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Israel/Palestine: Now Is the Time for Serious Negotiation

Brussels, 6 December 2010 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC is increasingly concerned at the lack of progress in achieving a just and peaceful resolution to the Israel-Palestine peace process. In particular, Israel's refusal to extend the moratorium on building settlements is proving to be a major barrier to advancing the process. All governments need to step up support for a lasting peace and for development of a prosperous Palestinian state.

"Working for peace and respect for international law are primary responsibilities entrusted to the ITUC by our member organisations worldwide, and we will prioritise this issue at our forthcoming General Council. Convincing the governments in Israel and Palestine to resume meaningful peace negotiations is critically important, as is the full support of the international community," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The policy adopted by the ITUC at its World Congress in Vancouver in June sets out clearly the steps which need to be taken and the parameters for ensuring comprehensive peace between Israel and Palestine, based on the co-existence in conditions of security of two sovereign, independent and viable states. The full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, (1967), which recognises the 1967 borders, and 338 (1973), is fundamental to the achievement of a just and lasting peace.

The ITUC will continue to work with its affiliates directly concerned to ensure the fullest support for its action for peace.

Along with resolving the range of political issues which need to be settled, action must be stepped up to ensure Palestinian economic development. Workers must have the security of decent work, not least because employment is essential to the long-term viability of a Palestinian state. The intention of the Palestinian Authority to put in place labour and social protection laws, to invest in jobs and establish vital institutions, is encouraging. To this end, the ITUC calls on all governments and international organisations to support President Abbas and the PA's ministers.

An end to illegal settlements, freedom of movement within their own lands and income security are fundamental elements of dignity, and the ITUC endorses and supports the work of the PGFTU for Palestinian workers and their families.

The time for serious negotiation is now.

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>

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