

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Egypt's President Morsi Intervenes to Settle Strike Wave After Worker Killed

Brussels, 23 July 2012 (ITUC OnLine): Egypt's President Morsi has intervened to settle strikes across the textile sector and at the giant Cleopatra Ceramics in Ain Sokhna, where striking workers agreed to mediation to get unpaid wages from the Mubarak-era factory owner. In Mahalla, textile worker Ahmed Hosni was killed and four others injured when attacked by three men, apparently acting under orders from Al-Samoly company management. A wave of strikes in Mahalla was the trigger for the revolution to depose Hosni Mubarak from the presidency.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said "President Morsi's intervention is crucial but it doesn't get to the root of the problem - workers are weary of the top-level political intrigue while basic questions, such as non-payment of wages, are not being dealt with. The government needs to move quickly to address these basic concerns and the military must allow it to do so. Workers are feeling the squeeze, financially and politically, and any failure to deal with their demands would have dramatic results."

Tens of thousands of workers in Egypt's industrial sectors have been involved in strike action in recent weeks, over management attempts to take away benefits as well as over unpaid wages and demands for pay increases. Progress in putting effective worker protections and labour laws in place has been slow since the revolution, with business operators having strong links to the old regime and the military resisting change.

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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