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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Gaza: ITUC Welcomes UN Resolution, First Delivery of Trade Union Aid Arrives

Brussels, 9 January 2009 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has welcomed the call of the UN Security Council for an immediate and durable cease-fire in Gaza as the first plane-load of trade union humanitarian assistance was unloaded in Egypt for distribution in Gaza.

"The UN Resolution recognizes just how serious the humanitarian crisis is, and the need for Israel and Hamas to stop the fighting immediately. This is an important step forward which the two sides to the conflict must act upon right now. The international community must do everything it can to make this happen," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

The Resolution also reiterates the call for a "comprehensive peace based on the vision of a region where two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace with secure and recognized borders".

"We are also pleased to report that the first shipment of trade union humanitarian aid is on its way into Gaza, and many ITUC affiliates and Global Union Federations are sending funds in response to our appeal. Even if the desperately-needed cease-fire is put into place, the humanitarian needs are huge, and the world trade union movement is playing its part in helping to alleviate the suffering of people in Gaza," added Ryder.

The first humanitarian flight, on a plane made available by Royal Jordanian Airways, arrived yesterday afternoon at Al-Areesh airport in Egypt, near to the border with Gaza. The cargo, including three ambulances, a range of medical supplies, milk for babies, rice, wheat and children's food, will be distributed inside Gaza by the Red Crescent. The aid consignment was the first delivery under the appeal made by the ITUC, ITF, the GFJTU Jordan and the PGFTU Palestine.

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 311 affiliated national organisations from 155 countries. <http://www.ituc-csi.org>
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For further information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on: +32 2 224 0204 or +32 476 621 018.

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