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ITUC OnLine

Egypt: ITUC Call to Drop All Charges Against Kamal Abbas

Brussels, 1 March 2012 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC is calling on the Egyptian authorities to withdraw all charges and annul the sentence of 26 February against Kamal Abbas, the general coordinator of CTUWS.

According to the information received by the ITUC, a Misdemeanor court in the city of Helwan sentenced Kamal Abbas, in absentia, to six months imprisonment for "insulting a public officer" during the 2011 International Labour Conference in Geneva. The sentence refers to Thursday 9 June 2011, when Kamal Abbas interrupted Ismael Fahmy while he was delivering a speech to the Conference.

"Our friend Kamal Abbas attended the Conference as a representative of the ITUC delegation," said Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary. "We can't accept this judgement. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right. We are urging the authorities to drop all the charges." Abbas is accused of expressing his objection to the claim that the ETUF truly represented Egyptian workers' interests.

"Following the Egyptian revolution in February 2011, the ITUC gave the authorities every chance to respect fundamental workers' rights. Our patience has run out," added Burrow.

See the ITUC Letter to Juan Somavia, ILO General Director: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/egypt-criminal-judgement-against.html>

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 308 affiliated national organisations from 153 countries and territories.

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