

Mr Oleksandr V. Turchinov
Chairperson of Verkhovna Rada
Kiev
Ukraine

By telefax: +380-44-255.20.58

PERC/GG/AL/pw

Brussels, 30 June 2014

Attacks on the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine

Dear Mr Turchinov,

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) are seriously concerned about the continuing interference in the functioning of the Federation of Trade Unions (FPU), including direct assaults on their activities, structures and properties. The latest attempt to prevent the General Council of FPU to elect a new president of the organization is an alarm signal and requires a prompt and decisive response to secure for trade unions normal conditions to work and contribute to the stabilization and recovery of the country.

On 26 June, while the Council of FPU was holding its session in Hotel Turist, a crowd of extremists clearly spearheaded by nationalistic radicals burst inside, ransacking the building with the aim of distorting and interfering in the work and decision making-processes of the FPU, the largest membership based organisation in Ukraine representing the interests of workers of Ukraine and an ITUC affiliate since 2005. Such actions against FPU, as well as any other genuine trade union, are unacceptable and are counterproductive for the interests of the Ukrainian people, their European future and for the efforts of the authorities to consolidate effective democratic governance in the country.

Our concerns are further fuelled by a number of recent attempts around the country to take over whole trade union structures and their properties or interfere in trade union and workers' lives in particular companies – e.g. by the so-called Luhansk people's republic and other cases. The extension of such actions now to Kiev sends worrying signals that, in the turbulent period the country is trying to overcome, some adventurers are seeking to use the confusion to get hold of unions and their property, in pursuit of particular political or mercantile interests.

ITUC and ETUC condemn all anti-democratic and anti-trade union actions and call on you to make all necessary efforts to identify the perpetrators and provocateurs behind such actions and bring them to justice.

The ITUC and ETUC welcome the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU which will open important new opportunities for the country while facing it with serious challenges. Approximation with EU values and principles along with the reforms that need to be implemented can only be achieved if a sound public consensus is built, and citizens and their communities are fully consulted to secure sufficient space for the changes to take roots. In EU tradition and practice the social partners – employer organisations and trade unions - play a special role in facilitating the process through effective social dialogue. We hope the Ukrainian authorities and social partners will make good use of the available expertise and experience in these areas to lead the country out of the current difficult situation.

Yours sincerely,



Sharan Burrow
ITUC General Secretary



Bernadette Ségol
ETUC and PERC General Secretary

P.S.: The same letter was sent to President Poroshenko.

cc: FPU