

CAS Ethiopia

Ethiopia-case

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Chair, I will speak on behalf of trade unions in the Nordic countries.

The right to organize is a key element of the ILO Convention. Most importantly, being organized in a trade union gives workers a sense of belonging, representation and legitimacy. It is sad that Ethiopia, under its Labour Laws preclude several workers from exercising their fundamental rights to be organized because their work is termed as “essential services”. This applies to transport workers, air transport and urban bus services.

Sadly, we note that civil servants, such as teachers in public schools, employees of the state administration, care workers, judges, prosecutors, and managerial workers do not enjoy the right to organize. It is unfortunate that despite earlier promises by the Government, teachers are still not registered nor recognized as a trade union.

Chair, all Nordic workers enjoy the right to form and join trade unions of their choice and the right to bargain collectively. This includes workers in the public sector such as transport workers, teachers, police, prison staff and armed forces as well as those in the private sector, including the important economic petroleum sector. They all have the right to strike. We are aware that there are countries on the African continent which have unionized public sector workers. We would encourage the government to share experiences with these countries.

Accordingly, we urge Government to take necessary measures to ensure immediate registration of NTA, so that teachers can fully exercise their right to form organizations of their choice and defend teachers’ rights. We further urge the Government to re-visit and re-assess the “essential services” policy.

Thank you.