

Ayuba Wabba

President
Président
Präsident
Presidente

H. E. Abiy Ahmed Ali

Prime Minister
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
P. O Box 1031
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Sharan Burrow

General Secretary
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Generalsekretärin
Secretaria General

By email

HTUR/ZM

15 May 2020

Continuation of Acts of Anti-Union Discrimination by the Ethiopian Airlines Group

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing 207 million workers in 163 countries, including Ethiopia, to follow up on my letter of 18 December 2019 concerning acts of anti-union discrimination in your country perpetrated by the Ethiopian Airlines Group (EAG).

The ITUC welcomes your social dialogue directives to the parties to resolve the dispute. However, it remains concerned about the disrespect for the agreement reached between the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), the Ethiopian Industry Employers Confederation (EIEC) and the Ethiopian Airline Group representatives mediated and chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA). Despite the glaring disregard for the agreement by the airline's management, there is no remedial action that has been taken by your Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The ITUC is reliably informed that the agreement required the EAG to cease its acts of anti-union discrimination, reinstate the dismissed and suspended employees and promote an enabling environment for employees to exercise their right to freedom of association and the right to organise at the workplace.

To our disappointment, the Ethiopian Airline Group continues to strengthen its acts of anti-unionism by suspending and dismissing workers' representatives and activists. On 1 April 2020, the EAG summarily terminated the contract of employment of the chairperson of the workers' union, Mr Yeshiwas Fantahun, on spurious charges without affording him the right to be heard before making a decision. In addition, the following union members were also suspended or dismissed: Mr Markos Yesuwerk, vice chairperson; Tekeste Kahsay, vice secretary; Mrs Semhar Aradom, hostess representative in the workers' union; Mr Altaseb Bruku, union accountant; and Capitan H Michael Demena and Capitan Addissu W Michael, members of the workers' union. They are being victimised for carrying out their trade union activities at the company.

Honourable Prime Minister, I want to remind your government that the law in your country recognises the right to freedom of association. In addition, in 1963, your government ratified the ILO Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948 (No.87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949 (No.98). The two conventions are still in force in Ethiopia and must be respected.

In this regard, the ITUC repeats its call upon your government to stop these acts of anti-union discrimination by directing the Ethiopian Airlines Group to allow the union to operate without interference and reinstate all trade union officials and members dismissed or suspended by the EAG

for exercising their right to freedom of association.

May I assure you that the ITUC remains focused on this matter until an amicable solution is found. I encourage your government to promote social dialogue and implement in practice the decisions made.

I hope and trust that your office will once again take stern measures against the management of the Ethiopian Airline Group. I remain hopeful that you will give your utmost attention to this matter and look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B.' followed by a stylized flourish.

General Secretary

cc:

Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA)-Addis Ababa

The ambassador, Ethiopian Embassy- Brussels,

Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU)-Addis Ababa,

International Trade Union Confederation-Africa (ITUC-Africa)-Lomé, Togo.