

Geneva, 18 March 2014

To Ms. Park Geun-hye  
President of the Republic of Korea  
Blue House  
Seoul, Korea

By mail to [president@president.go.kr](mailto:president@president.go.kr); [foreign@president.go.kr](mailto:foreign@president.go.kr); [mission.korea-rep@ties.itu.int](mailto:mission.korea-rep@ties.itu.int)

## Call on President of Republic of Korea to Release Kim Jung-woo and Enter into Dialogue with Trade Unions

Dear President Park,

I am writing to you on behalf of [IndustriALL Global Union](#), which represents more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing industries in some 140 countries, to call for the immediate and unconditional release of **Kim Jung-woo**, who was detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of association.

Despite our call to you from 20 February 2013—please see attached letter—the situation in Korea has worsened. Therefore, it is imperative that your administration enter into a democratic and meaningful dialogue with our national affiliated unions, national centers and with us, including the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and Public Services International (PSI) to guarantee workers' legitimate human rights and trade union rights, in full accordance with the International Labour Organization's core labour standards and United Nations' universally-adopted human rights conventions.

In Korea, labour leaders and activists are imprisoned for engaging in industrial action that would be legal elsewhere in the world. The government does so despite repeated and clear direction from the International Labour Organization to bring the law, particularly the obstruction of business clause of the Penal Code, into line immediately with principles of freedom of association. The arrests and imprisonments are often compounded by strike compensation lawsuits against unions and individuals with no purpose other than to bankrupt them.

Kim Jung-woo, former leader of the Ssangyong Motor branch of the Korean Metal Workers' Union, was arrested on 10 June 2013 when he tried to prevent municipal government officials dismantling sit-in tents and a memorial alter in Seoul, the capital. The protest called for the reinstatement of the workers dismissed by Ssangyong Motor in June 2009, and in memory of the 24 workers and family members who either killed themselves or died of stress-related disorders during the campaign. All the necessary police notifications for the protest had been submitted, but despite this, the police sent a notification banning the demonstration on May 30 2013. The trade union filed an injunction against the ban, and this appeal was ongoing when the government officials dismantled the site in June 2013. There were two previous rulings at the Seoul Administrative Court in favour of the union's right to protest on the same site, in July 2012 and December 2013.

Kim Jungwoo was sentenced to 10 months in prison for 'special interference with a government official in the execution of his duties'. He will have completed the sentence in April but he could be given a heavier sentence at the High Court after an appeal by the prosecution.

We join the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), together with Amnesty International, in urging the government of the Republic of Korea to release Kim Jung-woo, and those who have been similarly detained, for exercising their internationally-protected right to associate.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jyrki Raina".

Jyrki Raina,  
General Secretary  
IndustriALL Global Union