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*President: Berthold Huber
General Secretary: Jyrki Raina*

Geneva 8 February 2016

Mr. Muhammad Navaz Sharif
Prime Minister
Government of Pakistan
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Sent by email: info@pmo.gov.pk; mission.pakistan@ties.itu.int

IndustriALL Global Union expresses solidarity with workers in Pakistan protesting against privatization and calls upon the government to stop repression and initiate dialogue

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing this letter to you as General Secretary of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than fifty million union workers in mining, energy and manufacturing industries in 140 countries worldwide, including Pakistan, to call upon the Government of Pakistan to stop repressing peaceful workers' demonstrations, held against the privatization of public sector enterprises, and to start a dialogue with the unions to take full account for their legitimate demands and concerns.

We are deeply pained to learn that two employees of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA,) Enayat Raza and Saleem Akbar were killed and many, including women workers, were injured in a brutal crackdown on 2 February 2016, during a peaceful rally in Karachi against the government's policy to privatize public sector enterprises. We express our heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased workers. At this moment of grief and anguish we stand in solidarity with the trade union movement and workers of Pakistan.

We are also distressed over the disappearance of four trade union members of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), namely Mr. Hidayatualla, President of Peoples Unity Union, Mr. Zamir, Mr Saifullah and Mansoor. The government should take steps to punish those responsible for the killing, and immediately direct the law enforcing agencies to trace the disappeared unionists.

We note that the proposed privatization of public sector companies are loan conditionalities imposed by International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF is one of those very institutions that failed to predict the global economic crisis in 2008, and with its "one size fits for all" policy approach continues to wreak havoc in developing countries' economies. Privatization will lead to loss of policy space.

It is extremely important that developing country like Pakistan require adequate policy space for the government to enact appropriate macro-economic policies to address pressing challenges of employment generation and eradication of poverty. There is no doubt that the proposed privatization and subsequent restructuring of privatized companies will lead to massive employee layoffs and increase precarious work. Protesting workers are right in expressing their apprehensions against privatization.

Furthermore, we note with concern that the imposition of the Essential Services Maintenance (ESM) Act 1952 for six months, effective as of 2 February 2016, goes against Pakistan's commitment to globally established labour standards and human rights principles. The government must immediately withdraw the ESMA.

We strongly condemn the violent clampdown of workers' peaceful protests. Criminalization of workers must end immediately. In a democracy, dialogue not repression will bring lasting solutions to pressing issues faced by the people of Pakistan.

We call upon the Government of Pakistan to end the repression of workers and start a national consultation with workers' organizations to reach amicable solutions to the issues raised by workers.

I anticipate your prompt reply and action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JR' or similar initials.

Jyrki Raina, General Secretary

Copied to

Suhail Baluch, Convener, Joint Action Committee (JAC), PIA Employees
IndustriALL Pakistan Council