

ITUC Statement

Statement: ITUC stands in solidarity with the UGTT Tunisia and urges action to address teachers rights violations in Tunisia

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) stands in solidarity with our affiliate, the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), and the nearly 17,000 teachers whose salaries have been unjustly suspended by the Tunisian government amid ongoing protests.

The education sector is the foundation of any thriving society, and depriving teachers of their rightful wages is not only an attack on their dignity but also on the very essence of a prosperous and just society.

This unprecedented move is not only a severe blow to the education sector but also an affront to the fundamental rights of workers, especially those who dedicate their lives to shaping the minds of Tunisia's future generations.

We condemn in the strongest terms the Tunisian government's decision to halt salary payments for these teachers and to terminate the employment of 350 school principals. Such actions only exacerbate the already grim economic outlook in the country and add to the unrest within the education system.

The ITUC urges the Tunisian government to engage in constructive dialogue with the UGTT and address the legitimate demands of the teachers. It is imperative that the government finds a fair and sustainable solution to this crisis, one that upholds the rights of workers and preserves the future of education in Tunisia.

We are deeply concerned about the potential consequences of this drastic action, as it is expected to affect approximately 30% of the country's primary school teachers. With an already strained economy and rising inflation, the withholding of teachers' salaries further threatens the livelihoods of thousands of families and places an undue burden on already vulnerable communities.

The ITUC also acknowledges the teachers' peaceful protest by withholding students' grades. It is essential to recognize that these educators are not only fighting for their rights but also standing up for the future of the children they educate. We call upon the Tunisian government to address the root causes of this unrest and work towards creating an environment that values and respects its educators, acknowledging their pivotal role in nation-building.

The upcoming school term is now clouded with uncertainty and tension, with hundreds of school principals having resigned in protest. This turmoil not only disrupts the education of students but also jeopardizes the social fabric of the country. It is high time for the Tunisian authorities to prioritize the well-being of its citizens, including its teachers, and take decisive actions to resolve this crisis.

The ITUC will continue to support the workers, their organisations, and the UGTT in its efforts to protect the rights and dignity of workers in Tunisia. We call on the international community to join us in expressing solidarity with the teachers and UGTT, and to urge the Tunisian government to reverse its decision and engage in meaningful dialogue to find a just and sustainable resolution.

In times of economic uncertainty, it is crucial to prioritize social dialogue, social justice and the protection of workers' rights. The ITUC remains committed to standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our affiliate and all workers in Tunisia and around the world.
In solidarity,

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