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ITUC OnLine

Confrontation in Kazakhstan

Brussels, 16 December 2011 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC strongly condemns the acts of violence that occurred today in Zanaoen, Kazakhstan, and urges the authorities to take all necessary measures to settle the conflict peacefully.

According to the information received by the ITUC, at least 10 people were killed Friday in violent clashes in an oil town in western Kazakhstan where workers have been protesting for higher wages for months, authorities said.

Prosecutor General Askhat Daulbayev said in a statement that the mayor's office, a hotel and vehicles were set afire in Zhanaozen, a city of 90,000 in the far south-western corner of the energy-rich Central Asian nation.

“Several months’ confrontation in Western Kazakhstan shows the failure of current institutional labour conflict resolution framework in the country,” said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. “Such an extreme situation of tension and despair has provoked unrest, panic and chaos. Violence must stop immediately, and all the parties must recognise that the only way for the conflict resolution is open dialogue and negotiation. The government must move immediately to start that process.”

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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