

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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198/211210

Belarus: ITUC Denounces Brutality Against Demonstrators and Arrests of Trade Union and Human Rights Advocates

Brussels, 21 December 2010 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has denounced the violent attacks by the police and the special security forces on demonstrators protesting over disputed presidential elections on Sunday evening in Minsk. Of the 20,000 people who took to the streets, more than 600 were arrested and detained, including trade unionists, human rights advocates and journalists. Mikhail Kovalkov, chairperson of the Free Trade Union of Belarus, a member organisation of the ITUC-affiliated BKDP, has been sentenced to 10 days in prison.

“The ITUC demands that all those detained be released without delay and the Lukashenko regime respect fundamental human rights, including freedom of association and freedom of assembly. This kind of repression is totally unacceptable, and the international community, including the European Union, must not let it go unchallenged,” said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The Lukashenko regime’s appalling record on trade union and other human rights has already led to an ILO Commission of Inquiry and the withdrawal of EU trade preferences under the GSP+ system.

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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