

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

### ITUC OnLine

#### Somalia: Systematic intimidation of Somali trade unionists

Brussels, 1 December 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has supported the National Union of Somali Journalist (NUSOJ), which is affiliated to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), in its strong protest against the systematic intimidation of Somali trade unionists.

According to information received by the ITUC, on Wednesday 16 November, the Somali Minister of Labour instructed the Director of his Cabinet to write to the Somali Criminal Investigations Department (CID), to report "illegal activities" of Somali trade unions, in order for criminal investigations to be initiated. This followed the armed robbery of the NUSOJ offices, against which the ITUC protested on 3 June 2011, and another raid, without a warrant, on the same offices on the morning of Sunday 13 November. Following the second raid, the NUSOJ Organising Secretary was illegally detained for 90 hours. Less than two weeks later, he was again summoned by the CID for an inquiry about the union's members and actions, and to hand in union documents to enable the CID what to base criminal charges on.

The Somali government is trying to criminalize trade union activities," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. "The decision to press charges had obviously been taken already, under the clear assumption that a direct cause for them can always be found in internal union documents." "We stand in solidarity with the working people of Somalia in the face of these outrageous attacks. The Somali authorities must cease this harassment and respect fundamental workers' rights"

For more information on the attacks, see the ITUC letter (<http://www.ituc-csi.org/systematic-intimidation-of-somali.html>) to the Prime Minister of Somalia, in which the ITUC calls on the authorities to take the necessary measures to put an immediate stop to the interference, harassment, travel bans, intimidation, threats and violence against NUSOJ leaders, and to let all Somali trade unionists exercise their legitimate activities in an environment free from intimidation and harassment.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 308 national affiliates.

Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

For more information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on the following numbers: +32 2 224 0204 or +32 476 62 10 18

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