



Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street
End of Shahid Keshvar Doust Street,
Tehran,
Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: Email: info@leader.ir
Fax: 98-21-774.22.28

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Global Solidarity Action Day with Iranian workers

Excellency,

We are writing to you on behalf of 170 million workers to express our solidarity with the many Iranian workers, who have joined the demonstrations in the streets to call for respect for their inalienable democratic rights. All human rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association should be enjoyed by the Iranian people.

The heavy repression of peaceful demonstrations and lack of respect for human life and dignity is appalling, and the disproportionate use of violence has left tens of people dead and several hundred injured. Workers' organisations across the world have become accustomed to witnessing how scores of workers and citizens are attacked and arrested in workers' demonstrations, lastly on 1 May as they attempted to hold a peaceful May Day rally at Laleh Park in Tehran. The many demonstrations in the wake of the election have been met with particularly violent repression, including hundreds of arrests.

The callous reaction of the authorities to the legitimate expression of the will of the people is illustrated by reports that authorities have ordered Iranian mosques not to hold

services for any victims of the demonstrations over the past few days. This reflects a basic lack of human decency and respect for your own people.

Weeks before the voting for the Presidential election, the ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation), EI (Education International), ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation), IUF (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations) announced the formation of a coalition, "Justice for Iranian workers" and called upon our affiliates worldwide to take part in the Global Solidarity Action Day on 26 June 2009 due to the continued repression of workers' rights in Iran. We did not imagine the brutal turn of events in the wake of the election.

The brutal repression discredits the current government and your own office as Iranian citizens and workers are showing their discontent with the government that you support, in part related to the irregularities in connection with the election, but more importantly because of the strict curbs on fundamental human rights like freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association. These restrictions deprive the Iranian people of a voice.

In these times of deep economic crisis, the impact on Iranian workers and all Iranians, already enduring economic hardship, has been extremely severe. Workers have on several occasions attempted to voice their frustrations at back wages, indecently low pay, temporary contracts, delayed or unpaid unemployment and pension benefits, social security and poor working conditions met each time with repression. Many trade unionists remain in prison for their efforts, including Mansour Osanloo, Ebrahim Madadi, Farzad Kamangar including participants in this year's May Day rally.

Those who are demonstrating in the streets of Tehran and other cities are not accepting such oppression anymore. Working men and women from around the world and their organisations in the Global Unions add their voices to their Iranian brothers and sisters, in support of their struggle for fundamental human and workers' rights. We urge you to take the necessary measures to put an immediate end to the violent response against peaceful demonstrations and to bring those responsible for killings and violence to justice.

The introduction of democracy and internationally-recognized human rights to the Iranian society is urgently needed and is the prerequisite for an administration to credibly lead any country and to find solutions to the current political and economic crisis in Iran.

International trade union objectives are clear and remain the same. We are calling for (a) full democratic rights for all Iranians, including freedom of association and freedom of

assembly (b) a halt to all violent repression (c) the release of all imprisoned trade unionists (d) recognition of all independent workers' organisations in Iran; (e) respect for core labour standards and the ratification of all fundamental ILO Conventions in particular those relating to freedom of association and collective bargaining (f) a halt to all anti-union repression and (g) the reinstatement of unfairly dismissed workers.

The situation of working people in Iran remains the focus of attention for trade unions internationally, and our coalition "Justice for Iranian workers" will continue to monitor closely the situation in Iran as it unfolds.

Yours sincerely,



Guy Ryder
ITUC General Secretary



Fred Van Leeuwen
EI General Secretary



David Cockroft
ITF General Secretary



Ron Oswald
IUF General Secretary