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ETUCE – European Trade Union Committee for Education
Education International - European Region

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Brussels, 12 July 2024
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To: Mr Yusuf Tekin, Minister for National Education of the Republic of Turkey (MEB)
(abdigm@meb.gov.tr)

Cc: Mr Kemal Irmak, President of the Education and Science Workers' Union of
Turkey (Eđitim Sen) (international@egitimsen.org.tr)

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Solidarity with the ETUCE member organisation Eđitim Sen

Dear Minister,

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 123 education trade unions, encompassing over 11 million teachers and other education personnel across all levels of education in Europe. As a recognised European Social Partner for education at the EU level and a European Trade Union Federation within the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), ETUCE stands as the European Region of Education International (EI), the global federation of education trade unions.

With this letter, ETUCE expresses its unwavering solidarity with its member organisation in Turkey, the Education and Science Workers' Union of Turkey (Eđitim Sen), amidst the ongoing protests against the newly proposed Teaching Profession Law. This law, introduced by the Ministry of National Education (MEB) without consulting trade unions and education workers, poses significant threats to the teaching profession, undermining job security and professional dignity.

Eđitim Sen has been conducting a peaceful sit-in protest in front of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey to voice their legitimate concerns and opposition to this draft law. It is their democratic right to protest and to demand a law that reflects the true needs and aspirations of teachers. However, on July 9, 2024, Eđitim Sen members, including central executive members and branch executives, were subjected to severe police violence and wrongful detention.

ETUCE strongly condemns these actions of police brutality and the suppression of democratic rights. Such acts are unacceptable and a serious violation of fundamental human rights. We call on the Turkish government to cease these unlawful actions immediately and to respect the rights of teachers to peaceful protest and assembly.



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The new Teaching Profession Law, currently under debate in the parliament, raises numerous concerns. It disregards the professional training provided by faculties of education, introduces arbitrary measures threatening job security, and lacks transparency and fairness in its proposed processes. This draft law does not address the pressing issues faced by education workers and instead appears to be a tool for political control and discrimination.

ETUCE supports Eđitim Sen's demands for a fair, inclusive, and consultative process in the formulation of any professional law affecting teachers. A genuine professional law should be based on the ILO-UNESCO 'Recommendation on the Status of Teachers' and should aim to improve the economic, democratic, and personal rights of all education workers. It should uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work and ensure the protection of existing rights. As stated in the Recommendation, "Teachers should enjoy academic freedom and the material conditions necessary for the proper performance of their functions" ([International Labour Organization](#)).

We urge the Ministry of National Education (MEB) to listen to the voices of teachers and engage in a meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders to create a law that genuinely supports and enhances the teaching profession. ETUCE stands ready to support Eđitim Sen and its members in their struggle for justice, dignity, and professional respect.

Yours sincerely,



Larry Flanagan
ETUCE President