



Int dept/Keth Thapper/gp

DATE
2011-06-09

OUR REFERENCE
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Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
Ankara
Turkey

Prime Minister,

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), which represents 1.5 million workers in Sweden, hereby voices its indignation at the rising tide of violence against women in your country and the arrest of trade union activists who protested against this intolerable situation.

According to our sources, every day in your country women are murdered by men who are often members of their own family or close acquaintances. Each year, hundreds more are harassed, assaulted or raped, sometimes even at their workplaces. We are extremely concerned about the number of women murdered in Turkey and deeply regret the fact that your government has not managed to take the measures required to prevent the escalation of such crimes. The situation is alarming. Your government has a duty to protect its male and female citizens and ensure that their most fundamental human rights are respected.

On several occasions, our affiliate the Turkish Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK) has drawn the government's attention to the extent and gravity of the situation by writing to both the Minister for Domestic Affairs and the Minister of State in charge of women's and family affairs. Not once has KESK received a reply in keeping with the seriousness of the situation. In fact, your Minister of State described these killing as "sporadic incidents".

Our affiliate KESK opted to demonstrate against this injustice and against the crimes and killings to which women fall victims in Turkey. Last year large-scale manifestations were organised in several cities in the wake of 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. KESK and numerous women's organisations took part in that event. On 11 November 2010 in Urfa, members of KESK's Executive

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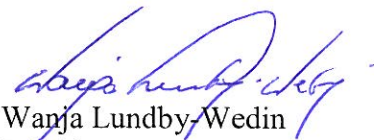
The Swedish Trade Union Confederation

Committee were taken in for questioning and charged for violating the law governing public gatherings and demonstrations.

The cause of the manifestations was a just one: to bring an end to the violence endured by women in Turkey. The right to engage in trade union activities, to publicly express an opinion, and to demonstrate are all fundamental rights. The LO therefore urgently urges you to take all the necessary steps to ensure that women's and trade union rights are respected in our country.

The LO will closely monitor the proceedings at the trial of the members of KESK's Executive Committee in Urfa which is scheduled for 7 July.

Yours sincerely,
THE SWEDISH TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (LO)


Wanja Lundby-Wedin
President