

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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### **ITUC in Talks with Palestinian Authority, and Palestinian and Israeli Affiliates**

Brussels, 19 February 2010: (ITUC OnLine): In a meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah on 16 February, ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder discussed the deep economic problems confronting Palestinians, and the government's plans to tackle a series of labour issues including vocational training, employment services, occupational health and safety and labour inspection. Shaher Sae'd, general secretary of the ITUC's Palestinian affiliate PGFTU, took part in the discussions, which also included meetings with Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and Labour Minister Ahmed Majdalani. Ryder stressed the importance of the PGFTU's role as an independent trade union centre, and welcomed indications that the Palestinian Authority would establish an economic and social council to institutionalise social dialogue. The talks also focused on possibilities to revive the peace process with Israel.

On 17 February Ryder held discussions in Tel Aviv with Ofer Eini, chair of the ITUC Israeli affiliate Histadrut. Along with the state of Israeli-Palestinian relations and the quest for peace, the talks covered developments on the labour market and workers' rights within Israel.

"With the peace process effectively in stalemate at present, the ITUC's working together with our Israeli and Palestinian affiliates is especially important. Trade union cooperation is crucial in protecting and advancing decent employment and workers' rights, and has an important contribution to make in promoting peace and mutual understanding in the Middle East as in every other part of the world," said Ryder.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 155 countries and territories and has 311 national affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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