

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

ITUC OnLine

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No End to Assassinations in Colombia

Brussels, 26 June 2009 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC, together with its regional organisation TUCA and its three national affiliates in Colombia, has strongly condemned the murder of Rafael Antonio Sepúlveda Lara, an affiliate of the national hospital workers' union, Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores Hospitalarios de Colombia (ANTHOC), and a member of the national executive of the public servants' federation, Federación Nacional de Servidores Públicos (FENASER-CTC).

"This murder once again proves that trade unionists' right to life and the free exercise of trade union activities are not guaranteed in Colombia," said Guy Ryder, general secretary of the ITUC. "This assassination is yet another violation of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 87 and 98 ratified by Colombia.

The violence against the Colombian trade union movement is ongoing and confutes the statements made by the Colombian government to the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards in June, as well as in other forums, asserting that Colombia protects trade unionists.

In a letter http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/No_cesan_los_asesinatos_en_colombia_26_de_junio.pdf to the Colombian authorities, the ITUC called on President Uribe to launch an immediate and exhaustive investigation into this murder, to ensure that those responsible for ordering and executing this crime be brought to justice.

Colombia continues to hold the sorry record of being the world's most dangerous country for trade unionists, as shown by the ITUC Annual Survey, which points out that of the 76 trade unionists murdered across the world in 2008, 49 were Colombian (see the ITUC Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights <http://survey09.ituc-csi.org/>).

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

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

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