

H.E. Mr Roh Moo-hyun
President of the Republic,
Blue House,
Seoul
Republic of Korea

By fax: + 82-2-770-1690

4 September 2006

Dear Mr. President,

Police use force to close down KGEU offices

On behalf of The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) representing nearly 2 million workers, I would like to protest strongly against the violent crackdown on the KGEU.

In March, the Ministry of Government and Home Affairs (MOGAHA) issued the very repressive Directive to Promote the Transformation of Illegal Organisations into Legal Trade Unions, according to which local authorities were ordered to pressure members of the KGEU to leave the union, for example by demotions, or even by approaching the family members of employees who belonged to the union.

The local authorities have now been instructed to enforce this directive by a new directive of 3rd of August which has resulted in an intensified campaign by the police throughout the country to close down KGEU offices by use of force.

The LO condemns these serious violations of the principle of freedom of association, and finds it offensive that the government chooses to intensify its campaign against the KGEU at the very time when the ILO Asia Regional Meeting is taking place in Korea to improve industrial relations in the region. This shows a lack of respect for the ILO and the fundamental principles on which this institution is built.

The LO urges your government to respect the fundamental principles of the international organizations of which Korea is a member and end its repressive campaign against the KGEU immediately.

The Government should respect the conclusions and recommendations of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association on case 1865, contained in its 340th Report and adopted by the ILO Governing Body in March 2006.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Wanja Lundby-Wedin, President

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO)