



Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
Başbakanlık, 06573 Ankara, Turkey

CC: Ms. Ayşe Sinirlioğlu, Turkish Ambassador to Spain.
Mr. Cristóbal González-Aller Jurado, Spanish Ambassador to Turkey
Mr. Selim Yenel, ambassador. Permanent Delegate of Turkey to the EU
Mr. Jean-Maurice Ripert, ambassador. Head of Delegation of the EU to Turkey

Madrid, 22nd January, 2014

Dear Prime Minister,

I contact you on behalf of the **Federation of Public Services of the General Workers' Union of Spain (FSP-UGT)**, to strongly denounce the attacks against trade unions and trade union activists that your go government are carry on, as well as the abuse of the Turkish legal and judicial system by the authorities, an abuse that hinders the trade union movement and in particular the **Confederation of Public Sector Workers' Unions (KESK)**, an ITUC and ETUC affiliate.

In January, the ITUC and the ETUC –confederations FSP-UGT are member of- are joining the international trade union delegations attending the court hearings of cases targeting members of KESK.

On January 13th, the first hearing of the case of 502 persons –one of the highest number of defendants ever tried– including the President and General Secretary of KESK and other KESK members, was hold in Ankara Kızılay. The charges caused damage to public properties and using inappropriate violence during a strike and demonstration on 28-29 March 2012 in Ankara. This demonstration attended by thousands of public employees aimed to protest the draft law No. 4688 on Public Employees Trade Unions and a draft amendment to the Law on Education. The police ended the demonstration violently. As a result of the police attack, two demonstrators were severely wounded. A complaint was lodged against the police officers for the damages caused by their violent attack but no criminal proceeding has been launched.

On 23-24 January, the first hearing of a lawsuit against KESK's members and leaders will be held in Istanbul. They were arrested during a police raid carried out 19th February 2013 in the whole country. The police raided the headquarters of the public sector union in Ankara and searched KESK's members' residence as well as the public buildings, schools, clinics and offices where they work. Overall, more than 150 persons were arrested on that day, and 28 of them are kept in prisons pending trials in Istanbul. Court hearings had already



been heard in Adana, Bursa, Ismir and Malatya often leading to the release pending trials of unionists detained for months.

The repression of the trade union movement through constant intimidation, harassment and repression of trade unions leaders and activities has been increasing in Turkey since 2008. Trade union rights violations in Turkey have regularly been put on the agenda of the annual International Labour Conference in Geneva.

FSP-UGT calls your Government to **immediately release all the union members** arrested under unproven connections to illegal organizations, to **lift all bans on meetings and demonstrations** and also calls Turkey to abide by its European and international obligations to secure the human and trade union rights and freedoms of its workers.

The European Union, its citizens and trade unions, cannot and will not accept that a strategic ally and potential member as Turkey violates the international agreements on trade union rights, liberty of demonstration and, certainly, human rights. FSP-UGT will be vigilant of the development of these trials, the reaction of your government, your bans on demonstration rights, trade union freedom, and violence against our Turkish sisters and brothers, and will actively work within ETUC to **urge the different bodies of the European Union to stop any procedure with Turkey** until the freedom of Turkish workers is reestablished, respected, and protected. The FSP-UGT avails itself of its relations to the Spanish government and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation to denounce the situation, and to **question the convenience of supporting the Turkish candidacy for the United Nations Security Council for 2015-2016.**

I sincerely trust that your Government will act swiftly on these requests, and that Turkey will regain the close friendship and alliance to Spain, its people and its workers.

Sincerely yours,

Comisión Ejecutiva Federal
Julio Lacuerda Castelló
Secretary General, FSP-UGT
Vice-president, PSI