

Geneva, 05 February 2014

Mr Osama Al Najafi  
Speaker of the Parliament

Mr Unadem Kana  
Chairman of Parliament Committee of Labour and Social Affairs

Parliament of Iraq  
Baghdad, Iraq

## Labour and Trade Union Laws in Iraq

Dear Sirs,

I am again writing to you on behalf of [IndustriAll Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing industries in some 140 countries. There are six trade unions from Iraq as part of our global trade union family. For years, the international trade union movement has urged successive Iraqi governments to amend the labour and trade union laws because they place substantial restrictions on the fundamental rights of workers, including the right to freedom of association, to bargain collectively and to strike. You will also recall that you met with a delegation from IndustriALL Global Union in Baghdad in July 2013 when we discussed our concerns regarding the labour and trade union laws.

Despite the fact that the Iraqi government has received considerable technical assistance from the International Labour Organization (ILO) on drafting new legislation, we are extremely concerned to be informed that the government-backed Parliament Labour Committee versions of the labour and trade union laws, presently before Parliament, continue to be restrictive of worker's rights and do not allow public-sector unions. We are deeply concerned that recommendations to improve the laws, including at public meetings where government and Parliament representatives were in attendance, appear to have been ignored.

We strongly believe that it is essential to put in place, in line with international commitments already made, a genuinely ILO-compliant trade union law that must apply to workers and employees throughout the public sector and it must also recognize the present day reality of trade union pluralism. It really is time now for the old laws of the Saddam Hussein era, presently being used against trade union organizations, including our affiliated trade unions, to be finally consigned to the dustbin of history and a new era of respect for trade union rights begun.

On numerous occasions, Iraqi trade unions have jointly submitted detailed amendments to the draft labour law and made comprehensive proposals for a new trade union law that we believe is consistent with international standards.

We strongly urge the Parliament to move forward on the basis of the input from the trade unions, as well as the ILO, to ensure that any new legal framework affords workers their rights under international law. IndustriALL continues to be prepared to offer you any necessary technical assistance in this effort.

Yours sincerely,



Jyrki Raina, General Secretary