



Korean Metal Workers' Union

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To: Mr. Tom Conway
President, United Steelworkers - USW
Cc: Mr. Benjamin Davis
Director, International Affairs, USW

29 January 2021

Kumho Tire

Dear President Conway,

Solidarity greetings from the 180,000 men and women of the Korean Metal Workers' Union to the 850,000 USW members in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean, and in particular, to your members at Kumho Tire in Macon, Georgia.

Though we are halfway across the world, because our members also fight against virulent and lawless union busting here in Korea, we know all too well the pressure and suffering the comrades at union-busting workplaces undergo. Thus it gives me great pleasure to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the USW for your victory winning certification as the exclusive bargaining representative at Kumho Tire's Macon plant in Georgia. I salute the courage of the largely African American workers of the Kumho Macon plant to defend workers' dignity and rise tall above the fear and persecution mongered by Kumho Tire's union-busting consultants amid the anti-union environment of the American South.

We know from our own struggles here in Korea that the fight will continue until you secure just working conditions and union rights for each and every member there, and just how important that first union contract is for workers. We would like to convey a letter from our KMWU Kumho Tire Local.

To speak a bit about our Kumho Local, after years of hard times, workers here were being asked to shoulder sacrifices for Kumho to avoid court receivership, which could have jeopardized workers' jobs. Unfortunately, South Korea's social security system falls far short that of advanced nations, forcing Korean workers to be completely reliant on our employment; being served a dismissal notice is akin to receiving a death sentence to Korean workers. Thus, to avert calamity on their communities, the Korean Kumho Tire workers made sacrifices to weather the hard times together.

As such, it was all the more outrageous to learn that while asking workers to share sacrifices here, Kumho Tire was pouring tens of thousands of dollars into union-busting the workers in Macon. At the time, we worked with National Assemblywoman SIM, Sang-Jung to grill Korean Development Bank CEO LEE, Dong-Gull about Kumho's Macon plant union-busting during a National Assembly Policy Committee parliamentary audit of KDB and our Kumho local sent support messages and photos to the USW Kumho members in Macon.

Since then, the global economic situation has taken a turn for the worse and the Kumho Tire workers here and in Macon will need the union even more in such uncertain times. We stand shoulder to shoulder with you in the belief that wherever we are, workers are stronger when we stand together.

In Solidarity,


KIM, No Gyu

President,
Korean Metal Workers' Union



Attachment: KMWU Kumho Tire Local Letter to USW