

21<sup>st</sup> December, 2016

Mr Binali Yıldırım  
Prime Minister  
Vekaletler Caddesi  
Başbakanlık Merkez Bina  
P.K. 06573  
Kızılay / Ankara, Turkey

**Re: Arbitrary dismissals and emergency decrees**

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you as a member of the International Trade Union Confederation, which represents 181 million workers in 162 countries and territories and has 340 national affiliates, including DISK, KESK, HAK-IS and TURK-IS in your country.

While we condemn the failed coup attempt in Turkey, we are deeply concerned by your government's drastic purge launched in the immediate aftermath of the coup attempt. The number of public sector employees arbitrarily dismissed or suspended since the coup attempt of 15 July now stands at 100,000, mainly in the health, education and justice departments. While those fired are barred from future employment in the public sector, we are concerned that new recruitments may be arbitrary and not based on objective criteria, especially in education institutions where most dismissals have occurred so far.

In addition, we have been informed that various social media sites and VPN internet connections were blocked. Fifteen more media outlets have been closed by the authorities and almost 100 journalists are now in prison- the highest number of journalists imprisoned in any country of the world.

On 11 November, the Ministry of Interior announced the suspension of activities of 370 NGOs in 39 provinces. These suspensions, imposed initially for three months, were announced without individualised reasoning and there is no possibility of appeal or judicial remedy. Reports indicate that activities of over 70 NGOs have been suspended so far. These interventions frame in the follow-up to now a total of 12 decrees under state of emergency provisions adopted by the Council of Ministers following the coup attempt, many permanently limiting fundamental rights. However, these sweeping measures are disproportionate and cannot be justified even under the state of emergency, and are in violation of the rights to freedom of expression and association, guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Turkey is a party.

We stand in solidarity with trade unions in Turkey and call on your Government to stop abusing the state of emergency to arbitrarily dismiss workers and to crackdown on free speech and freedom of association.

Yours sincerely

Patricia King  
General Secretary