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The Honourable Carrie Lam
Chief Executive of Hong Kong
Office of the Chief Executive
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
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Sharan Burrow

General Secretary
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HTUR/MW

28 February 2020

Arrest of Lee Cheuk Yan, General Secretary of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU)

Dear Chief Executive Carrie Lam,

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) representing 207 million members globally and the ITUC-Asia Pacific condemn the arrests of Lee Cheuk Yan, General Secretary of our affiliate, the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) and two other democrats, Yeung Sum and Jimmy Lai. Lee, Yeung and Lai face charges of 'unlawful assembly' for their participation in the public rally on 31 August 2019 to oppose the extradition bill amendment.

By now 7,000 protesters have been arrested by the police for unlawful assemblies and rioting associated with the anti-extradition bill protests. Eighty per cent of these cases are still under investigation in a bid to intimidate and judicially harass the arrestees from exercising their lawful rights and fundamental freedoms.

The UN Human Rights Committee has repeatedly urged the Hong Kong government to revoke the prior notification to public assemblies and excessive restrictions under the Hong Kong Public Order Ordinance for contravention with Art. 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). In its most recent report, the Committee of Experts of the International Labour Organisation has taken note of the trend of anti-union dismissals faced by employees when they took part in public protests¹.

We regret that the government of Hong Kong continues to act in ways contrary to the fundamental human rights standards recognised internationally. We urge the Hong Kong government to respect the people's right to freedom of assembly and to:

1. Drop all criminal charges against Lee Cheuk Yan, Yeung Sum and Jimmy Lai and all the peaceful protesters associated with the anti-extradition bill protests;
2. Lift all restrictions on peaceful assemblies and ensure that peaceful assemblies can be conducted without police interference

¹ Application of International Labour Standards 2020, Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, International Labour Organisations, p.102, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_norm/--relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_736204.pdf

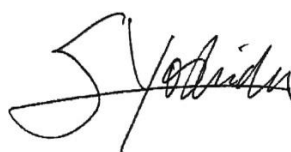
3. Stop anti-union discrimination and unfair dismissals and ensuring re-instatement of the workers affected
4. Stop arresting and prosecuting people who participate in peaceful assemblies
5. Establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate human rights violations, including excessive police violence and arbitrary detentions.

We look forward to your urgent intervention and wish to be kept informed of the measures taken to address these matters.

Yours sincerely,



Sharan Burrow
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ITUC



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