



Internazionale

## PROTEST: Visa denial to the WFTU General Secretary by the USA government

**As World Federation of Trade Unions, we denounce the government of the USA which has denied granting to the WFTU General Secretary George Mavrikos an entry visa to the US.**



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As World Federation of Trade Unions, we denounce the government of the USA which has denied granting to the WFTU General Secretary George Mavrikos an entry visa to the US.

The WFTU General Secretary has scheduled a visit to the USA for March 2018 to attend an event of the United Nations in New York, where he is a permanent representative of the WFTU, and to participate as main speaker in the annual trade union meeting of Trade Union Organizations members and friends of WFTU that will take place the same month in Los Angeles, USA.

We followed the procedure of ESTA but unfortunately the persistent answer from the competent USA state authorities was negative.

This position of the US Department of State is antidemocratic and aims at preventing the free trade union action and the strengthening of the militant trade union movement of the workers in the USA. At the same time, it is a deliberated discrimination against the WFTU and against its right to fulfill its role within the United Nations, a role that has possessed since 1945. The

USA governments do not like the consistent anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist line of the WFTU, and they think that through antidemocratic prohibitions they will stop our internationalist action in favor of the peoples who struggle to decide on their own, in a free and democratic way, about their present and future. But they will never manage this, no matter how many anti-democratic, racist discriminations they make against the international militant trade union movement.

We also addressed the embassy of the USA in Athens without receiving a positive answer.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece was also informed, but the coalition government of SYRIZA and of far-rightist ANEL neither wants nor is able to assure the right of free movement of the citizens of Greece to the USA.

At the same time, trade union Organizations in the USA sent a letter of protest to the US Secretary of State, Mr. Tillerson, but until today no solution has been found.

The answer of the USA competent authorities to all these legal actions we proceeded to so as to issue a visa, was that we should apply to be exempted from the "Terrorist Travel" System.

These actions are provocative and unacceptable. The WFTU is a massive, class oriented, international Trade Union Organization with 92 million members in 126 countries all over the world. Since its foundation, in October 1945 until today, its history is public and well known. It has never been servile towards imperialists or multinationals. Nor now will it sell its history.

At the same time, the prohibition of entry of the WFTU General Secretary into the USA points out one more question. How is possible for International Organizations to operate in the USA, since their government randomly sets out antidemocratic rules and arbitrary restrictions about visa issuing. We are awaiting with interest the position of the competent services of the United Nations on this subject, since the USA prohibit the entrance of the WFTU legal representative into the country where the United Nations Headquarters are located.

On the basis of this situation we ask a legal visa to be granted to the General Secretary of the WFTU and all these discriminations against WFTU cadres to stop.

We assure the workers of the USA that irrespectively of any difficulties and obstacles, the WFTU will stand by their side in their fair struggles. Internationalism and solidarity are the unbeatable weapons of workers and peoples.

THE SECRETARIAT