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Dismissal of public officers and the attack on trade union rights

We are writing you on behalf of UNI MEI Global Union and UNI Post & Logistics Global Union and our 300 affiliated unions and guilds representing over 2 000 000 workers in the media and entertainment, and post and logistics industries worldwide regarding the situation of trade union rights in Turkey.

We would like to convey the great concern of our colleagues from around the world regarding the state of freedom of association and the right to organise as guaranteed by the ILO conventions 87 and 98.

We have been informed by our affiliate, Basın Yayın İletişim ve Posta Emekçileri Sendikası/Media Communication and Postal Employees Union (Haber-Sen), of the ongoing violations of labour, trade union and human rights in Turkey.

We have been informed that about 125 000 workers have been dismissed in different sectors (judiciary, education, police force, national intelligence services, different ministries and private institutions such as foundations, media, among others.). Over 2500 members of Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK), the national confederation of our affiliate Haber-Sen, have been dismissed. Similarly, ten Haber-Sen members have been permanently dismissed from their offices by Decree Laws. Seven of them were working in the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation or TRT. Forty-nine members have been suspended from their offices, two of whom were from the TRT.

As we understand, dismissals of public officers are conducted through publicised lists without an effective appeal mechanism in place. According to our information, dismissed public officers have no chance to be re-employed by the public sector. They lose their social security and their passport is cancelled.

Similar concerns have been raised by Nils Muižnieks, the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, in paragraphs 8, 24, and 31 of his report

entitled *Memorandum on the human rights implications*¹, or paragraphs 110, 111, and 112 of the Venice Commission *Opinion on Emergency Decree Law Nos. 667-676 Adopted Following the Failed Coup of 15 July 2016*². In our view, these measures are contrary to ILO Convention (n° 87) - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948 and the Convention (n° 98) concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively, 1949, ratified by Turkey, respectively in 1993 and 1952, as well as C111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111) which Turkey has ratified in 1967.

We express our protest against the measures put in place in the aftermath of the failed coup attempt in July 2016 which have led to an attack on trade union rights, human rights, democracy, and rule of law, and urge the Government of Turkey to stop the attack against media organisations and union members.

We call on the Government of Turkey to comply with its international obligations and to respect human rights as well as labour and trade union rights in all its actions.

Sincerely,



Philip Jennings
General Secretary
UNI Global Union



Oliver Roethig
Regional Secretary
UNI Europa

¹<https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=2952586&SecMode=1&DocId=2392872&Usage=2>

² [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2016\)037-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2016)037-e)