



TÜRKİYE GIDA SANAYİİ İŞÇİLERİ SENDİKASI
FOOD INDUSTRY WORKERS' UNION TURKEY

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Comments on PMI's reply to BHHRC

Dear Ralf Zysk,

Firstly, you point out that these workers are employed by Euroserve, and you therefore directed us to raise our protest with their employer instead of with PMI. However, the dismissed workers' "only and exclusively" worked at the PMI factory. They receive work-related instructions from PMI managers, not from Euroserve. Some have been working in the same factory for 15-20 years. They are involved not only in ancillary work but also in production. They produce cigarettes for Philip Morris brands like Marlboro, Parliament etc.

Secondly, you claim to have no knowledge of any individual's trade union membership status and that this information is protected by Turkish law. This is contradicted by claims from the workers themselves that managers are conducting interviews on the factory floor to ascertain which workers are trade union members and who is responsible for trade union recruitment.

Your third point is a denial that any workers have been targeted for their union membership, and yet the four workers transferred from the factory were all trade union representatives. Their removal follows a pattern of behaviour by management sacking or transferring trade union representatives both before and after the triggering of this dispute.

Your letter then dismisses the protests as illegal activity, but as far as we are aware there have been no evidence, police reports, or even internal disciplinary hearings attesting to this. Conversely, we have had reports that protesting workers were denied access to facilities including fresh water and toilets.

Your final point dismisses even the possibility that PMI should engage with DİSK/Gıda-İş in any way, directly contradicting the opening claim of the same letter, which states PMI is committed to respecting the right of employees to form or join trade unions of their choice.

The workers at PMI have done so, and they are members of DİSK/Gıda-İş. DİSK is a legitimate trade union organization. It is an affiliate of ITUC and ETUC. It is a member of many constitutional institutions, such as Turkey's Economic and Social Council. You refer to Turkish trade union laws - however, several these laws are contrary to ILO conventions. ILO committees and EU bodies have issued numerous reports calling on Turkey to amend these laws. Indeed, even without government authorization, trade unions can consult, bargain, and reach agreements with employers under Article 90 of the Turkish Constitution and ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

PMI advertises itself as a business where 'everyone is treated with fairness and respect.' The treatment of these workers is not only outside of ILO conventions as well the Turkish constitution but also outside of the commitments the company has publically made towards its workforce.

We therefore repeat our request to PMI that you intervene swiftly and decisively to end this wholly unnecessary breakdown in industrial relations, reinstate the sacked workers, and commit to good faith engagement with their chosen independent trade union going forward.

Sincerely yours



Seyit Aslan
President