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Our Ref : CDM/sol/iraq/pj

Dear Prime Minister,

Murder of Alaa Issa Khalaf of General Federation of Iraqi Workers (GFIW)

We are writing to protest at the murder of Brother Alaa Issa Khalaf, Executive Board member of the GFIW, on Wednesday 25 January 2006. Mr. Khalaf was shot by several unidentified men who were awaiting him outside his house in Baghdad when he left for work.

UNI Global Union, which represents 15 million workers, considers this to be a targeted attack on a trade union activist. On a separate matter, UNI Global Union is also concerned at reports of government interference in union affairs, namely the GFIW-affiliated engineers' and lawyers' unions.

Mr. Prime Minister, as a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Iraq has an obligation to respect the fundamental labour standards established by Convention 87 on freedom of association, regardless of ratification. It is totally unacceptable that trade unionists should exercise their activities in a climate of violence, and it is your government's responsibility to ensure security for trade unionists.

I therefore strongly urge you to ensure a full and immediate investigation is launched into the murder of Alaa Issa Khalaf, and that adequate steps are taken to provide security for trade unionists, so they can do their legitimate trade union work without having to fear for their security or their lives.

Finally, I also urge you to ratify ILO Convention 87 on the right to freedom of association.

I look forward to a positive response.

Yours sincerely,



Philip Jennings
General Secretary