

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC OnLine

ITUC Criticises UAE Bid to Chair ILO Regional Conference

Brussels, 2 December 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has criticised the bid of the United Arab Emirates to chair the Regional Conference of the International Labour Organisation in Kyoto starting on 4 December. The UAE has one of the worst records for absolute denial of fundamental workers' rights.

"How can a Government seek to preside over the decisions of an ILO Regional Conference when it does not recognise the fundamental principles which underline the very existence of that organisation?" asked ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. "Their bid to chair the meeting is an insult to the working people of their own country, and of the region."

The ILO Regional Conference will discuss key issues such as employment and social protection, fundamental principles and rights at work, social dialogue and economic and social sustainability. Yet the UAE doesn't fulfil even the minimum international obligations regarding trade union rights entrenched in the ILO's Constitution.

The UAE's Labour Law does not permit trade unions to exist and function, free from interference, nor the basic right to collective bargaining. It doesn't specifically recognise the right to strike, and it gives the Labour Minister the power to unilaterally end strikes and force workers back to work.

Public sector workers, security guards and migrant workers are banned from striking, and migrants who participate in or provoke a strike "without a valid reason" can be banned from working for a year and can even have their work permits cancelled and be deported.

See the annual survey of violations of trade unions rights: <http://survey.ituc-csi.org/>

See the Union View "Hidden face of the gulf miracle": http://www.ituc-csi.org/hidden-faces-of-the-gulf-miracle_9144.html

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>

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