

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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### **European Multinationals' Position on Vietnam Wages "Totally Unacceptable", Say ETUC and ITUC**

Brussels, 26 November 2010 (ITUC Online): John Monks, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) described as "totally unacceptable" the position of the European Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (EuroCham) threatening withdrawal of European investment in the country if minimum wages are raised. ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow has described EuroCham's intervention as "offensive".

John Monks said that the ETUC expected European companies to contribute to decent work and sustainable development in their host countries. He pointed out that the European Union (EU) had consistently pressed for sustainable development chapters to be included in Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with third countries in line with those objectives. The EU is planning to engage in negotiations with Vietnam on such an FTA. In a letter to Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht, he asked the Commission to ask EuroCham, which the ETUC understood received support from the Commission, "to desist from making such statements which can only undermine the development of proper trade relations with Vietnam". Sharan Burrow described the Eurocham's position as "an offensive intervention in Vietnam's wage-setting, at a time when many foreign companies are actually finding it hard to attract workers due to the low wages they offer. European companies should not be trying to export poverty wages to Vietnam or anywhere else - decent incomes are central to economic growth and development."

Link to ETUC's letter to EU Commissioner for Trade:

[http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/251110\\_Karel\\_de\\_Gucht.pdf](http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/251110_Karel_de_Gucht.pdf)

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 301 national affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

For more information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on: +32 2 224 0204 or +32 476 621 018

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