



Geneva / Brussels, 16 July 2014

**Jean-Claude Juncker**  
**President**  
**European Commission**  
jean-claude.juncker@ec.europa.eu

Dear Mr. President,

### **Maternity Leave Directive**

We take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the European Commission.

IndustriAll European Trade Union and IndustriALL Global Union are union federations, representing some 7 million workers in Europe and over 50 million workers worldwide in the metal, chemical, textile and related sectors.

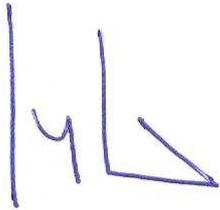
We have been informed that the Commission has withdrawn the proposal to strengthen maternity leave and the rights of women who have recently given birth under the Maternity Leave Directive. As you know, this proposal was adopted by the European Parliament in 2010 but was ultimately rejected on 15 July.

This is not the right signal to be sending to women and men in Europe and indeed the world. The EU is missing a golden opportunity to restore citizens' trust and belief in the European institutions. The idea that maternity leave is being sacrificed to the REFIT agenda because it is not efficient is an affront to the rights of women everywhere.

Maternity rights are part of the equality agenda, which you indeed have promised to support. Reconciliation of work and family life is still a concern for many working people, and this directive provides part of the necessary support that families need. Furthermore, strengthening maternity rights is just one way to combat the ageing societies that we are now faced with all over Europe.

We urge you to make a fresh start as you begin your presidency and ensure that negotiations to revise the maternity directive positively are resumed. Our women (and men) members will be counting on you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a vertical line on the left, a horizontal line in the middle, and a diagonal line on the right that ends in a small hook.

Jyrki Raina  
General Secretary  
IndustriALL Global Union

A handwritten signature in blue ink, written in a cursive style with a prominent 'U' at the beginning and a series of loops at the end.

Ulrich Eckelmann  
General Secretary  
IndustriAll European Trade Union