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Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali

Prime Minister

Somalia

Cc:

H.E. Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed

Tuesday, 20th December 2011

O/R.: 1162/2011/SG/RB

Dear Sir,

INTIMIDATION OF UNION LEADERS

The African Regional Organization of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) representing over 16 million workers in 48 countries on the continent wishes to express grave concern over the harassment and intimidation of union leaders in Somalia.

Information reaching us indicates that one of the leaders of the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ), Abdiqani Sheik Mohamed was summoned at the CID in Mogadishu for interrogation.

This is subsequent to a previous raid, which was carried out on the morning of 13 November 2011, where secret police invaded the offices of NUSOJ in Mogadishu without a warrant, and briefly detained Abdiqani Sheik Mohamed, Organising Secretary of NUSOJ.

Two police officers armed with pistols entered the union offices and arrested Abdiqani, taking him to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) headquarters and detaining him 90 minutes.

The harassment and intimidation of trade unions and their officers to freely carry out their duties in Somalia are becoming rampant and worrisome. These infringe on the fundamental human rights guaranteed and secured by international and regional statutes such as the United Nations 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' as well as the 'African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights'.

Trade unionists being advocates for human and workers' rights deserve conditions under which they can carry out their duties freely.

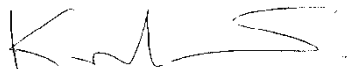
The arrest of Abdiqani Sheik Mohamed against whom no charge is brought is a clear violation of freedom of association, and we appeal to the government to put an end to this.

In effect, ITUC-Africa calls on the TGF to:

- Put an end to the harassment and intimidation of union leaders in the country, particularly the leaders of the National Union of Somali Journalists.
- Provide a conducive environment free and fair for trade unionists to carry out their duties
- Drop all charges and criminal investigations against NUSOJ and its leaders, including Abdiqani Sheik Mohamed

We hope your honourable government will favourably consider our appeal and provide trade unions a more democratic atmosphere to operate in.

Yours Sincerely,



Kwasi Adu-Amankwah
General Secretary