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New ITUC Report on Core Labour Standards in Mozambique

Brussels, 22 April 2009 (ITUC OnLine): A new report by the ITUC on core labour standards in Mozambique, which coincides with the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) review of its trade policies, has found serious violations of trade union rights including in Mozambique's export processing zone in Mocal.

The ability of trade unions to operate freely is badly hindered by law and by arbitrary use of violence by employers. Many of these violent actions go unpunished and, furthermore, anti-union discrimination is not subject to adequate penalties. Workers in export processing zones (EPZs) face restrictions on their rights due to the authorities' definition of such work as "essential" although clearly it does not fall under the ILO definition of "essential services". The ITUC report calls on the government to amend its labour law to bring it in line with ILO Conventions No. 87 and No. 98.

The report shows that women face discrimination in terms of employment and remuneration. Moreover, although against the law, sexual harassment is considered to be widespread in both the private and the public sector.

The report draws special attention to child labour which, while it does not take place in industry, is widespread in rural areas where children often work as seasonal labourers and in commercial plantations. Alarming numbers of children are forced into prostitution and many others work as domestics or beggars.

Mozambique has ratified the ILO Conventions on forced labour and has established dissuasive penalties. However, human trafficking for sexual or labour exploitation is also pervasive, usually from rural areas to Mozambican cities or to South Africa. The report calls on the government to provide training to law enforcers and take all appropriate measures in order to start eliminating any forced labour.

The ITUC report is available at the following URL:
http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Mozambique_report-final_2_.pdf

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 312 affiliated national organisations from 157 countries and territories.

<http://www.ituc-csi.org> <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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