



Int Dept/Keth Thapper/gp

Date  
2011-12-05  
Your date

Our reference  
KT/gp  
Your reference

Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister

Ankara  
Turkey

Mr. Prime Minister,

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) is writing to you with considerable dismay as the Izmir Criminal Court has issued its final judgment in the EGITIM Sen-KESK trial.

LO has been informed by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) that 25 Turkish trade unionists, members of EGITIM Sen-KESK including KESK President Lami Özgen were sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison under the guise of the anti-terrorism legislation. This despite the clear lack of evidence noticed by the head of the court himself who asked for the acquittal.

LO firmly condemns those appalling sentences against trade union members. LO supports KESK in its appeal against the Criminal court judgment and will follow this case closely.

This judgment is a woeful example of the judicial harassment faced by KESK trade union members as well as the abuse of the Turkish justice system in order to silence Turkey's workers. It unfortunately illustrates the harsh anti-union environment in which Turkish trade unions have to operate.

This represents a clear assault on democracy. As already denounced by the ITUC, this also constitutes a very serious infringement on various European and international legislations and treaties to which Turkey is a signatory, such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 87 (on Freedom of Association and the Right to Organise), the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights.

During its 100th Session in June this year, the ILO Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) expressed, in its conclusions, among many other things, "concern about the new allegations of the restrictions placed on freedom of association and assembly of trade unionists." It urged the

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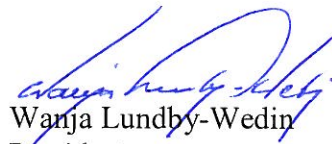
**The Swedish Trade Union Confederation**

Turkish government to report on the respect for trade union rights before the ILO Governing Body session in November this year, and to avail itself again of ILO technical assistance.

LO urges your government to rescind the sentences and to take immediate action in order to improve its trade union rights record.

Trade Union Rights are Human Rights, and these can only be exercised in a climate that is free of violence, reprisals or threats of any kind against their leaders and membership, and it is up to governments to ensure that this principle is respected.

Yours sincerely,  
The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO)



Wanja Lundby-Wedin  
President