

Greek Trade Unionists Face Trial

Brussels, 11 January 2012 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has written to Greek Prime Minister Loukas Papademos to protest at the trial of trade unionists from the power workers' union, including its president Nikos Photopoulos. He and several other members of the union were charged following a sit-in at the power company's computer centre, in protest at the government's decision to impose heavy and inequitable property taxes through power bills.

According to the ITUC's Greek affiliate, the GSEE, "we note that the court hearing comes at a time when DEH-the Greek Public Power Corporation S.A., regardless of the extreme adversity endured by Greek families, callously announced new raises of 15-20% in the price of electricity as of January 2012 to compensate for its use of environment-polluting lignite. We also note that this hearing precedes by a few days the new advent of the Troika team in Greece with renewed outrageous demands dictating the abolition of the National Collective Labour Agreement and the minimum wage, new wage and pension cuts, immediate mass lay-offs in the public sector and lowering employers' social security contributions."

"We call on the Greek government to drop all charges against the union members and to refrain from penalising trade union action, and also express our support for the GSEE's refusal to accept unilaterally-imposed cuts to incomes including the minimum wage. Yet more austerity will cause unacceptable hardship, and risks sending the country into an economic spiral from which it will take generations to recover," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

To read the letter to Prime Minister Papademos, see :
http://www.ituc-csi.org/greece_genop-dei-trial.html?lang=en

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

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