



Geneva and Brussels, 15 July 2026

Mr. Gilbert F. Hougbo
Director-General

International Labour Organization (ILO)
4, route des Morillons,
CH-1211 Geneva 22

Sent by e-mail to: Hougbo@ilo.org; vargha@ilo.org; curtis@ilo.org

Call for urgent intervention concerning the criminal prosecution and detention of trade union leader Mr Yarema Zhuhaievych in Ukraine

Dear Director-General,

We are writing this letter on behalf of IndustriALL Global Union and industriALL European Trade Union, both with affiliated unions that represent workers in mining, energy, and manufacturing industries throughout the world, to urgently request the ILO's immediate intervention with the Ukrainian government concerning the criminal prosecution and continued detention of Mr Yarema Zhuhaievych, Chairman of the Trade Union of Aircraft and Machine Building Workers of Ukraine (TUAMBWU), an affiliate of both our organizations.

Mr Zhuhaievych has been in pre-trial detention since 1 May 2026. He was arrested as Chairman of the Supervisory Board of PJSC Ukrproftur, the company set up by the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine to manage joint trade union assets, to which the Federation had delegated him as the shareholder's representative. The charges concern decisions taken collectively by the company's governing bodies within their statutory powers. As board chairman he was obliged to sign them. Bail has been set far beyond his personal means. In the meantime, a union representing tens of thousands of workers in the aircraft and machine-building industries is deprived of its elected leader.

In our view this is a clear case of criminalization of legitimate trade union activity, contrary to Conventions 87 and 98, both ratified by Ukraine, and to the established principles of the Committee on Freedom of Association on the arrest and detention of trade unionists. The ILO has repeatedly emphasised that state authorities must refrain from any action that may hinder the legitimate activities of trade unions or create an atmosphere of intimidation or fear among their representatives.

The case does not stand alone. It forms part of the long-running conflict over trade union property in Ukraine, aspects of which have come before the ILO supervisory bodies in the past, and it comes at a time when labour law developments in the country are already a source of serious concern to our affiliates, as we raised in our joint letter of 29 January 2026 on the labour law reform process.

Therefore, in support of the position of our Ukrainian affiliates, we call on you to undertake an urgent intervention with the Ukrainian authorities to press for Mr Zhuhaievych's release from pre-trial detention, for full respect of due process and the presumption of innocence, and for the property dispute to be resolved through civil proceedings rather than through the criminal prosecution of a trade union representative.

We look forward to your prompt action and reply,
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith Kirton-Darling".

Judith Kirton-Darling
General secretary
IndustriALL European Trade Union

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Atle Høie".

Atle Høie
General secretary
IndustriALL Global Union