



Park, Geun-hye
President of the Republic of Korea
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Seoul, Korea
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Dear President Park

In Korea, labour leaders and activists are imprisoned for engaging in industrial action that would be legal elsewhere in the world. The government does so despite repeated and clear direction from the International Labour Organization to bring the law, particularly the obstruction of business clause of the Penal Code, into line immediately with principles of freedom of association. The arrests and imprisonments are often compounded by strike compensation lawsuits against unions and individuals with no purpose other than to bankrupt them.

We, on behalf of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and Amnesty International Ireland call for the immediate and unconditional release of **Kim Jung-woo**, who was detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of association. We also call on your government to recognize the right of trade unionists to carry out their work without harassment or arrest, in accordance with international human rights law.

Kim Jung-woo, former leader of the Ssangyong Motor branch of the Korean Metal Workers' Union, was arrested on 10 June 2013 when he tried to prevent municipal government officials dismantling sit-in tents and a memorial altar in Seoul, the capital. The protest called for the reinstatement of the workers dismissed by Ssangyoung Motor in June 2009, and in memory of the 24 workers and family members who either killed themselves or died of stress-related disorders during the campaign. All the necessary police notifications for the protest had been submitted, but despite this, the police sent a notification banning the demonstration on May 30 2013. The trade union filed an injunction against the ban, and this appeal was on-going when the government officials dismantled the site in June 2013. There were two previous rulings at the Seoul Administrative Court in favour of the union's right to protest on the same site, in July 2012 and December 2013.

Kim Jungwoo was sentenced to 10 months in prison for 'special interference with a government official in the execution of his duties'. He will have completed the sentence in

April but could be given a heavier sentence at the High Court after an appeal by the prosecution.

The international trade union movement, together with Amnesty International, is deeply troubled by the developments in Korea and will monitor closely the situation in the country. We urge the government to make the right decision to release Kim Jung-woo and those who similarly have been detained for exercising their internationally protected right to associate.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Begg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Begg
General Secretary
Irish Congress of Trade Unions

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colm O'Gorman', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Colm O'Gorman
Executive Director
Amnesty International Ireland