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Public Services International calls on Korea's President-elect to recognize the KGEU and reinstate dismissed employees

President-elect Park Guenhye,

On behalf of 20 million public sector workers around the world, who are members of our global union federation, Public Services International (PSI), I call upon the Korean government to immediately stop attacking workers' and trade union rights. We support the Korean Government Employees' Union (KGEU) and its leader, Kim Junnam, in their call for the protection of trade union rights, the right to freedom of association and the reinstatement of 137 trade union members who were dismissed because of their affiliation to the KGEU.

The main demands of the KGEU are for the normalization of labour relations in the government sector and need for improvement of working conditions, freedom of association and trade union rights. PSI would once more like to remind the government of Korea of its obligation under international law deriving from its membership of the ILO to respect core labour standards, including the right to freedom of association.

Kim Junnam launched a hunger strike in the streets of Seoul outside the offices of the Presidential transition committee on 15th January 2013. Kim Junnam has vowed to continue his hunger strike until these issues are resolved.

The Korean Government Employees' Union (KGEU) held a New Year rally on 19th January 2013, at Seoul Square, supported by KGEU officials and members. In that rally, KGEU declared its commitment to its demands to the President-elect once more.

We call upon President-elect Park Guenhye to commit to the basic human and labour rights that public workers are entitled to, recognize the KGEU, and reinstate the dismissed workers. This would be a signal of hope that will pave the way for a renewed dialogue and normalization of labour relations in the public sector in Korea.

Sincerely,

Rosa Pavanelli
PSI General Secretary