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| Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS  telephone: 020 7636 4030 [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk/)  General Secretary: *Frances O’Grady* Deputy General Secretary: *Paul Nowak* |  |
| Ambassador David Concar  British Embassy  Mogadishu  Somalia | date: 05 June 2017  contact: Tanya Warlock  direct line: 0207 467 1307  email: twarlock@tuc.org.uk |

Dear Ambassador Concar

Accusations and threats of criminal prosecution towards trade unionists

On behalf of the TUC and nearly six million British trade union members, I would like to express my concern over the unwarranted criminal accusations being directed towards the Secretary-General of the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ), Omar Faruk Osman.

He was summoned to appear before the Attorney General’s Office for interrogation on 31 May for organising *“on 3 May the commemoration of World Press Freedom Day without approval of the Ministry of Information”* and *"issuing on 6 May an abusive statement, as NUSOJ, which offended and defamed the minister of information of the federal government of Somalia, and was widely disseminated"*, according to a letter from the attorney general's office.

It is no secret that Somalia continues to be regarded by many as the most dangerous place in Africa for trade union activity with its systematic use of unjustifiable anti-union action. The TUC rejects the suggestion that holding a World Press Freedom Day celebration and criticising the minister's policies should be subject to criminal sanction and we urge you to press the Somali Government, specifically the Minister of Information, to stop these continued anti-union activities against Mr Osman and the NUSOJ.

Indeed we would urge you on behalf of HMG, to call upon the federal government of Somalia to fully respect the right of freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly, to end attacks on the independent trade union movement and to drop the accusations and threats of criminal prosecution levelled against Omar Faruk Osman.

It is of no coincidence that these acts of intimidation took place directly before the International Labour Organisation’s June 2017 International Labour Conference which is currently taking place and has previously [expressed concern](http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/de/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11110:0::NO::P11110_COUNTRY_ID,P11110_CONTEXT:103244,SC) about the actions of the Somali Government with respect to trade union Freedom of Association.

I look forward to receiving confirmation from you that our concerns have been conveyed by you to the Somali government.

Yours sincerely

**FRANCES O’GRADY**

General Secretary