

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

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ITUC supports UGTT and the Tunisian people in their fight against corruption and for democracy

It calls for greater dialogue with all the peoples of the region.

Brussels, 24 January 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The International Trade Union Confederation has reiterated its total support for its affiliated organisation in Tunisia, the UGTT, and the Tunisian people, which have been mobilising in massive numbers and with great courage, for over a month, in favour of equality, social justice, political freedom and democracy.

It was the suicide, on 17 December 2010, of a young street vendor in Sidi Bouzid following the confiscation of his merchandise by the authorities that triggered the movement of popular revolt, which spread rapidly throughout the country, claiming the lives of over 100 people according to the UN, and led to the departure of former President Ben Ali.

The ITUC welcomes the fall of the dictatorship in Tunisia and fully supports the UGTT 's call for an end to corruption and nepotism and the institution of a genuine transition towards a true democracy.

The ITUC has also expressed serious concern at the recent escalation in attempted suicides, by self-immolation, among young unemployed men in other countries in the region (Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Yemen) in protest at the social injustice, poverty and lack of freedoms. There has also been a surge in street protests against the unbridled rise in the prices of basic commodities, as well as in solidarity with the people of Tunisia (in Mauritania, Jordan, Yemen, Palestine, Oman, Libya, etc.).

For Sharan Burrow, general secretary of the ITUC, "The events in Tunisia are the logical outcome of the absence of civil liberties, the repressive authoritarianism and social injustice. The governments of this region must take urgent stock of their people's needs and aspirations, open a real dialogue with the unions regarding the introduction of new social policies and show respect for fundamental freedoms, which is key to good governance."

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

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