

## Resolution of IndustriALL Global Union on Belarus

### **Solidarity with independent trade unions in Belarus**

Peaceful protests against the election fraud, massive repressions and arrests continue in Belarus since August 2020. These protests are widely supported by the civil society, including independent trade unions. On October 26, the opposition called for a general strike in which many workers participated.

Workers who tried to use their democratic rights to peacefully protest or to strike were stopped by the police; they were intimidated both by employers and state authorities and security forces. The mostly state employers threatened the workers, they arbitrarily cut their wages and social benefits, and they unlawfully dismissed many of them. Workers were also intimidated by the authorities. They and their families were interrogated by the police and were arrested. Many of them face criminal charges with high prison sentences.

So far more than 15,000 protesters were arrested, many of them were tortured and beaten in jail, students were ex-matriculated from their universities, and many had to leave the country.

Workers' rights have been suppressed in Belarus for many years. Workers cannot effectively fight for better working and living conditions. As nearly all workers have only fixed-term employment contracts they can be dismissed easily.

Democratic and free trade unions have been suppressed and hindered in their work for many years. These repressions are a clear breach of international labour standards and norms, ratified by Belarus.

IndustriALL Global Union stands on the side of our Belarussian colleagues and supports their legitimate demands:

- to end the violence and massive repressions against people participating in peaceful strikes and demonstrations
- to hold a new, free and fair election
- to release all political prisoners
- to reinstate all dismissed workers
- for a criminal prosecution of those participating in the brutal suppression of protests

IndustriALL Global Union will together with other trade unions' federations and its affiliates call on all relevant international and European institutions, as well as on national governments, to take a stronger position against the repression of democratic opposition, as well as harassment and intimidation against independent Belarussian trade union leaders and activists, and to review their economic and political relations with Belarus. Furthermore, those independent trade union leaders and activists that are in illegal detention should be released immediately and all charges withdrawn. If democracy has a chance to win in Belarus, it will only happen with the active support of the free trade unions, the political support of the EU, and the support of the international community.