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Guatemala: Abductions and Death Threats

Brussels, 2 June 2009 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC strongly condemns and denounces the latest abductions and death threats together with the climate of violence and impunity prevailing in Guatemala.

Trade union leader Efrén Emigdio Sandoval Sanabria, a member of the coordinating board of the ITUC affiliate UNSITRAGUA (Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala) and of the political council of the Guatemalan labour, indigenous and campesino movement, MSICG, has been the target of repeated death threats, issued in various forms. On 27 May, he received threats of abduction, torture and murder by e-mail, reminiscent of those used during the years of armed conflict.

The following day, on 28 May, Victoriano Zacarías Míndez, deputy general secretary of another of our affiliates, the CGTC (Confederación Central General de Trabajadores de Guatemala), who is also a member of the political council of the Guatemalan labour, indigenous and campesino movement (MSICG), was abducted by armed men. Fortunately, he managed to escape from his captors unharmed.

The national, regional and international trade union movements have once again joined with the Guatemalan labour, indigenous and campesino movement (MSICG) in condemning the violence and impunity affecting the day-to-day lives of the Guatemalan people and in demanding solutions.

In a letter to the Guatemalan authorities

http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Secuestros_y_amenazas_de_muerte_junio_2009.pdf, the ITUC has called on President Alvaro Colom to take every measure necessary to fight against the political and social instability prevailing in Guatemala as well as to ensure that those responsible for these acts are tracked down and brought to justice and, by so doing, to bring an end to the violence and impunity in the country.

"It is essential that violence and impunity be eradicated in Guatemala," said Guy Ryder, general secretary of the ITUC, "and that a strong democracy be established so that working people can freely exercise their fundamental rights."

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 312 affiliated national organisations from 157 countries. <http://www.ituc-csi.org>
<http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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