

Geneva, 12 January 2017

The Honourable Sheikh Hasina,
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,
Old Sangshad Bhaban,
Tejgaon, Dhaka 1215 Bangladesh

Sent by email to info@pmo.gov.bd; pm@pmo.gov.bd; ps1topm@pmo.gov.bd;
mission.bangladesh@ties.itu.int

IndustriALL calls for the release of detained labour leaders and definite end to the harassment of trade union leaders and workers' rights activists

Dear Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,

I am writing this letter to you as General Secretary of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industrial-all-union.org), representing more than fifty million workers in the mining, energy and manufacturing industries, including garment, in some 140 countries worldwide, to call for an immediate end to the persecution of garment workers, trade union leaders and worker activists in Bangladesh.

The events in December 2016 and early January 2017, when at least eleven union leaders and workers' rights advocates were detained under the Special Powers Act 1974, an emergency introduced in wartime, are an alarming step backwards for Bangladesh.

The eleven detained include seven members of three IndustriALL trade union affiliates in Bangladesh – the BGIWF, SBGWF and BIGUF.

Wages in Bangladesh' garment industry are among the lowest in the world, while the cost of housing, basic commodities and medical care is spiraling. It is unacceptable that the demand to increase the minimum wage is met with suspended production at 59 factories, the suspension of well over 1,600 workers and police filing cases against 600 workers and trade union leaders.

Garment workers in Bangladesh have the unequivocal right to organize and must be paid a living wage on which they can survive.

IndustriALL Global Union is calling on the government of Bangladesh to intervene and end the crackdown on trade unionists and workers in the Bangladesh garment industry.

We demand that the government immediately release the detained trade union leaders and activists, and drop the criminal cases against hundreds of garment workers.

I anticipate your prompt reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sanches", is centered on a light blue rectangular background.

Valter Sanches
General Secretary
IndustriALL Global Union