



Trades Union Congress

HE Mr Joonkook Hwang  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Republic of Korea  
60 Buckingham Gate  
London  
SW1E 6AJ

date: 07 July 2017

Dear Ambassador

### **Immediate Release of Han Sang-gyun, President of Korean Confederation of Trade Unions**

On behalf of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) and almost 6 million members of our affiliated unions and British workers, I urge you to convey our demand for the immediate release of Han Sang-gyun, President of Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). We make this call in association with the International Trade Union Confederation.

We are concerned that Han Sang-gyun is still serving a 3-year sentence given by the previous Park-Guen-hye government for organising public demonstrations for workers' rights despite the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention declaring on 25 April that the imprisonment was arbitrary and recommending Han's immediate release.

We take note of the commitments His Excellency Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, has made to restore labour rights and dignity for working people in Korea and redress the human rights abuses of the previous government including compliance of the administration with human rights standards, and the review of the policies of the police on demonstrations.

These commitments will not be meaningful if Han Sang-gyun continues to remain imprisoned for exercising fundamental civil and trade union rights which Korea is obliged by international agreements to respect. In 1996, the Republic of Korea agreed upon its entry to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 'to reform existing laws on industrial relations in line with internationally accepted standards, including those concerning basic rights such as freedom of association and collective bargaining.' The Korean government also affirmed it would effectively implement the ILO convention on freedom of association and the other ILO core conventions when it signed the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement in 2010.

Releasing Han Sang-gyun would demonstrate the government under HE Moon Jae-in's leadership was committed to these international obligations and restoring justice.

I look forward to hearing that our call for the immediate release of President Han has been conveyed to your government.

Yours sincerely

**FRANCES O'GRADY**  
General Secretary