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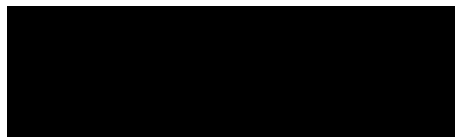
May Day repression and several arrests

Dear President,

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing 311 affiliated member organisations, with a total membership of 168 million workers in 156 countries and territories, strongly protests against the repression of peaceful May Day demonstrations in Iran and the arrest of many trade union activists.

The ITUC has been informed that shortly before May Day, namely on 23 April 2008 Shays Amani, one of the founders of the National Union of Dismissed and Unemployed Workers (NUDUW) and one of the former leaders of the union in the Kurdistan Textile Company, was arrested. The ITUC believes that this arrest was meant to create fear among labour activists ahead of May Day. Mr. Shays Amani was also arrested last year on May Day, and was imprisoned for 42 days on that occasion. He was later sentenced to two and a half years in prison but was still waiting for the result of his appeal. The Appeals Court had not issued a ruling before his arrest on 23 April.

On May Day itself several arrests and other acts of harassment took place across your country. The ITUC has been informed that three workers activists, **Javanmir Moradi** and **Taha Azadi**, members of the Free Union of Iranian Workers (FUIW), and another worker by the name of **Saeed Hazrati** were arrested in Asaluyeh in the south of Iran during May Day. Police forces confiscated their placards and broke up the celebrations. Moradi and Azadi were handcuffed and on 6 May they were transferred from their detention in Assaluyeh to the Intelligence office in Bushehr.



Further arrests took place in Ashnavieh city, where three activists, **Nasrin Mahmoudi-Azar**, **Hamid Athari**, and **Aram Ebrahim-Khales**, were arrested at their place of work the day before May Day. Mr. Nasrin was released on bail but the two others a board of director member of the Free Union of Workers in Iran remained in custody.

Other arrests took place in Sanandaj, where seven participants in May Day celebrations were arrested in front of the Social Welfare Organisation building. Their names are: **Salah Zamani**, a member of the Centre in Defense of Children Rights, **Shiva Kheir Abadi**, **Abdollah Najjar**, **Ghaaleb Hosseini**, **Ali Hosseini**, **Bahaoddin Sadooghi**, **Susan Raazani**. They were later released. In Saqez a few people were also arrested for a short while.

In many places May Day celebrations were obstructed by government harassment. In Tehran, an attempt to celebrate May Day already on April 25 was blocked, when police and security forces blocked Chitgar Park and scared away participants, whilst over 1000 security forces shut down the park but workers immediately moved to another park nearby (Jahan-Nama Park) and were able to celebrate May Day. In Sanandaj the governor of the city had refused to permit the celebrations and trade unionists were forced to conduct their celebrations in the outskirts of the city. In the City of Kermanshah, planned activities had to be abandoned due to pressure from the authorities.

At the May Day celebration organized by the government recognised Worker's House in a stadium in Poonak independent worker activists were not allowed to enter.

The ITUC deplores the fact that the government of Iran continues to repress peaceful celebrations on May Day and that Iranian workers must still suffer repression to participate in this worldwide celebration of workers. Iran has again and again repressed worker activists for the mere participation in May Day celebrations.

The ITUC would like to remind the Iranian government once more that the peaceful celebration of May Day is protected under the principle of freedom of association as enshrined in the ILO Convention 87. The Government of Iran has an obligation to respect this principle by virtue of its membership of the ILO.

The ITUC sees no other option than to report these incidents to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association. The other cases which are still pending before this Committee are as urgent as ever. In this regard, the ITUC urges you in the strongest terms to halt the heavy repression of teachers and the Syndica Sherkat-e Vahed and most importantly the ITUC is again urging you to free Mansour Osanloo immediately.

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary

Cc.: His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran