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Libya: Deep Concern at Mounting Civilian Toll

Brussels, 23 March 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC is deeply concerned over the mounting civilian death and injury toll in Libya, with the continued refusal of the regime of Muammar Gaddafi to enter any form of negotiation with the opposition precipitating international military intervention under a United Nations mandate.

UN Security Council Resolution No 1973, adopted last week following a March 12 appeal from the Arab league for the UN to implement a no-fly zone, provides clear guidance to all UN member states on the actions that they can take in implementing the Resolution. The ITUC respects the authority of the UN, and stresses that any and all action taken by any country must be in full compliance with that Resolution, which was adopted with the explicit purpose of “protecting civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack”.

“The Gaddafi regime turned against its own people in the most violent and murderous manner when it felt that its absolute control over them, and Libya’s immense natural wealth, was under threat. The only acceptable way forward is for an immediate ceasefire, and real negotiations to open the way for a new, democratic Libya where human rights are respected. Many countries have been complicit in sustaining the Gaddafi regime in the past, and many multinational companies have made huge profits out of their dealing with the regime. The primary responsibility of the international community at this time is to act for the welfare, safety and rights of the people of Libya,” said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 305 affiliated national organisations from 151 countries and territories. Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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