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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

## ITUC OnLine

Release of persecuted Iranian trade unionist welcomed

Brussels, 19 December 2006 (ITUC Online): The ITUC and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) today welcomed the release of detained Iranian trade unionist Mansour Osanloo, while deplored the fact that he had to post additional bail to ensure his release. Osanloo was already on bail of 150 million Toman (US\$ 165,000), stemming from his previous detention by the authorities from 22 December 2005 to 9 August 2006.

"We are pleased that Mansour Osanloo is now out of detention, but the additional bail condition, and the fact that leaders and members of his union continue to face systematic repression and harassment, are of deep concern", said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

Osanloo, who is President of the ITF-affiliated Trade Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company ("Vahed Union"), was arrested on November 19th, only months after being released on bail following a long campaign of intimidation by Iranian police and state security agents that has seen him and colleagues brutally arrested and meetings violently broken up. His release followed public protests by Vahed Union members and an international campaign led by the ITF and the ICFTU (now ITUC), that involved protests to Iran, demonstrations outside embassies and a formal complaint to the ILO (see [www.itfglobal.org/urban-transport/tehranbuses.cfm](http://www.itfglobal.org/urban-transport/tehranbuses.cfm) for background).

He and 9 other Vahed union leaders had been detained on an earlier occasion, on their way to an ILO seminar in Tabriz on November 8. A beating during his last arrest led to an aggravation of an existing eye injury, and in detention he was again threatened and subjected to blackmail in order to stop his union activities. Osanloo refused however to bow to the threats.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft said "progress has been made but more needs to be done. The persecution of this man has to stop. Fundamental trade union rights have to be respected in Iran and we await similar positive news concerning Mansour Osanloo's trade union colleagues, some of whom have been sacked and all of whom have been denied the right to be represented by the union of their choice. For some weeks, the Iranian Labour Ministry had promised that Osanloo would be released, however worldwide pressure was needed to bring it about. The Government of Iran has to face up to its responsibilities without the need for continued pressure from others."

Founded on November 1 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 304 national affiliates.

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