

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC Online

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC) CONDEMNS YET ANOTHER ATTACK ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN FIJI

On August 13, police broke up a regular meeting of the Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) after revoking its permit to assemble. The move follows the recent arrest of FTUC President Daniel Urai and Mr. Goundar, a union official, for meeting with members to prepare for collective bargaining. Previous applications to hold meetings this year have also been rejected on the basis that the trade union does not support government policy – which has been to eliminate by decree trade union rights in the country.

“That trade unions must seek prior consent from the government to hold a meeting is an affront to the fundamental human right to freedom of association,” explained Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the ITUC. “The government must end immediately the criminalization of legitimate trade union activity.”

Most astonishing, the latest attack by the regime came just hours after the FTUC met with a high-level delegation of the International Labor Organization, which was in Fiji to investigate human and worker rights violations in Fiji committed by the government. “The police raid on the union’s meeting, on the heels of the ILO visit, sends an unambiguous message, certainly intended, that the government of Fiji neither respects international law nor the opinion of the international community,” stated Sharan Burrow.

The ITUC, together with its affiliated unions, have been closely monitoring the situation and is coordinating a global campaign to pressure the government to rescind recent executive decrees that nullify fundamental human and trade union rights and which prevent their exercise in practice. Which each step by the government, the global labor movement only strengthens its resolve to continue on with our campaign until these rights, and indeed democracy, are fully restored.

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