

JUSTICE FOR IRANIAN WORKERS GLOBAL SOLIDARITY ACTION DAY 26 JUNE 2009

CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES

The ITUC, EI, ITF and IUF jointly released a May Day Appeal this year to express once again our commitment to and continued support for the independent workers' movement in Iran. This is the latest development of what many have been familiar with as the "Free Osanloo Campaign".

We sent this Appeal to the Iranian government and asked them not to interfere with the celebrations of the independent workers' organisations on 1 May. Instead, the state responded by attacking the peaceful assemblies in Tehran and elsewhere, arresting scores of people.

That is why, the four organisations, together with Amnesty International, are once again calling upon their affiliates and human rights activists to join forces and hold a global solidarity action day for Iranian workers on **26 June 2009**.

Brief background

Our relationship with genuine Iranian workers' organisations started in 2004 when the ICFTU (now ITUC) was contacted after the murder of workers during protest action at a smelting plant and it consequently visited Iran to meet with representatives from the independent workers' movement. This activity met with an immediate state reprisal when more than 40 workers, who took part in a peaceful rally and march in the City of Saez to celebrate May Day, were attacked and detained by the government's security forces. Among the "Saez 7" who were arrested was Mahmoud Salehi, co founder of the Saez Bakery Workers' Association and the Coordinating Committee to Form Workers' Organisations.

Another important stage arrived when the bus workers in Tehran formed their own union in 2005. Again, they faced massive oppression from the government and their puppet organisations (Workers' House and Islamic Labour Council) including imprisonment, attacks and blacklisting of the leaders and activists.

These events have provoked strong and persistent international solidarity actions from trade unions and human rights activists around the world to demand, amongst other things, the release of Mansour Osanloo, President of the Tehran Bus Workers' Union, who has spent more time in jail than out since his union was formed. In Iran, more workers have now started to

form their own unions, including teachers in different cities and sugar workers in Haft Tapeh. Unsurprisingly, they have faced the same oppression.

That is why the signatories of the May Day Appeal, together with Amnesty International, have been working closely in recent months to formulate our common strategy. One conclusion that these organisations have reached collectively is that we must step-up the common struggle in support of fundamental labour and trade union rights in Iran as the Islamic Republic of Iran shows no sign of improving its record on workers' rights in the midst of their Presidential election this summer.

Our demands

A Global Solidarity Action Day for Iranian workers is called on 26 June 2009 to demand:

- The immediate and unconditional release of all imprisoned trade unionists including Mansour Osanloo, Ebrahim Madadi and Farzad Kamangar;
- Unconditional recognition of all independent workers' organisations in Iran and reinstatement of workers who have been disadvantaged as a result of their support for these organisations;
- Ratification of core ILO Conventions on freedom of association and the right to collective bargain by the Iranian government;
- Conclusion of collective bargaining agreements between the independent unions and the relevant employers and reinstatement of unfairly dismissed workers.

We trust that you and your organisation will join us on the Action Day!

Building activism towards the Action Day

We have just about one month for the preparation. Let us see what we can do in these weeks to build the momentum in our organisations. Please consider planning events centrally at your headquarters but also to involve your regional/local organisations.

A. Campaign planning

It is important to make your plans early. Who will you be encouraging to get active and what is the best way of communication? Who will you be targeting (e.g. the members? the public? the media? your Government? the Iranian Embassy in your country or the Iranian Government? Iranian companies active in your country, or domestic corporations that trade with or operate in Iran?) What will your campaign actions and events be? What resources will you need? Once your programme is ready, let us know. We will publicise it in our E-News.

Many action plans will require the collective effort of your organisation. You would therefore need to consider:

- How will you mobilise your members and brief them about this campaign?
- Will you organise regional actions together with your central event?
- What campaign materials will you use? How many? What is the timetable for distribution?
- How will you liaise with other unions in your country?
- How about NGOs and human rights groups? Do you have allies in your community that support this campaign?
- Have you considered the legal implications for your plans?

B. Campaign materials

Campaign materials such as the poster, logo, FAQs, leaflet will be made available electronically. To receive them, please register your organisation and its contact person for the Action Day and tell us what your plans are by filling-in the attached form and sending it back to us.

C. Send protest emails

We will be developing a campaign site where visitors can send their protest email to the Iranian government. The key demands are described in this Campaign Guidelines.

D. Raising awareness among your members/activists

As your organisation gets involved in this campaign, it is crucial that you raise awareness of your members. Can you discuss the Global Solidarity Action Day and workers' rights in Iran at your meetings? Can you include an article on this issue in your journal? Can you add a page to your website?

E. Lobbying and Public relations

Can your organisation also raise the issue of workers' rights in Iran with your politicians and government offices before the Action Day?

Will you be contacting the media to advertise the Action Day and inform about the abuse of trade union rights in Iran?

Will there be any diplomatic, governmental or commercial visitors to/from Iran to whom you could make an intervention?

Action Day activities

It would be great to involve both the leadership and the rank and file members of your organisation in the Action Day.

Individual organisations will decide exactly what they will do on the Action Day, based on local conditions including custom and law, but you could consider:

- Rallies, marches, demonstrations, pickets and dharnas (sit-ins) including at Iranian embassies and consulates
- Leafleting the public and public transport users
- Decoration of your workplace/school with messages
- Announcements at facilities
- Short work stoppages or work-to-rule
- Information kiosks and exhibitions
- Workshops, seminars and union/NGO meetings
- Lobbying
- Collection of signatures and sending letters
- Press conferences and media interviews

Please fill in the attached form and return it to us at your earliest convenience.

Justice for Iranian Workers

Global Solidarity Action Day, 26 June 2009

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(Please print)

Name:

Union/Organisation:

Position in
union/organisation:

Postal address:

Country:

Telephone:

Mobile/cell:

Email:

WWW:

Spoken
language(s):

☐

English

☐

French

☐

German

☐

Spanish

☐

Swedish

** if you wish to nominate more than one person, kindly make extra copies of this sheet and fill in the necessary information separately.*

☐ Other(s) _____

** if you wish to nominate more than one person, kindly make extra copies of this sheet and fill in the necessary information separately.*

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