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NORTHERN CYPRUS: MASSIVE REJECTION OF ANKARA'S "REFORM PACKAGE"

31 January 2011

On 28 January, more than 30 000 workers participated in a massive meeting and a general strike organised by the trade union movement in Northern Cyprus, supported by other groupings. The aim of the meeting was to say no to the "reform package" pressed for by the Government in Ankara, which would hurt fundamental workers' rights.

European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
 Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

The "reform package" aims, among other things, to restrict the practical application of right to organise and collective bargaining, and to privatise public institutions, even the ones that are in profit, while cutting the salaries of the workers and pensions. The austerity measures further complicate a situation of social dumping on the labour market fuelled by a policy of legitimisation of the employment of unregistered immigrant workers from Turkey in an attempt to change the demographic composition of the population.

European Trade Union Confederation General Secretary John Monks said: "The authorities must stop trying to create facts on the ground at the expense of workers in Northern Cyprus. There is widespread opposition to the proposals among the population that the administration must recognise. The ETUC will continue to support its affiliate Turk-Sen in its fight to defend workers' rights".

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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