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Turkey: Commemoration of Ankara Bomb Atrocity

Brussels, 11 February 2016 (ITUC OnLine): Hundreds of mourners gathered yesterday at the Ankara Central Railway Station as a mark of respect for the 101 people who died and hundreds more who were injured in the atrocity of 10 October 2015. ITUC Deputy General Secretary Jaap Wienen joined ETUC General Secretary Luca Visentini and representatives of their national affiliates DISK and KESK, which had co-organised the October peace rally with other organisations. Two bombs exploded at the rally, and Turkish security forces were heavily criticised for blocking rescue efforts in the aftermath of the explosions, and using tear gas against the victims and those trying to give first aid.

"The Turkish government is behaving like the dictators of the past, using the threat of terrorism as an excuse to limit freedom of speech, press freedom and the rights of Turkey's working people to trade union freedom. Turkish workers deserve better - they deserve respect and protection, and can count on the support of trade unions from across the world," said Wienen.

Today, Wienen and Visentini joined local trade union officials in a protest outside the prison where Can Dündar and Erdem Gül, two prominent journalists working for the Cumhuriyet daily, are being held. The two are facing life sentences (<http://www.ifj.org/nc/news-single-view/backpid/1/article/turkey-life-sentences-demanded-against-journalists-can-duendar-and-erdem-guel/>) for reporting on Turkey's involvement in Syria. Turkey has one of the world's worst records for imprisonment and harassment of journalists.

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