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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC Condemns Latest Attack on Greek Workers' Rights

Brussels, 28 January 2013 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has condemned the Greek government's use of wartime emergency powers to break a week-long strike by metro transit workers in the capital city of Athens. On 25 January, riot police moved in and forced workers back to work under the threat of arrest. This is the latest of a series of measures taken by the government that severely undermine the fundamental rights of workers in stark violation of international conventions to which Greece is a party.

In November 2012, the International Labour Organization (ILO) issued a strong rebuke over the measures the Greek government had already taken, at the insistence of the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission and European Central Bank, which all but eliminated collective bargaining machinery that has taken generations to build.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said "Enough is enough. The Troika's misguided and illegal policies are creating long-term social and economic damage to an entire generation. Forcing people to work under threat of arrest will only produce more misery and instability."

The metro workers' strike is not just a reaction to pay-cuts being forced on them. It is about the government's disregard of existing collective agreements and the threat of being pushed into a new uniform public sector wage scheme imposed by the Troika.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 308 national affiliates.

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