

**Akiko Gono**

President  
Présidente  
Präsidentin  
Presidenta

**Luc Triangle**

Acting General Secretary  
Secrétaire général par intérim  
Geschäftsführender Generalsekretär  
Secretario General en Funciones

**President Bola Ahmed Tinubu**

**Office Of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation,  
Shehu Shagari Complex,  
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Abuja,  
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email: [info@osgf.gov.ng](mailto:info@osgf.gov.ng)**

**HTUR/ZM**

**29 September 2023**

**ITUC condemns state-sanctioned interference and persecution of trade union leaders in Nigeria.**

Dear President Tinubu,

I write on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) which represents 191 million workers in 167 countries, including Nigeria, to condemn a series of attacks on our affiliate union, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and its affiliate, the National Road Transport Workers (NURTW) by your government. We also condemn the refusal by some of your states to implement the national minimum wage, duly agreed by social partners and your government.

The ITUC is reliably informed of a surge in acts of anti-union discrimination, including attacks on the trade union movement, since your government came into power in May 2023. These attacks have included the banning or disruption of trade union gatherings, and interference in trade union elections, where force and violence have been deployed in some cases. Trade union leaders have also been arbitrarily arrested and persecuted in certain states.

On 6 September 2023, Imo State's police force harassed, intimidated, and locked up trade union leaders who were carrying out lawful duties of monitoring and coordinating a nationwide strike from within the state. This followed an incident on 7 March 2023, in which the same government's police force disrupted an NLC conference organised to elect new leadership and left a number of delegates injured and trade union property damaged. The state's government then appropriated the NLC conference and installed its own trade union leadership in its name .

On 28 August 2023, the Nigeria Police Force violently seized and occupied the national headquarters of the NURTW with the sole purpose of installing its own leadership within the union. The NURTW's democratically elected leadership were arrested and detained and continue to be denied access to union offices. Subsequently, state governments in Lagos, Oyo, Ondo and Osun have continued to illegally ban the activities of the NURTW in their states.

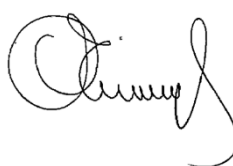
The ITUC urges your government to respect, both in law and in practice, the rights of trade unions as provided for under the ILO Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948 (No.87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949 (No.98), to which the Federal Republic of Nigeria is a party. Article 3 of Convention 87 provides that *"Workers' and employers' organisations shall have the right to draw up their constitutions and rules, to elect their representatives in full freedom, to organize their administration and activities and to formulate their programmes. The*

*public authorities shall refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof.”.*

The ITUC demands the immediate release of the detained leaders of NURTW, a stop to interference in trade union activities and that the rule of law is upheld. Furthermore, we implore your government to ensure that the national minimum wage is complied with, in line with the ILO CAS Conclusions of 2023 which require your government to “*establish an effective system of supervision and sanctions to ensure that the national minimum wage is applied at all levels.*”.

We remain ready to work with your government to promote good industrial relations both in your country and globally and look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luc Triangle', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Luc Triangle  
Acting General Secretary

cc: Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), [gsec@nlcng.org](mailto:gsec@nlcng.org)

cc: Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Kingdom of Belgium, [info@nigeriabrussels.org](mailto:info@nigeriabrussels.org)