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President: Jörg Hofmann
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Geneva 8 January 2018

H.E. Moon Jae-in
President
Republic of Korea

By email to: president@president.go.kr; carrot0330@hanmail.net; geneva.korea@mofa.go.kr

IndustriALL Global Union calls on President of Republic of Korea to release imprisoned trade unionists, including HAN Sang-gyun and LEE Yeong-Ju

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing this letter to you as the General Secretary of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industrial-all-union.org), which represents more than fifty million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors throughout the world, including the Republic of Korea, to call again on your government—I had written to you on 29 May 2017 to congratulate you on your election—to ensure that South Korean authorities stop the persecution of union leaders, and release imprisoned trade unionists, including KCTU President HAN Sang-gyun and KCTU General Secretary LEE Yeong-Ju.

We are shocked to learn that LEE Yeong-Ju, who was already under house arrest, was detained on 27 December, and might be prosecuted. Furthermore, we are disappointed to see that you pardoned 6,444 individuals at the end of 2017, but neither HAN Sang-gyun nor LEE Yeong-Ju were included on that list. The charges against both unionists relate to organizing a public protest against regressive labour law reforms put forth by the government of former South Korean President Park Gyun-hye.

Nevertheless, we are encouraged by some news indicating that you would be about to honour the pledge you made last year during the presidential campaign to ratify ILO core labour standards, including Convention 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, and ILO Convention 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining. We are of the opinion that the ratification process should be done immediately with a follow-up action to do the necessary legislation change as soon as possible.

We trust that you will fulfil your commitment to abide by national and international labour standards, and that, in this sense, you will put an end to the persecution of union leaders, release all imprisoned trade unionists, and guarantee the respect of fundamental workers' rights.

I anticipate your swift action and immediate reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sanches". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial letter.

Valter Sanches,
General Secretary