

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy
The Presidential Office of Ukraine
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Dear President Zelenskyy

Anti-worker law 5371

The Australian Union movement stands with the people of Ukraine in condemning the Russian invasion and calling for peace. We have joined the international trade union movement's response to the crisis, including contributing to fundraising efforts to support Ukrainian workers, and the Australian Government has sent a clear message of solidarity with Ukraine which includes the provision of humanitarian assistance. The Australian Union movement is deeply concerned, however, to hear that the Ukrainian Parliament adopted draconian Draft Law 5371 on 19 July 2022, which will undermine rights for 94% of Ukrainian workers.

Law 5371 will deprive workers in enterprises employing up to 250 employees labour rights, impacting the vast majority of workers in Ukraine. Our sister unions in the Ukraine – the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine (FPU) and the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine (KVPU) – condemn this draft law, noting it will result in effective abolition of important labour rights and protections safeguarding workers against the arbitrary actions of employers, cases of which have become more frequent in the current situation of war and economic downturn. The implementation of this law will result in unfair dismissals, excessive overtime work, undermining of collective agreements, and will jeopardise workers' ability to organise – in violation of International Labour Standards.

We join Ukrainian and global unions in condemning two other draft bills (No. 6420 and 6421) that have moved forward which would enable the confiscation of properties owned by the FPU, which have housed some 300,000 internally displaced persons and continue to provide accommodation for internally displaced people and vital humanitarian assistance for workers and their families who have lost everything and are on the front lines resisting the Russian invasion.

These anti-worker laws are opposed by our sister unions in Ukraine, but with workers busy fighting the Russian invasion and unions focused on humanitarian work and keeping the country running, the state of emergency prevents them from publicly mobilising against these attacks on workers' rights.

We call on you to exercise your Presidential powers to veto Law 5371, withdraw draft laws 6420 and 6421, and replace anti-worker laws with measures which would increase the security of workers and enable them and their families to survive the devastation of war and build a stronger Ukraine.

Yours sincerely



Michele O'Neil

President

CC:

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