

To General Secretary Toprak

KESK

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[Letter sent by e-mail]

Dear General Secretary Toprak,

Following the attempted coup in Turkey, we have received and seen statements from your organisations concerning the dramatic events of 15 July.

The ITUC and ETUC wish to reiterate our strong condemnation of the failed coup. We are fundamentally opposed to all unconstitutional efforts - especially involving the use of military force - to seize power and overthrow democracy. We call for the investigations and eventual prosecution of those responsible to be carried out in full respect of the rule of law.

We would like you to convey our deepest condolences to the families of the victims, and in particular to members of your organisations who have been affected.

The ITUC and ETUC have both also stated that we are deeply concerned by the drastic purge launched by the Turkish government in the immediate aftermath of the coup attempt. Not only have soldiers, generals and police officers been arrested and detained, but so too have civilians. Tens of thousands of workers and citizens have now been dismissed or suspended from their jobs. Plans to replace 20,000 teachers have been announced, including many thousands of union members. The coup attempt cannot be used as an excuse to eradicate democratic opposition through a "state of emergency" investing enormous power in the hands of President Erdogan, without any democratic control.

Amnesty International has described "credible reports" that detainees are being subjected to torture and sexual assault. Reports that the government is considering re-introducing the death penalty are of deep concern.

Turkey must fully respect human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, and abide by the rule of law. As a candidate for EU membership, it must comply with the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which rejects the death penalty.

The further undermining of democracy adds new concerns about the situation of refugees in Turkey, which cannot be considered a safe haven for people in need of protection. The EU must now end the EU-Turkey Deal and Member States must accelerate the resettlement of refugees under an enhanced asylum system.

We have called on the international community to stand with the people of Turkey and their democratic rights under international law, and to apply maximum pressure on the Turkish authorities to respect the fundamental rights enshrined in international and European law. We have further called upon the European Commission and the Council to condemn the crack-down in Turkey. Turkey's EU candidacy is at risk and the suspension of the accession process has to be seriously considered if the violations of the values of the EU continue.

The ITUC and the ETUC stand in full solidarity with the people of Turkey, and will do all in our power to support the full restoration of democracy, human rights and respect for the rule of law. Our Constitutional principles provide absolute clarity as regards the conduct of the ITUC, ETUC and all our affiliates with respect to these matters. We totally reject any attempt to manipulate the events of 15 July so as to justify repression, intolerance and abuse of power.

We congratulate all those who, while condemning the violent attempt by some within the military to seize power, publicly reject the dictatorial approach being pursued by the government of President Erdogan.

Yours sincerely,



Sharan Burrow  
General Secretary, ITUC



Luca Visentini  
General Secretary, ETUC

