

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

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Iran: Labour Activists to Celebrate May Day

Brussels, 25 April 2005 (ICFTU OnLine): Independent labour activists in Iran are planning once again to hold May Day celebrations, despite fears of a repetition of last year's arrests by the authorities for taking part in a similar event. Seven activists from the city of Saquez, Jalal Hosseini, Mohamad Abdipoor, Borhan Divangar, Hadi Tanoomand, Esmail Khodkam, Mahmoud Salehi and Mohsen Hakimi, were arrested by security police and subjected to 11 days of interrogation for participating in a peaceful May Day event in 2004. Court proceedings against those arrested have continued since that time, with the authorities refusing to allow ICFTU representatives to enter the country to observe the proceedings. Two of them have been told to attend further court hearings on May Day this year.

One of those charged, Mahmoud Salehi, is accused of having made contact with the ICFTU, and with preparing a chart containing information on the cost of living in Iran. Further charges, denied by Mr Salehi, include writing, possessing and distributing political literature. Similar charges have been made against the other accused. The ICFTU has protested to the Iranian authorities against the proceedings, along with other serious trade union rights violations in recent months.

The ICFTU supports the right of all working people to participate in May Day celebrations, and believes that the attitude of the Iranian authorities to the planned 2005 celebrations will be an important indicator of the extent to which fundamental labour rights will be respected in the country in future. The global trade union confederation will continue to monitor developments concerning labour rights in Iran, and will pay particular attention to events on May Day this year.

The ICFTU represents 145 million workers in 233 affiliated organizations in 154 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a partner in Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

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