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Ms. Doris Bures, Minister of Transport, Innovation and Technology
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1011 Wien
 Austria

Uw bericht van	uw kenmerk	ons kenmerk	datum
			2012-11-29

Austro Control and trade union representative Norbert Payr

Dear Minister,

ACV TRANSCOM / CSC TRANSCOM, the largest Belgian trade union for ATM and civil aviation workers, has been informed by our European colleagues that Austro Control has suspended Norbert Payr from his job as Air Traffic Controller (ATCO) and it has started the legal procedure to terminate his labour contract. Today the case is in hands of the court.

In brief we are upset to see that Norbert has been fired for a statement in a newspaper, stated as elected Trade Union Representative, about a possible conflict of interest within the company. Austro Control considers that comment as a strong insult, heavily damaging the company...

Clearly, in any democratic country and within Europe such employer's behaviour is not acceptable and we believe that Austro Control severely overreacts and want to attack unions' rights.

The Austro Control decision against him appears to be a tentative to limit the freedom of the Trade Union activity. This decision has already created tension and difficulties in Austrian and in Europe. We have observed that the relations between the parties are further deteriorating as Austro Control management totally refuses to negotiate any compromise.

The management's action against Payr has meanwhile got an international dimension, overtaking the Austrian Borders:

- The FAB CE Social Dialogue is on hold/stop because of a general union boycott due to the Austro Control's behaviour and is putting the Central European integration and the most important regional project of civil aviation, the FABCE, at risk;
- Austro Control is damaging industrial relations at European level and causing tensions between the European Social Partners;
- ITF, the International Transport Workers' Federation, has been involved and has adopted a motion of support, and will give the case a worldwide dimension;
- ITF is planning to launch a worldwide solidarity campaign because ITF does not accept any such attack against their members and against workers' rights;

ACV TRANSCOM / CSC TRANSCOM calls to the Austrian Government to intervene in such a way that the Austro

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Control management shall withdraw all measures and reinstate Payr in all his rights and duties as a staff representative.

It is clear that, if Austro Control does not change its mind, this situation will create further tensions and difficulties at all social dialogue levels. ACV TRANSCOM/CSC TRANSCOM strongly believes that these negative effects can be avoided in respect of workers' rights and union rights within European countries.

Looking forward to a follow-up from your side.
Best regards,



Kurt Callaerts
National Union Officer for Civil Aviation

CC:

- Melchior Wathelet, Belgian Secretary of State for Mobility
- Elio Di Rupo, Belgian Prime Minister
- Frank Durinckx, Director Belgian NSA