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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

Fundamental Rights at Work in the Republic of Korea

Brussels, 21 February 2013 (ITUC OnLine): The Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) of the EU-Korea free trade agreement released an opinion on "Fundamental Rights at Work in the Republic of Korea". The Group comprises trade unions, employers' organisations, civil society organisations and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). The Group's mandate is to advise the EU on the implementation of the Sustainability Chapter of the free trade agreement. A similar Group is established in Korea.

The opinion identifies areas in which the national legislation fails to implement fully the rights enumerated in the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and proposes amendments in the areas in which the national legislation fails to respect them. Particularly, the opinion states that the government of Korea should ratify ILO Conventions 29, 87, 98 and 105, "amend Article 314 of the Criminal Act and narrowly define the scope of obstruction of business" and resolve a series of cases of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association.

The paper treats several practices that do not comply with the Conventions including the government's refusal to grant the Korean Government Employees Union (KGEU) and the Migrant's Trade Union (MTU) recognition. Another covered issue is the grim situation of Korean dispatched and temporary workers. To this end, the DAG's recommends that the government of Korea takes measures to prevent abuses of subcontracting as a way to evade the exercise of their trade union rights by precarious labour.

The report was prepared by the ITUC member of the EU-Korea FTA DAG.

Read the opinion here: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/opinion-on-the-fundamental-rights>

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