Mr. Oliver Ropke

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EESC

Mr. Luca Visentini

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ETUC

Mr. Sergejus Glovackas

Desk Officer for Europe and Central Asia

ILO

ATTN: Reaction on illegal migration at the Lithuanian - Belarusion border

 9 July 2021 No.10-106

Dear Colleagues,

We do understand that it is summer, a holiday season, but the situation that has arisen on the Lithuanian-Belarusian border requires urgent action and we, as trade union,kindly ask for your support in forming trade union policy.

In recent months, illegal migrants at the Belarusian border have been flocking massively to Lithuania. More than 1,500 people crossing the border illegally have been detained on the border with Belarus, many from the Middle East (mostly from Iraq) and Africa. Lithuanian officials say that increased migration flows are an organized action of the Belarusian regime against Lithuania.

Due to the sharp increase in the flow of migrants, the Lithuanian government declared a state of emergency last week. Lithuania is a small country and such a large and steady number of illegal migrants is unprecedented.The government appealed to the municipalities asking to share the burden and to look for premises where migrants could live temporarily.

We understand thatsituation will need more actions at all levels. The society was not prepared for such flow of refugees.Our communities used to live quite closed life and public opinions were quite negative concerning migrants and refugees for many years. Our trade union already has some experience how to work with labour migrants, people who arrive legally looking for jobs, but this situation is deferent. We kindly ask for your advices on our actions and further activities in the situation that is new for us and our society. The situation should be analysed from different perspectives: political, legal, economic, social.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kristina Krupaviciene

President

Lithuanian Trade Union „Solidarumas“