

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC OnLine

113/240810

Barclays Burma Scandal Shows Need to Tighten Sanctions

Brussels, 24 August 2010 (ITUC OnLine): The announcement that Barclay's Bank has agreed with the US Department of Justice to pay a \$298m fine for breaching sanctions on Burma and other countries shows yet again that international sanctions on Burma need to be made tighter and more comprehensive, according to the ITUC.

According to the ITUC-affiliated Federation of Trade Unions in Burma (FTUB), the announcement by the Burmese junta of the so-called elections on 7 November was made primarily to divert attention from a serious social and economic crisis brewing within the country. Discontent and divisions within the military over various issues, including financial problems, continue to mount.

The General Secretary of the FTUB, Maung Maung, has described the ongoing gross violations of fundamental human and trade union rights in Burma, as well as the Junta's efforts to foment ethnic tension. "The regime uses slave labour, rape and torture to stay in power. Unions are banned and the jails are full with those who have dared to speak out."

The time has come for the perpetrators of these heinous crimes to be held accountable. Instead of embarking upon uncritical engagement policies that could strengthen the regime, governments must finally bring the Burmese junta to implement the 12-year-old recommendations of the International Labour Organisation Commission of Inquiry on Forced Labour.

"With the Burmese military junta mounting a propaganda campaign around its sham elections in November, it is especially important that the international community demonstrate its resolve by loudly denouncing this latest assault on the legitimate and democratic aspirations of the Burmese people. It is unconscionable that governments should remain quiet at this stage while allowing companies to do business as usual with the regime. Governments need to send a clear message and tighten sanctions now, including on finance and insurance. The European Union in particular should step up pressure," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 156 countries and territories and has 312 national affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> y <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

For more information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on 32 2 224 02 04 or + 32 476 62 10 18

You are currently subscribed to ituc-online as: Gabriele.Kemp@fes.de.

To unsubscribe click here: <http://forum.ituc-csi.org/u?id=38591.9b9f95bf74798c23c71e69445d2c53d3&n=T&l=ituc-online&o=19706>

(It may be necessary to cut and paste the above URL if the line is broken)
or send a blank email to leave-19706-38591.9b9f95bf74798c23c71e69445d2c53d3@forum.ituc-csi.org