

8 January 2014

## Australian workers show solidarity with Korean Unions

Australian workers are today taking part in a global show of support for Korean union members facing ongoing attacks by their Government.

Last month the Korean Railway Workers Union (KRWU) began a strike to stop the privatisation of the Suseo KTX line which resulted in 4,600 riot police and 900 SWAT Squad raiding the headquarters of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU).

Workers have since returned to work after an agreement was reached with ruling and opposition national assembly members that allows the KRWU to participate in an advisory capacity on a newly created 'sub-committee on the development of the rail industry' under the Korean National Assembly Committee on Land, Infrastructure and Transport.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said around 100,000 people protested in the streets of Seoul against privatisation and repression of unions and now union members around the world are showing support for their Korean counterparts.

"Australian Union members stand by Korean workers and call on the Korean Government to respect their right to representation," Ms Kearney said.

"Ten thousand workers maintained a 23 day strike to protect the railways - and their jobs, yet in response police raided union headquarters, have warrants out for 35 union leaders and hundreds of workers have been dismissed for their involvement in the strike.

"While Australian Unions welcome the settlement with the Korean Government that has ended the strike we remain concerned by the Government's attitude towards the Korean Labour Movement.

"We want to see the Korean Government enter into dialogue in good faith and cease the repression of trade unionists.

"The International Labour Movement will continue to monitor the situation closely, in particular the continued repression of trade unionists."

Korean Unions have called for Solidarity Actions by Unions worldwide outside Korean Embassies to protest the repression of Unions in Korea.

We are asking all members of unions and supporters of human rights to join the protest outside the **Korean Embassy, 636 St Kilda Road, TODAY (Wednesday 8 January) at 12.30 pm.**

**Media contact: Carla De Campo, 0410 579 575**