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

ECOFIN. WROCLAW: FINANCE MINISTERS TURN THEIR BACK ON GREECE

21 September 2011

The European finance ministers' (ECOFIN), meeting in Wroclaw on 16 and 17 September, decided not to decide anything. They did not adopt the urgent measures needed to prevent any worsening of the crisis in the European Union, and in particular the situation of Greece. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), which organised a demonstration to coincide with the ECOFIN meeting, regrets this absence of decision which may be fraught with consequences for workers and for Europe.

ETUC General Secretary Bernadette Ségal commented: "It is extremely regrettable that the European finance ministers failed to live up to their responsibilities and failed to take the measures needed to keep from adding further to the crisis. Instead, certain Member States, which are caught up in the logic of national election campaigns, decided that the emergency could wait until tomorrow and did not have to be dealt with today. They turned their back on Greece, at the risk of speeding up a contagion effect in Europe. More than 50,000 trade unionists from 18 countries demonstrated in the streets of Wroclaw on 17 September to say that the time has come to make a reality of European solidarity. I regret that we did not have the opportunity to say this in person to the European ministers, since they did come to at least one decision: they cut their meeting short to keep from meeting us."

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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