

EPSU Congress calls on Turkish President to take 'immediate steps' to release 24 arrested trade unionists

The 8th EPSU Congress have sent a letter to the President of Turkey, **Mr Abdullah Gül**, expressing serious concern about the the arrest of the 24 members of the **KESK Confederation** on 31 May 2009. A Declaration of Solidarity adopted by the 550 participants in the 8th Congress of the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) in Brussels, called on the President to take '*immediate steps*' to release the arrested trade unionists.

Full text of the declaration:

SOLIDARITY WITH KESK CONFEDERATION - TURKEY DECLARATION BY THE 8TH EPSU CONGRESS

(9 June 2009, Brussels) On behalf of the 8th Congress of the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), the European federation representing over 8 million workers in the public services in Europe, we express our concerns in relation to the police assaults against the offices of **KESK confederation** in April and May this year and *the taking into custody of 43 members of the confederation, of whom 24 have been placed under arrest.*

The houses and the workplaces of the people detained by the police were searched and their belongings confiscated, including documents addressed to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), as well as official letters sent to the Turkish authorities.

The police proceedings were made in violation of the Turkish Constitution and the Code of Criminal Procedures, in the absence of the public prosecutor, as required by law.

EPSU urges the Turkish government to respect its obligations under the ILO Conventions 87 and 98 ratified by Turkey, to ensure workers' rights to freedom of

association and their right to organize.

EPSU calls upon the Turkish government to secure the immediate release of the union members arrested by the police and to take the adequate measures to guarantee the right of the trade unions to carry out legitimate activities aimed at protecting their members' rights.

EPSU will follow the situation closely and will inform the European institutions of the progress made in solving this case of violation of trade union rights.

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