

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

ITUC OnLine

Burma: Seven Trade Unionists Released From Prison

Brussels, 13 October 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The International Trade Union Confederation welcomes the recent release from prison of 7 trade unionists (*). However, much more remains to be done. Burma's regime recently announced an amnesty for 6,359 prisoners; yet only 200 of them were political prisoners serving lengthy sentences in prisons across the country. Many trade union and labour activists remain behind bars serving decades long sentences. The ITUC calls upon the Burmese authorities to release all political prisoners immediately, including trade union activists.

While taking note of some small steps forward, the ITUC urges the international community not to let up the pressure, just as that pressure is finally bearing some fruit. Today in Burma, the army continues to exact forced labour, recruit child soldiers and confiscate land from the population in several states in Burma, and in some it appears to have worsened in 2011.

Full respect of Convention 87, protecting the trade union's freedom of association and right to collective bargaining, is still an issue in Burma.

The ITUC supports the statement of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar: "many serious human rights issues remain and they need to be addressed". Indeed, much more needs to be done to address fundamental violations of rights and act against impunity in the legal system, in law and in practice.

(*) The trade unionists released from prison today are:

Myo Aung Thant, Ms. Aye Thi Khaing, Ms. Aye Chan, Ms. Yin Kyi, Ms. Than Than Htay, Thein Lwin Oo, Than Win and Ye Lwin Htoo.

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

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