

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

Turkey: Dictatorship a Step Closer After Deplorable Failed Coup

Brussels, 18 July 2016 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has expressed deep concern over the dismissal of nearly 3,000 prosecutors and judges, along with 8,000 police and a large number of civil servants in the wake of the failed military coup in Turkey. 232 people were reportedly killed during the coup attempt, and some 1,400 wounded.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said “First and foremost our thoughts are with the families of those who tragically lost their lives, and with the many hundreds of people who were injured. The ITUC unequivocally condemns the attempt to seize power by military force, and calls for those responsible to be judged in full accordance with the rule of law. The speed with which President Erdogan’s government has moved to dismiss thousands of prosecutors and judges, 8,000 police, many senior civil servants and others is a cause for genuine concern. While the coup has failed, democracy remains under threat as the authorities seem determined to consolidate power even further, regardless of the consequences for the people of Turkey and its neighbours.”

A total of some 6,000 people are reported to have been arrested since the coup attempt.

Recent years have seen a serious weakening of democratic freedoms and human rights in Turkey, with trade unionists, journalists and academics a particular focus of state repression. In May this year, the ITUC reported that more than 1,000 union members had been placed under investigation for participating in an event calling for peace and democracy. Some 284 are in exile or have been transferred, 403 have been forced to retire, 102 placed under investigation and 97 have been charged with “insulting the President”. <http://www.ituc-csi.org/turkey-government-stepping-up>

“Turkey has withstood this attempted coup. In its aftermath, it is imperative that President Erdogan and his government respect the fundamental tenets of democracy and international law. The disgraceful and violent actions of one section of the military must not be used as an excuse for further repression of those who oppose the government and are themselves committed to peace, democracy and human rights,” added Burrow.

The ITUC represents 180 million workers in 162 countries and territories and has 333 national affiliates.

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