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Brussels, Geneva and Stockholm 17 September 2015

## Solidarity with Finnish unions fighting proposed anti-union legislation

Dear Colleagues,

We, the three federations in the construction and wood sectors, are writing to you requesting letters of support and solidarity for the Finnish unions, facing one of the biggest challenges to the trade union movement in Finland.

The Finnish trade unions strongly reject the plans of the Finnish right-wing coalition government to unilaterally cut pay and benefits negotiated through collective bargaining. The Finnish unions are asking for international solidarity and support.

On September 9, after unions refused to agree to the proposals, the Finnish government announced a series of measures to be legislated and imposed as collective agreements begin to expire next year. These include substantial reductions in compensation for overtime, weekend and night work, no compensation for the first day of employee sickness and reductions in sick pay for days 2-9, reducing and limiting annual leave to 30 days (5 weeks is the norm in many sectors) and the elimination of two national holidays, which would become working days or unpaid holidays, Unions estimate that the impact would be a 4-6% reduction in pay, with the impact falling hardest on the most vulnerable, including part-time and women workers.

The measures announced by the Finnish government means in practice abolishing the current collective bargaining system of Finland. This would have unforeseeable consequences for the Finnish society, and would jeopardize the whole Nordic model of free collective bargaining.

The national trade union confederations SAK, STTK and Akava have called for a mass demonstration tomorrow on September 18, condemning the proposed legislation as a fundamental attack on collective bargaining rights, violating ILO Core Conventions 87 and 98, the European Convention of Human Rights and the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe, as well as other international human rights instruments.

Messages of support should be addressed to the Presidents of BWI/ EFBWW/ NBTF affiliates Rakennusliitto, Puolitto, Sähköalojen ammattiliitto and PRO.

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President of EFBWW

Sam Hägglund  
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