

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Panama: Thirty-three Workers Dismissed for Forming a Union

Brussels, 20 May 2011 (ITUC OnLine): Thirty three workers at Panamá Gaming & Services (CIRSA) de Panamá S.A. were fired for attempting to form a union.

According to the information received by the ITUC, the 33 employees presented the relevant documentation to the Ministry of Labour and Manpower Development with a view to forming a union in accordance with Article 385 of the Labour Law. The Ministry rejected the application on 10 May. A few days prior to the Ministry's negative response, the company had already dismissed the 33 workers.

For the ITUC and its affiliated organisations in Panama, the CTRP, CGTP and CS, their dismissal constitutes a blatant violation of workers' rights and, in particular, of ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association and protection of the right to organise, ratified by Panama.

The ITUC has joined with its regional organisation for the Americas, the TUCA, and its Panamanian affiliates in strongly condemning this blatant anti-unionism. In a letter to the Ministry of Labour and Manpower Development <http://www.ituc-csi.org/panama-treinta-y-tres-trabajadores.html>, the ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow said, "The authorities of Panama seem to have overlooked the recommendation of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) urging the Panamanian government to take every step necessary to ensure freedom of association in Panama, a fundamental workers' right."

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

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