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Over 3000 workers rendered jobless following ban on telecommunication companies

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) strongly condemns the ban on operations of telecommunication companies as well as a money transfer company in Somalia, by Al Shabaab Islamist militants in the Lower and Middle Shabelle regions respectively, which are areas under their control.

Updates show that the suspension of operations which occurred on Sunday, 02 October 2011 is as a result of the companies' refusal to pay illegal money to support the fight of the militia against the Somali federal government and African Union operations in Somalia.

ITUC-Africa, representing about 16 million workers in the continent, strongly condemns the ban which has rendered jobless a total of 3,253 workers at TELCOM Somalia and Nation Link which are two of the 3 main private telecommunication companies.

This act is totally against the rights of workers as well as the companies they work for.

The threat that "these companies will remain closed until their managers accept to pay the taxation for wars against the infidels and the crusaders" as strongly emphasised by a junior Al Shabaab member who identified himself as Abu-Yusuf is extremely worrisome.

This statement threatens the livelihood of workers and also destabilises the telecommunication services in the country which further jeopardises the economy of the country.

ITUC-Africa is in total disagreement with this and sees this decision as unacceptable, unfair and unjust.

We stand in solidarity with the workers of the affected companies and strongly hope for a resolve to this rather disturbing issue.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'K', 'A', and 'S' in a stylized, cursive script.

Kwasi Adu-Amankwah

General Secretary