

President

John Hendy QC
Lawyer, UK

Vice Presidents

Kurshid Ahmed
General Secretary, All Pakistan
Workers Confederation

Professor Jan Buelens
Advocaat, Progress Lawyers'
Network, Belgium

Dr. Anita Chan
Academic, Australia

Dr. Ericson Crivelli
Advogado, Crivelli Advogados
Associados, Brazil

Professor Keith Ewing
Academic lawyer, UK

Fathi El-Fadl
Director, Trade Union Rights
Centre (independent NGO), Sudan

Esther Lynch
Confederal Secretary,
European Trade Union
Confederation

Lornts Nagelhus,
Advokat, LO Norway

Yoshikazu Odagawa,
Secretary General,
Zenroren, Japan

Jeffrey Sack QC
Lawyer, Canada

Jitendra Sharma
Senior Advocate,
Supreme Court of India

Jeff Sissons,
General Counsel,
New Zealand Council
of Trade Unions

Surya Tjandra,
Lawyer and Director of the
Trade Union Rights Centre,
Indonesia

Ozlem Yildirim,
Policy Officer,
International Department
CGT France

Director

Daniel Blackburn, MA,
barrister

Researcher

Ciaran Cross, MA



International Centre for Trade Union Rights

Centro Internacional para los Derechos Sindicales
Centre International pour les Droits Syndicaux

Address: 177 Abbeville Road, London SW4 9RL , UK
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7498 4700
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7498 0611
E-mail: ictur@ictur.org
Web: www.ictur.org

ICTUR was founded
to defend and extend trade union rights
and to raise awareness of these rights
and their violations around the world

By e-mail: mauriciomacri@argentina.gob.ar and
jorgetriaca@argentina.gob.ar

November 2016

Attn: Mauricio Macri
President of the Argentine Republic

CC: Jorge Triaca
Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Security

Dominique Marlet, Senior Coordinator Trade Union and Human Rights
Education International, Belgium

Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República
Argentina

Central de los Trabajadores Argentinos

Dear President Macri,

The International Centre for Trade Union Rights is writing to express its concern about two recent incidents of police harassment – and an apparently related incident of violence - against local teaching unions FGDB and SUTEBA.

ICTUR understands that in the early hours of 16 November workers for a street-posting company, who were putting up posters on behalf of the Buenos Aires teachers' union FGDB, were intimidated and attacked in the city of La Plata. They were initially approached by officers understood to belong to the Buenos Aires police, and were subsequently beaten by a six-man gang who arrived at the scene in several vehicles. The workers complain that their mobile phones were broken.

The following day, in the city of Santa Teresita, members of the Buenos Aires police took up a position at the entrance of a school where the teachers' union SUTEBA was holding a meeting, chaired by its General Secretary, Roberto Baradel.

Fundamental rights – especially those relating to human life and personal safety – must be fully respected and in order to guarantee the principles of freedom of association, enshrined in the International Labour Organisation Convention 98, which Argentina has ratified. According to the ILO's Committee on Freedom of Association the rights of workers can only be 'exercised in a climate that is free from violence, pressure or threats of any kind against the leaders and members of these organizations, and it is for governments to ensure that this principle is respected' (*Digest of decisions and principles of the Freedom of Association Committee of the Governing Body of the ILO*, Fifth Edition, 2006, paras. 42-45). The Committee has further noted that an independent judicial inquiry should be instituted immediately to investigate assaults on the physical or moral integrity of individuals, in order to determine responsibility, punish those responsible and prevent repetition (*ILO Digest*, paras. 46, 50, 184, 191). Failure to hold guilty parties to account creates a culture of impunity, 'which reinforces the climate of violence and insecurity, and which is extremely damaging to the exercise of trade union rights' (*ILO Digest*, para. 52).

ICTUR calls on the authorities to investigate these incidents, to take steps to prevent further incidents of police harassment, to offer assurances to the unions concerned, and to ensure that the reported violence is dealt with effectively by the appropriate criminal processes. It is the responsibility of the State to undertake all necessary measures to ensure the protection of the fundamental right of workers to join and form unions and to take action in defence of their interests without fear of harassment.

ICTUR will report these incidents in the journal *International Union Rights*, which was established in 1993, and which enjoys a readership in more than 100 countries.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Blackburn', followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel Blackburn, Director