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Global Right to Strike Action Sends Clear Message

Brussels, 19 February 2015 (ITUC OnLine): The 18 February global day of action to support the right to strike has proven to be a huge success, with more than 100 activities around the world reported to the ITUC. Unions in over 60 countries took action, with support in many cases from politicians, human rights organisations and community groups.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary said, "Workers and their communities are united in their determination to defend the right to strike against concerted moves by radical employer groups to end the rule of law at work. Governments are on notice that voters won't tolerate stripping away this most basic of rights, which is a foundation of democracy. And responsible bosses need to send a clear message to the radical employer fringe that workers too have human rights."

Employer representatives at the International Labour Organisation have been blocking global mechanisms which ensure respect for ILO standards, in an attempt to wipe out decades of international legal recognition of the right to strike under ILO Convention No. 87. This Convention, which guarantees freedom of association, is one of the most important global human rights treaties. Having created this dispute at the ILO, the employer groups are now stalling moves to follow the ILO's own Constitution which says that such disputes must be referred to the International Court of Justice for adjudication.

"Taking away the right to strike would return the world to feudal times, with employers having absolute power over their workforce. Thanks to the international rule of law, countries such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia with their feudal employment systems and the world's most closed dictatorship North Korea are, amongst others, exposed. The rule of law needs to be brought to work in all countries, rather than taken away," said Burrow.

Read "Global mobilisation to defend the right to strike" on Equal Times - <http://www.equaltimes.org/global-mobilisation-to-defend-the#.VOXnzS7Ei9s>
View the Twitter timeline of the Global day of action - <http://www.ituc-csi.org/twitter-timeline-hands-off-our>
View the ITUC Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/ituccsi>
View the Global day of action webpage - <http://www.ituc-csi.org/18feb>

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 162 countries and territories and has 328 national affiliates.

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