

Spate of Trade Union Rights Violations in Cameroon

Brussels, 14 February 2012 (ITUC OnLine): Reports have been received of a string of trade union rights violations in Cameroon. The ITUC has firmly condemned the reported intimidation, harassment, suspension and unfair dismissal of trade unionists.

Around 15 workers at the National Institute of Cartography (INC) had their contracts suspended after taking part in strike action calling for the signing of employment contracts to regularise the employees' status. In a similar move, according to the reports received by the ITUC, Cameroon's sugar manufacturer SOSUCAM, backed by the prefectural authorities of the department of Haute Sanaga, has instituted legal proceedings against three workers, also for taking strike action.

Finally, Micheline Banbe, branch vice president in charge of women's affairs and assistant secretary for legal affairs with the regional office of the CSAC in Douala, has been unfairly dismissed by her employer, Orange Cameroun. The trade unionist had been put forward by her branch union as a candidate for the workplace representative elections in April 2011. Since then, the employer has been targeting all the people on the list as well as all those nominated by the branch, disqualifying them and putting forward non-unionised workers.

"It is intolerable that workers exercising legitimate trade union activities be treated in this way," underlined ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. "The right to organise, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike are fundamental to a healthy democracy."

In a letter to the national authorities, the ITUC called on President Paul Biya to take every action necessary to ensure the immediate restoration of workers' rights and respect for the core conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), such as those protecting the right to organise and collective bargaining, in Cameroon.

For more information, read the ITUC letter: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/cameroun-atteintes-aux-droits-de.html>

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