

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Libya: International Community Must Support Democratic Transition and Social Justice

Brussels, 26 August 2011 (ITUC OnLine): With the collapse of the Gaddafi regime, the international trade union movement is gravely disturbed at reports emerging from the country of summary killings and other acts of revenge, and is particularly concerned for the safety of the many migrant workers still the country. The establishment of legitimate interim authority and full respect for the rule of law are crucial and urgent steps which must be taken, with the support of the United Nations and the international community as a whole. The militia allied to the former regime must now be disarmed and demobilised.

The people of Libya finally have the chance to build a democratic and just society, which delivers economic and social progress. The international community must now act responsibly in support of the Libyan people, to help them realise their aspirations which have for so long been subjugated to the interests of the regime and those who have benefited from its decades of dictatorship.

With tens of billions of dollars invested abroad, huge oil and gas reserves and a major international effort needed to help trace Gaddafi's other assets, there is enormous potential to develop the country's economy and overcome the deep inequalities which the regime sustained and which helped drive the rebellion.

"Many countries have been complicit in sustaining the Gaddafi regime in the past, and many multinational companies have made huge profits out of their dealings 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 and help them achieve a democratic transition. Those now in power in Libya must also ensure the full application of the rule of law, avoid reprisals and safeguard the most vulnerable, including migrant workers," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

Even as Libya enters a new era, citizens in several other countries in the region still live under the heavy hand of repressive regimes. The ITUC calls once again on the governments of the

region to be open to real social dialogue, and to respond to the legitimate aspirations of their people for democracy and social justice.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates.

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