



**Leo W. Gerard**  
International President

September 29, 2017

H.E. Moon Jae-in  
President of the Republic of Korea  
Blue House,  
Seoul, Korea

Honorable President Moon,

On behalf of the 850,000 members of the United Steelworkers (USW) and union petitioners at Kumho tire, I write to express our concerns with the actions of the Korean-based company Kumho Tire towards its employees in the United States.

On September 19, 2017, the USW filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to conduct a union representation election at Kumho Tire's plant in Macon, Georgia. This petition is supported by authorization cards signed by a large majority of the more than 300 employees at the plant. The NLRB has scheduled an election for the workers to vote on union representation on October 12 and 13.

The Kumho Tire employees have raised several important concerns:

- They believe they have a right to fair and equal treatment, including
  - No discrimination
  - No retaliation
  - No favoritism
  - No harassment
- Seniority should be the basis of selection for
  - Job signing
  - Awarding overtime
  - Scheduling vacation
- The employees believe that SAFETY should be a proactive value in the workplace, and that every employee is entitled to a safe work environment.
  - Adequate training
  - Availability of personal protective equipment
  - Written standards and procedures

Kumho Tire management has responded to the election petition in a hostile manner by requiring workers to attend captive audience meetings in which managers have attempted to dissuade them from their effort to form a union. When the managers were asked whether Kumho Tire workers in the Republic of Korea are unionized, they refused to answer. The company has also hired antiunion consultants who have posted misleading and inaccurate information on an anti-union website.

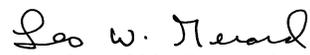
We are concerned that by opposing the efforts of its workers to exercise their right to freedom of association by forming a union, Kumho Tire may violate its obligations under international agreements including Convention 87 of the International Labor Organization, Chapter 19 of the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, among others.

Moreover, as we understand that Kumho Tire is currently under effective control of a creditors' committee headed by the Korean Development Bank, it appears that the Government of the Republic of Korea may bear direct responsibility for the behavior of the company's management.

Our union is also concerned about the potential impact the actions of Kumho Tire management in the U.S. may have on the relationship between our countries in the context of current discussions over the possible renegotiation of the KORUS free trade agreement.

We request that you communicate with Kumho Tire as soon as possible to request that their management at the Macon, Georgia plant immediately desist from all anti-union activities, adopt a clear position of neutrality in the upcoming NLRB election, and allow the workers to exercise their right to freedom of association without interference.

Sincerely,



Leo W. Gerard

International President

cc: The Honorable Ahn Ho-young, South Korean Ambassador to the U.S.  
Paik Ungyu, Minister of Trade, Industry and Energy  
Kim Hyun-chong, Minister for Trade  
Lee Dong-Gull, Chairman & CEO of Korea Development Bank

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