

## **Young trade unionists from South Asia extend solidarity to Sri Lankan workers**

We, the young activists from 25 South Asian trade union federations affiliated to IndustriALL Global Union, stand in solidarity with Sri Lankan workers who are currently facing an unprecedented economic crisis.

We are deeply concerned about the crisis unfolding in Sri Lanka and the vulnerability of the workers some of whom are currently surviving on just one meal a day. High inflation, job loss, wage theft, unavailability of essential items including food has made the situation in the country very grim.

Unsustainable borrowings, poorly planned investments, balance of payment problems, a corrupt political system, global rise in oil prices, and Covid 19 which led to the current crisis, as well as weak labour laws, unfair labour practices, preventing unionization of workforce and non-payment of living wages have all contributed to the appalling condition of the working class in the country.

Amid an unfathomable crisis, we're hearing alarming reports that international brands and local suppliers with factory presence in South Asian countries and are shifting their manufacturing bases from Sri Lanka to other Asian countries and diverting orders. Drawing from the experiences during the COVID-19 crisis, when international brands with manufacturing factories in South Asia, arbitrarily cancelled orders thereby leaving millions of workers unemployed overnight, we are deeply concerned about the high human cost in the form of unemployment, destitution, and starvation of the workers in the export sector in Sri Lanka when brands and local suppliers pull out of the country.

We demand that international Brands do not pull out, cancel, or divert orders, and continue to invest in jobs in Sri Lanka. We demand that local suppliers do not close production operations in Sri Lanka.

We stand united with Sri Lankan working class in their struggle to reclaim their rights in the face of the island country's current economic and political crises.

15.06.2022