INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)
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Nepal: Child Labour and Forced Labour Remain Problems

Brussels, 1 February 2012 (ITUC OnLine): A new report by the ITUC on core labour standards in Nepal, published to coincide with the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) review of its trade policies, reveals some serious violations of fundamental workers' rights including a high degree of prevalence of forced and child labour.

The report finds that members of democratic unions have often been victims of attacks by Maoist groups and sometimes police. The laws allow for the rights to organise, collectively bargain and strike but with several restrictions. In addition, fundamental rights are not respected in "essential services" sectors or ones the authorities consider essential for national economic development, which even includes hotels and banking. The Special Economic Zone Bill currently before the parliament for approval would deny trade union representation to workers in export processing zones.

Factory inspectors fail to enforce the law in the informal economic activities that comprise 90 per cent of the total. The fact that 1.6 million children are engaged in child labour, the majority of them girls, is one consequence. Furthermore, some forms of traditional slavery persist despite the abolition of one system (Kamaiya) in 2000. Many Nepalese workers fall victims to deceptive and fraudulent practices by labour brokers, recruiters and traffickers, and trafficking-related complicity by state officials is also reported.

Read the full report: http://www.ituc-csi.org/internationally-recognised-core,10529.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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