

Dear Prime Minister Saad Eddin Othmani,

I am writing to you as a member of the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) to express my concern about Morocco's draft law attacking the right to strike as well about your government's failure to engage in constructive dialogue on what is currently a very negative environment for workers in your country. The Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT)'s transport members are affiliated to the ITF and under the chairmanship of its Secretary-General, Miloudi Moukharik, the UMT has recently expressed serious concerns about the atmosphere of unprecedented frustration and tension caused by unpopular government policies and by successive attacks on trade union rights by the authorities.

I understand that trade union rights violations are being perpetuated in all areas and that across the private sector and public sectors as government policies have undermined the purchasing power of the workers, freezing wages and disrupting social dialogue. Given this background it is doubly concerning that your government is attempting to implement a draft law that would limit the constitutional right to strike and bind unions to negotiations in a manner that would make the exercise of this key right impossible, as well as interfere in the internal affairs of trade unions. This is contrary to the core labour standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). I note that on 24 February a national strike organised by the UMT together with other national unions received strong backing from workers and the public throughout the country. My union, as part of the ITF family, with its 670 member unions worldwide, adds its own backing to that impressive challenge.

Prime Minister, I am sure you also understand that such demonstrations are likely to continue whilst the government's approach to industrial relations remains so negative. In the interests of peaceful social and economic progress I would therefore urge you to withdraw the draft proposals to limit the right to strike and sponsor a round of good-faith negotiations aimed to address the very legitimate concerns of Morocco's workers.

Thank you for your attention. I would be very grateful to hear your opinion on this matter.

Yours sincerely