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Onderwerp: International trade must help strengthen, not undermine, workers' rights

International trade must help strengthen, not undermine, workers' rights

Brussels, 04/07/2011

In advance of the next round of trade negotiations between the EU and Canada on 11-15 July, the ETUC has called on Karel de Gucht, EU Commissioner for Trade, to ensure that EU and Canada take a lead towards meeting the concerns of workers worldwide that international trade agreements help strengthen and do not undermine their rights.

Bernadette Ségal, ETUC General Secretary, has written to the Commissioner asking that the EU should adjust its negotiating position to ensure that a strong dispute settlement mechanism, including the possibility of fines being imposed for breaches of international obligations on labour standards, is included in the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement currently being negotiated with Canada. Such a provision, which the Canadian side supports, would send a strong message also in the context of negotiations with other countries that the EU wants to ensure the full observance of standards set by the International Labour Organisation as part of its trade policy.

The ETUC is pursuing other issues in relation to the negotiations, and in particular opposes the inclusion of investment protection provisions in the Agreement, which would lack any justification and give business powers to bring into question democratic decisions and extract huge monetary compensation.

[ETUC letter to the Commissioner](#)

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) speaks with a single voice on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 82 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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