Unionen statement in support of Verizon workers in the US

The Swedish union Unionen, representing more than 600,000 employees in the private sector, together with its local representatives at Verizon Sweden, send their support and solidarity to the nearly 40,000 Verizon workers currently on strike in the United States.

We are concerned at the failure of collective bargaining negotiations and the employer’s refusal to come to an agreement on several key issues impacting the jobs and lives of its workers, namely: the closure of customer services centers and off-shoring of work, thus eliminating stable jobs with unionized wages and benefits that provide economic stability to families and communities; Verizon’s demand that workers agree to work up to 700 miles from their homes for an unlimited number of two-month rotations, placing an unreasonable burden on families, forcing spouses and partners to live apart and separating parents from their children for extended periods of time. We are also concerned at the company’s refusal to negotiate in good faith the first collective agreement for Verizon Wireless workers, including the pressuring of union members to return to work, along with the illegal termination of a union leader’s employment within the company.

Good cooperation between unions and management at local level is the best way to solve problems. Bargaining collective agreements sets a standard and establishes good long-term relationships. We therefore hope that Verizon will negotiate with the CWA in order to secure good working conditions for its employees.

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