



FDT025-2011

Brussels, 6 September 2011

Mr. Karel De Gucht  
EU Trade Commissioner  
European Commission  
Policy Coordination Unit – trade 01  
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium  
By mail: Karel.DE-GUCHT@ec.europa.eu

**Subject: violation of fundamental trade union rights at the Moldovan sugar factory AO  
“Glodeni-Zahar”.**

Dear Mr. De Gucht,

We thank you for your reply of 30 June 2011 to our letter of 23 May 2011 informing you of our profound concerns regarding the serious breach of fundamental trade union rights occurring at Moldova’s Glodeni-Zahar sugar factory and the failure of the government of Moldova to effectively implement Convention 87 on freedom of association, one of the fundamental human right standards associated with Regulation 55/2008, as per Annex II.

In your letter, you mention that there are have not been active cases before the ILO’s Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA) involving Moldova on violations of ILO’s C. 87 since 1985.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Government of Moldova actually has been – and continues to be – the subject of cases involving serious violations of freedom of association submitted to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association in the recent years. Case No. 2317, which the Committee regards as one of the most serious cases of the last decade, is open and ongoing. In its reports on this case, (335, 342, 348, 350), the CFA’s conclusions consistently note the government’s failure to address the issues in the complaint, the absence of an investigation into specific allegations of government interference into internal trade union affairs and the government’s failure to amend its legislation in line with the Committee’s recommendations. For these reasons, the case, which was submitted by a number of trade union organisations in Moldova (including the ITUC, IUF, PSI and Moldovan unions) is still open. The ILO Committee has also stressed that the case of Moldova concerns insufficient protection of trade union rights in law and in practice.

The Office of the ILO’s Director General was sufficiently alarmed at the escalation of government attacks on trade union rights shown by the criminal charges against the Glodeni unionists that on May 19, 2011 it conveyed its concerns directly to the authorities through an informal intervention. This action, and the ongoing case at the CFA, should be seen as sufficient evidence that freedom of association in Moldova, including in the sugar industry, is far from secure.



**EFFAT** EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

This is why we are reiterating our most serious concerns about this situation and we urge you to take action on this case. If Moldova is to comply with Regulation 55/2008, the criminal charges against the five Glodeni-Zahar sugar factory trade union leaders and activists for their trade union activity must be immediately and unconditionally dropped.

I also take this opportunity to share with you the following documents that provide additional information and background to this case.

- Letter sent by John Monks, General Secretary, ETUC, to Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, on 11 March 2011
- Letter sent by the Glodeni Zahar Union Chairman Vasile Guelac to Karen Curtis, Deputy Director of the International Labour Standards Department of the ILO on 26 August 2011

I look forward to hearing from you and remain

Yours sincerely,

Harald Wiedenhofer  
General Secretary  
EFFAT

CC: Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission (by mail: [Catherine.ashton@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Catherine.ashton@ec.europa.eu) ; [Beverly.tempest@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Beverly.tempest@ec.europa.eu))  
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