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Onderwerp: Tunisia: The ETUC raises deep concerns

TUNISIA: THE ETUC RAISES DEEP CONCERNS

12 January 2011

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) denounces the violent and totally disproportionate use of force by the Tunisian security forces against the broad and ongoing social protest movement in the country driven by the desperate social and employment situation, especially among young people.



The ETUC has written to Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, expressing its deep concerns as well as those of the Tunisian trade union movement with which the ETUC cooperates.

The Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT) has strongly condemned the shooting of demonstrators and the killing of innocent citizens in a number of regions in Tunisia and called for urgent action to meet the legitimate demands of the protestors. It has proposed a detailed plan aimed at introducing real and credible economic, social and political reforms. The ETUC calls on the EU to promote in its discussions with the Tunisian authorities this UGTT agenda which will open the way towards justice, democracy and human rights.

Following strikes in other regions in Tunisia, the UGTT has called for a general work stoppage in Tunis for tomorrow, Friday 14 January. ETUC General Secretary John Monks said: *"We are steadfast in our support for our Tunisian friends and hope that the government will listen to their wise counsel. We urge the authorities immediately to lift their blockade of the UGTT headquarters in Tunis. We also call on them to respect the right of workers to withdraw their labour and hope that tomorrow's action will be allowed to take place peacefully"*.

The ETUC supports the appeal of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), to which the UGTT is affiliated, for a broad and sustainable mobilisation of the European and international trade union movement to stop the bloodshed and to find a way for peaceful solutions.

UGTT statements can be found at: <http://www.etuc.org/a/8168>

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 83 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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