

Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions
Palestine - Ramallah



الاتحاد العام لنقابات عمال فلسطين
فلسطين - رام الله

Date: 25/05/2016

Sharan Burrow
General Secretary
International Trade Union Confederation

Subject: Our appeal against the General Conference of the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) and its results, on grounds of failure to meet legal requirements as per PGFTU Constitution

Dear Sister Sharan Burrow,

We, the undersigned federations and trade unions affiliated to PGFTU, would like to inform you that we have withdrawn from PGFTU's Fifth General Conference, which has taken place on 16/04/2016, for the following reasons:

1. Violation of article 16, paragraph 1, of PGFTU's Constitution, which stipulates the following:
"The general conference shall be constituted of delegates of the general trade unions, which are elected by their conferences, the general secretary, members of the general secretariat and the executive committee. It is the highest authority in the general federation and its resolutions shall be binding for all union leaders and bodies"

We were surprised by the participation of a great number of delegates with no representative or trade union status in the general conference, who were involved as representatives of their political parties and factions. We were also surprised by the prior agreement reached between the general secretary of PGFTU and political parties and factions about the names of their delegates that would occupy positions in the new executive committee and the general secretariat.

2. Violation of point "k" of article 16, paragraph 3, of PGFTU's Constitution, which stipulates that: "The general secretary, general secretariat and executive committee of PGFTU shall be elected through secret ballot or public vote".

Regrettably, we were denied the right to nominate ourselves for these positions and to elect our representatives in the governing bodies of PGFTU. The matter is all the more serious, since we are real trade unions with actual membership and representatives elected by our members. As we mentioned previously, everything had been arranged in advance, which prevented the holding of democratic and free elections. The members of the new so-called executive committee and general secretariat were chosen among representatives of political parties.

3. Clear violation of article 12 of the PGFTU constitution regarding affiliation and membership fees

A paragraph of this article stipulates that the executive committee shall not be entitled to exempt any member trade union from paying membership fees, partially or fully. Another paragraph stipulates that "If a member trade union does not pay its specific membership fees in a regular manner, before the general conference is convened, this trade union becomes an

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observer and is not entitled to nominate itself to the membership of the executive committee or to vote in the elections during the general conference, provided the executive committee informs it in writing a month prior to the general conference"

None of the trade unions, which participated in the Fifth General Conference of PGFTU, have paid their membership over the past years, and we challenge the general secretary or the financial department to prove otherwise.

4. Neither the general secretary nor the general secretariat have distributed the narrative and financial reports to members prior to the conference, so that we may exercise our right to discuss them. This is another serious matter, particularly since we have raised a great number of comments concerning the financial management of PGFTU, lack of oversight of expenditures and lack of abidance with the financial regulations, which in our view has led to misuse of funds and caused an accumulation of debts and receivables from members of the executive committee and general secretariat.

5. Clear violation of article 31 of the chapter 13, which requires the formation of committees prior to the general conference of PGFTU

Article 31 stipulates the following "The following committees shall be formed by decision from the general secretary after review of the general secretariat:

- a. Membership approval committee
- b. Nomination committee (constituted of members, who are not nominating themselves for election)
- c. Financial committee (to examine and adopt the financial recommendations of the conference)
- d. Regulations and laws committee
- e. Strategy committee
- f. Committee for appeals and membership audit, which should be constituted of members, who are not nominating themselves for election

We have submitted a complaint to the Palestinian Ministry of Labor to contest the constitutionality of the fifth general conference and its results, and another complaint to the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission with the aim of protecting the funds of PGFTU and prevent their use for purposes that violate the PGFTU Constitution and its financial regulations.

We would like to request the formation of an impartial commission of inquiry by the International Trade Union Confederation, so that we may place in their hands all the information that we have mentioned above, in addition to documents that support our allegations of misuse of funds over the years.

We pledge to our Sisters and Brothers at the International Trade Union Confederation that we will pursue our struggle to rebuild our trade union federation in Palestine on a democratic basis, in a manner that will guarantee the right of trade unionists to nominate themselves for election and elect their representatives in a free and democratic manner, and that we continue our struggle to promote good governance and transparency at all levels.

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Long live our trade union struggle! Long live the unity of the trade union movement.

Signatories:



نقابة العاملين في الخدمات البريدية - دولة فلسطين
PPSWU



نقابة العاملين بجرته جوال (Jawwal)

النقابة العامة لعطاي المياه



نقابة المياه
فلسطين
2016/5/25

نقابة المحاسبين الفلسطينيين



نقابة البنوك والمصارف



نقابة العاملين في شركة الكهرباء
2016/5/26