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Kuwait: Trade Unions Call for Dialogue, Not Military Force Against Strikes

Brussels, 11 October 2011 (ITUC OnLine): Kuwait's government needs to step back from confrontation and accept dialogue with the country's trade unions to resolve public sector strikes, according to the ITUC.

"The authorities' decision to give the military and security forces the power to break strikes is unacceptable and anti-democratic. Workers are on strike for legitimate reasons, and we support the call from the Kuwaiti trade union movement for the government to open genuine dialogue to resolve the workers' concerns," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The formation of a military committee from the Ministries of Interior and Defence, the National Guard and other authorities has been sharply criticised by the Kuwait Trade Union Federation (KTUF).

KTUF General Secretary Abdul Rahman Yousef Al-Ghanim has repeated the Federation's call for a high-level committee including the Council of Ministers, Labour and Social Affairs Ministry, the union movement and other stakeholders. "Repression of striking workers is totally unacceptable and will only lead to serious consequences for the nation and citizens alike," said Al-Ghanim in a statement to the media.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 305 affiliated national organisations from 151 countries and territories.

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