

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)
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Fiji's Dictatorship Moves Against Trade Unions

Brussels, 14 September 2011 (ITUC OnLine): Fiji's military dictatorship has tightened its control over the country's economy with a new decree outlawing trade union rights across key sectors. The UN's International Labour Organisation has accused the regime of demonstrating "the same lack of concern for the views of the international community as it has for the rights and aspirations of its own people", while the other governments of the region, through the Pacific Islands Forum, have expressed "continuing deep concern at the deteriorating human rights situation".

"The regime's eradication of fundamental worker's rights, at the stroke of a pen, is designed to entrench its position of absolute power. It is targeting union representatives with prosecution for simply meeting with their members, and refusing to listen to appeals from the ILO and the international community to respect fundamental human rights," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

On September 9, the authorities announced the implementation of the "Essential National Industries & Designated Corporations Regulations", which severely curtails workers' rights in the finance, telecoms, civil aviation and public utilities sectors and allows the regime to include any other industries as and when it wishes.

"The authorities are proceeding with a further militarisation of the economy and society, which is all the more unacceptable given Fiji's prominent role in UN peacekeeping. We call on the international community to stand with us to defend the rights of ordinary Fijians, and help protect civil society from complete suppression," said Burrow.

To see the ILO Director General's statement: http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/press-and-media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_162761/lang--en/index.htm

To join the Labourstart campaign on Fiji: http://www.labourstart.org/cgi-bin/solidarityforever/show_campaign.cgi?c=1086

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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