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Mr Plamen Dimitrov  
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Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of  
Bulgaria (CITUB)  
Sofia  
Bulgaria

By e-mail

PERC/GG/pw

Brussels, 19 November 2013

### **ITUC Support to CITUB national protest demonstration on 20 November**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Dear Friends,

Since the beginning of the year, we have been following with growing concern the uneasy path of Bulgarian society in search of effective solutions to overcome the impact of the crisis in Europe. We have witnessed the failure of the political elites to offer realistic, convincing and consensus-building arguments and policies to address the burning issues of the future of the people, which include

- dramatic and persistent unemployment levels;
- rising poverty, social exclusion and intolerance in society;
- public services and social protection systems facing persistent inefficiency problems; and
- a dysfunctional political process, blocked by pointless partisan confrontations, often guided by corrupt interests and undermining the trust in democratic principles and institutions.

It is hardly surprising that social discontent has been mounting and that escalating tensions have erupted in impressive protest actions. People have paid a hard social price for the destructive austerity policy the previous government was so proud of. What is surprising is that the current budget proposal demonstrates similar insensitivity to the real problems of the people, especially the poor and most vulnerable groups of society.

Moreover, it is extremely disconcerting to see the familiar fashion of blatant disregard for the constructive and necessary remedies proposed by the unions that can give a chance to the people through the most difficult times and open some space for longer-term, sustainable solutions to the political, economic and social challenges of the country.

It is high time for the political elites and the power holders to hear the voice of Working Bulgaria and act accordingly.

The ITUC fully supports all your demands and wishes you success in the protest action and other initiatives.

With fraternal greetings,

Yours in solidarity

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Burrow', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sharan Burrow  
General Secretary