

STATEMENT

In response to recent political and media statements addressing trade union freedoms in Algeria, and in view of the selective and opportunistic exploitation of the suffering of workers and trade unionists that has accompanied them, the Trade Union Confederation of Productive Forces (COSYFOP) considers it necessary to clarify its position before national and international public opinion.

This statement is issued at a time marked by an unprecedented escalation of anti-union repression, when the effective exercise of trade union rights has been hollowed out, while a dominant political discourse has emerged that neither reflects realities on the ground nor acknowledges the true depth of the crisis.

COSYFOP observes with serious concern that the current debate on trade union freedoms is taking place in the complete absence of the independent trade union movement, which is subjected to systematic marginalisation and enforced subordination to those in power. Independent trade unions are denied their right to organise; their leaders are dismissed, prosecuted, forced into exile or imprisoned. Meanwhile, certain violations affecting trade unionists affiliated with the state-controlled union (UGTA) are openly instrumentalised to serve political agendas and settle internal power struggles.

These abuses have reached a particularly alarming level, to the point where even the Secretary-General of the state-controlled union (UGTA) is unable to freely express what is happening within his own organisation. This situation has led to the political instrumentalisation of the suffering of workers and trade unionists for purely political purposes, representing a dangerous deviation and an unacceptable practice from both a political and trade union standpoint.

In this context, COSYFOP firmly reiterates that the current anti-union violations in Algeria do not concern any single sector and cannot be reduced to the transport sector alone. They constitute a generalised offensive affecting all sectors and targeting workers and trade unionists without distinction.

Furthermore, COSYFOP unequivocally condemns all narratives and practices that seek to justify or glorify the sabotage of the right to strike by portraying it as an “act of citizenship,” as well as the use of trade union officials affiliated with the state-controlled union (UGTA) to oppose workers exercising their legitimate right to protest and to strike. Such practices amount to a direct assault on one of the fundamental collective rights secured by the labour movement through decades of struggle.

In this regard, the Trade Union Confederation of Productive Forces holds the Ministry of Labour and the labour inspection services fully accountable, both legally and politically, for the ongoing violations, as they are the authorities exclusively responsible for safeguarding trade union rights and ensuring the effective implementation of Law No. 23-02, particularly its provisions on trade union protection and the criminalisation of obstacles to the exercise of trade union rights, which continue to occur with full impunity.

The continued obstruction of these legal mechanisms and the deliberate abandonment of trade unionists without effective protection reflect an official determination to silence trade union rights and render any political discourse on trade union freedoms entirely devoid of credibility.

Accordingly, COSYFOP calls on the Workers' Party, as well as all political parties that have addressed this issue, to fully assume their political and moral responsibilities, to put an end to selective approaches in the defence of trade unionists, and to commit unequivocally to defending all workers and trade unionists, without distinction between independent trade unionists engaged in the defence of human rights and those constrained by the limits imposed by those in power.

COSYFOP also calls for the opening of a serious, inclusive and balanced national dialogue on the real state of trade union freedoms, in which arbitrarily marginalised independent trade unions must participate, foremost among them the Trade Union Confederation of Productive Forces and its member organisations.

Finally, COSYFOP reaffirms its full readiness to cooperate with any sincere political or social force genuinely committed to restoring the right to free and independent trade union organisation and to ending abuses and judicial persecution targeting trade unionists. The trade union struggle in Algeria must not be treated as a temporary issue or an instrument of internal power struggles; it is a matter of fundamental and collective rights, directly linked to workers' dignity and their legitimate right to defend their interests, and must never be subject to manipulation or instrumentalisation.

Algiers, 29 December 2025

The Executive Committee