



**International Federation of  
Chemical, Energy, Mine and  
General Workers' Unions**  
20, rue Adrien-Lachenal  
1207 Geneva Switzerland  
tel: +41 22 304 1840  
fax: +41 22 304 1841  
email: [info@icem.org](mailto:info@icem.org)  
web: [www.icem.org](http://www.icem.org)



**International Metalworkers'  
Federation**  
54bis, route des Acacias  
Case Postale 1516  
1227 Geneva Switzerland  
tel: + 41 22 308 5050  
fax: +41 22 308 5055  
email: [info@imfmetal.org](mailto:info@imfmetal.org)  
web: [www.imfmetal.org](http://www.imfmetal.org)

Ref: ICEM-IMF11/EN LT/11

Geneva, March 2, 2011

Dear ICEM, IMF Trade Union Affiliate,

On October 18, 2010, Chile President Sebastián Piñera told the world that within 90 days his government would reform Chile's mine safety laws and adopt global standards. This was just days after the successful rescue of 33 miners from under the Atacama desert at the San José copper mine. President Piñera said Chile had learned its lesson and cumbersome mine safety and monitoring structures would be overhauled.

To date, none of this has come true. And because of that, we hereby call all ICEM and IMF affiliates to write to Chile President Sebastián Piñera and express outrage that he, Mining Minister Laurence Golborne, and others inside Chile's government used San José as a public relations guise with no intent to change archaic mine safety structures.

With this letter, we provide another letter. Copy it on your union's letterhead, and do 3 things with it: e-mail it, fax it, and post it. (Mail/fax information included in the letter, **and please, it is essential that the ICEM have a copy of your protest letter; send to [tom.grinter@icem.org](mailto:tom.grinter@icem.org).**) The urgency of this critical worldwide call demands these 3 actions. The Piñera government must not just only hear our message, but heed it as well!

To provide relevant background, ICEM met with senior representatives of the Piñera government in January in Santiago. ICEM was told that Chile has chosen to look at ratification of ILO Convention 187, the Promotional Framework for Occupational Health and Safety Convention, a general occupational safety convention.

ICEM responded by reminding that first and foremost, Chile is a resource-rich mining nation. Ratification of ILO Convention 176, the specialized Safety and Health in Mines Convention, is essential in a country that has both a developed extractive industry aimed at global markets and many small and medium-sized enterprises such as San José that operate under inferior conditions with little or no monitoring.

Both ICEM and IMF believe that the principles inside Convention 176 can and will provide the framework for revising the mine safety laws in Chile. For example, there is no room now for trade union health/safety committees to play a role in Chile's mining

industry. That is an inherent part of Convention 176. And it is a universal fact that when a union safety committee is engaged with a mining company and an official regulatory agency, the risks in mining get reduced dramatically.

Please do your part to move the Piñera government to make the necessary changes in Chile's mine safety culture. Attach the adjacent message on your letterhead and send it 3 ways!

In Solidarity,



Manfred Warda  
General Secretary  
ICEM



Jyrki Raina  
General Secretary  
IMF