INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

Bangladesh - Murder of Aminul Islam

Brussels, 15 April 2013 (ITUC OnLine): Just over one year ago, labour activist Aminul Islam was tortured and murdered in Bangladesh. It appears that Mr Islam was not the victim of random violence but rather targeted for his trade union work. His murder was no doubt meant to send a clear message to trade unions and NGOs not to protest the low wages, gruelling hours and poor working conditions that characterize the RMG industry. Some suspects have been interrogated, but as yet no one has been arrested, much less prosecuted. It is believed that members of the intelligence service are involved in his murder.

More troubling, Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hassina, appearing on the BBC, cast doubt on the fact that Aminul Islam was ever a labour activist and further claimed that no one had ever heard of him before his murder. This extraordinary statement was made even after the murder was featured in the international media and after US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had raised it with the PM herself. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJcP7TDXwPw (at minute 4:00).

The ITUC wrote http://www.ituc-csi.org/bangladesh-murder-of-aminul-islam to the government immediately after the murder and has raised it subsequently. Last week, the ITUC again called on the government to conduct a full investigation into the crimes and the arrest and prosecution of those responsible.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 156 countries and territories and has 315 national affiliates.

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