report notes that on a number of issues the government has not complied fully with the commitments it has made, although it has ratified all eight ILO fundamental conventions.

"Without legal protection, trade unionists cannot do their work at the company level," underlined Guy Ryder, ITUC general secretary, drawing attention to the fact that under national employment legislation in Barbados, employers are not legally obliged to recognise trade unions. The ITUC report further finds that the legislation in place does not provide adequate protection to workers' representatives.

The report argues that the government's efforts to tackle gender discrimination in employment and remuneration need to be strengthened so as to improve the position of women in the labour market. "Reducing the gender pay gap requires the full commitment of employers, workers and government," added Ryder.

On a positive note the report welcomes the work done in cooperation between public authorities and social partners to fight discrimination against HIV-AIDS infected persons on the labour market. The report highlights important shortcomings in current legislation on the prohibition of child labour. It argues that the government should strengthen the legal protection of children and young persons from hazardous work.

Finally, the report emphasises that the situation of migrant workers requires more attention from the government of Barbados, in the light of reliable evidence of discrimination against foreign workers including in the garment and construction sectors.

The full report is available at :

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Barbados.final.pdf>

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 155 countries and territories and has 311 national affiliates.

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