

Geneva, 3rd March 2017

Mr. Andrew MacKenzie
Chief Executive Officer
BHP Billiton
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IndustriALL Global Union calls on BHP Billiton to guarantee resumption of negotiations with union at La Escondida

Dear Mr. Andrew MacKenzie,

I am writing this letter to you as the General Secretary of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than fifty million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors throughout the world, including Chile, to call on BHP Billiton, as the majority owner, to intervene at La Escondida copper mine in Chile to ensure that your local management resume negotiations with the union Sindicato N°1 de Minera Escondida.

2,500 workers at La Escondida went on strike on 9 February due to the recalcitrant stance of the company and the ensuing suspension of negotiations with the union. IndustriALL Global Union is also concerned over the failure of La Escondida management to attend the government-sponsored mediation session with the striking workers on 15 February.

Furthermore, IndustriALL Global Union condemns BHP's illegal and unfair decision to withhold from striking workers the bonuses owed to them for work they carried out in 2016. The move, clearly designed to strangle the workers financially, is fanning the flames of an already explosive situation. We urge you to pay these bonuses without delay.

We are also gravely concerned at the news that during a demonstration held on March 1, special police forces shot tear gas grenades into the crowd, injuring three workers. It appears that in the absence of proper industrial relations procedures aimed at promoting good faith collective bargaining, the state is now resorting to police violence to resolve labour conflicts. This situation makes it all the more urgent that your company make every effort to secure a resolution through dialogue.

Consequently, it is imperative that La Escondida management resume negotiations with the union to address the legitimate demands of the workers, which call, inter alia, to drop the current plans to reduce wages and benefits, increase of working hours, and create a two-tier system that would be highly detrimental to new employees, as they would not receive any housing allowance, seniority bonus, or benefit from the current health system.

Given the severity of the situation, I reiterate my call to BHP Billiton to intervene immediately to guarantee the resumption of negotiations with the Sindicato N°1 de Minera Escondida to achieve a fair collective agreement for all the workers at La Escondida.

I look forward to your prompt action and reply.

Sincerely,



Valter Sanches
General Secretary