



Leader of the Islamic Republic
Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei
Via email: info_leader@leader.ir contact@leader.ir
cc: jjpr@iranjudiciary.org
info@judiciary.ir
sr-iran@ohchr.org

17 October 2018

Global Union Federations denounce the death sentence call for 17 labour activists and demand their immediate and unconditional release

Dear Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei,

We are writing on behalf of the global union federations, the International Transport Federation (ITF), Education International (EI), IndustriALL Global union, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association (IUF), and the international Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing more than 200 million workers worldwide, to express our most profound shock at the reports of a call by the Qazvin court to issue death penalty against striking truck drivers.

According to our information, since May this year, truckers have been urging your government to address their demands for better working conditions and asking to be allowed to have a voice in decisions affecting their livelihoods. Truckers took action in September as a last resort in the struggle to feed their families. Over the last two weeks, 150 truckers had been reportedly arrested, and last week over 250 were in custody. Then on 8th October the state-run IRNA news agency reported that a court in Qazvin province had requested possible death sentences for 17 activists.

The death penalty for striking is the most serious of violations of workers' rights. The attempt to use extreme penal sanctions against legitimate trade union activities for reasons of internal security involves a real abuse and places freedom of association and the rule of law in jeopardy, and we reiterate our concerns over the lack of judicial independence in the country.

it is unacceptable in any society that workers should be executed for undertaking the legitimate defence of their economic interests. Therefore, we strongly demand that all charges pressed against detained truck drivers are immediately and unconditionally withdrawn and that their physical safety is fully respected.

We recall that the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association and Committee on the Application of Standards have repeatedly drawn attention to the Government of Iran's consistent failure to respect fundamental rights and core ILO Conventions and issued many recommendations with respect to the government's actions.

For this, we are closely monitoring the situation and liaising with the ILO, and we expect that the government of Iran will immediately proceed to reverse the death penalty decision and commit to dialogue with the truckers' leaders to address their legitimate demands.

We look forward to receiving an urgent response from your side on this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

Sharan Burrow



ITUC General Secretary

Sue Longley



IUF General Secretary

Stephen Cotton



ITF General Secretary

David Edwards



EI General Secretary

Valter Sanches



IndustriALL General Secretary