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Address:
The Head of the Republic of Bashkortostan
Rustem Khamitov

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PERC/AL

9 April 2015

Hungerstrike of first aid service workers in Bashkortostan

Dear Rustem Khamitov,

The International Trade Union Confederation, representing more than 176 million workers in 162 countries and territories, was informed by its affiliate, the Confederation of Labour of Russia, about violations of trade union rights in the healthcare sector of the Republic of Bashkortostan.

In July 2014 one hundred and sixty first aid service workers decided to set up a union to promote their interests and to protect their rights. They joined the inter-regional union of healthcare workers “Deistvie” affiliated to the Confederation of Labour of Russia. The administration of the first aid service, which is a part of the regional government structure, however, did not respect the rights of workers for collective bargaining and began exercising pressure on the union activists. In October 2014 that led to a hunger strike of 25 union activists which was only stopped after the intervention of the head of the National Medical Chamber, who confirmed that demands of medical workers were justified. Yet, despite some promises, the management of the first aid service continues exercising administrative pressure aimed at suppressing union activities. The appeals of the union to the regional authorities were left unanswered, and the activists had to resort to protest actions to make their voice heard. On 19 March eleven of them started a hunger strike. On 4 April other medical workers from different cities of Russia expressed their solidarity with their colleagues in Bashkortostan.

On behalf of the ITUC, I urge you to intervene to make sure that the rights of workers of the first aid service to collective representation and bargaining are fully respected, that any pressure and intimidation of union activists by management is stopped and that the government officials responsible for discriminatory anti-union actions are held responsible. I also ask you to meet with the protesting workers, to consider their demands and to take appropriate actions to resolve the issues.

Yours sincerely,



General Secretary

Cc: Confederation of Labour of Russia