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European Transport Workers' Federation  
Fédération Européenne des Travailleurs des Transports  
Europäische Transportarbeiter-Föderation  
Federación Europea de los Trabajadores del Transporte

Mr Božo Petrov  
Speaker of the Croatian Parliament

By email: [predsjednik@sabor.hr](mailto:predsjednik@sabor.hr)

Brussels, 14 March 2017

Dear Mr Petrov,  
Dear Speaker of the Parliament,

**RE: SZH's fight to defend workers' right of representation**

On behalf of the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and more than 840,000 railway workers we express our grave concerns about the worrying situation reported by our Croatian affiliates following the restructuring of the Croatian Railways Cargo Ltd (HŽ Cargo d.o.o.).

At the ETF Executive Committee meeting of 3 March 2017 we learned about the company's numerous attempts to silence workers' representatives and dissolve the legally elected works council. We have received the information that this publicly owned company is undergoing a massive restructuring process that mainly translates into dismissing workers, and in particular those involved in workers' representation, namely members of the works council, shop stewards and the health and safety representative.

Our Croatian affiliates and the ETF read these developments as a clear intimidation of workers' representatives and as an attack on the freedom of association and the right to organise. We remind you that such practices are in breach of fundamental International Labour Organisation Conventions C135 and C087 which Croatia has ratified. We would also expect that three convictions by the national court of justice declaring the parallel works council set-up in the Croatian Railways Cargo company as illegal is understood as a clear wakeup call to stop undermining lawful workplace representation. Instead we learn about government statements that initiate a further weakening of workers' representatives' position as well as promote similar practices in Croatian public and private companies.

As the recognised European workers' representative and social partner in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for railways we want to draw your attention to the importance of works councils as the voice of employees and their crucial role in restructuring processes. ETF condemns in the strongest terms any obstruction of its affiliates to exercise their rights and urges the Croatian government to respect its legal obligations as a European Member State and in particular with regard to social rights.

We therefore expect the Croatian Prime Minister to address this issue with the seriousness it deserves.

Yours respectfully,

Eduardo Chagas,  
ETF General Secretary

Sabine Trier  
ETF Deputy General Secretary  
Political Secretary for Railways



President Lars Lindgren

General Secretary Eduardo Chagas

Vice Presidents Alexander Kirchner  
Ekaterina Yordanova

