

**IRAN: Global Call for Release of Trade Unionists Held in Iran – Demonstration in Brussels, Thursday, 9 August 2007**



Today, 9 August 2007, 168 million trade unionists from round the world are launching a global call for the immediate and unconditional release of two of their activists who have been detained and are in a dangerous position in Iran.

This day of action has been organised by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and is being backed in Belgium by Amnesty International's French-speaking Belgium branch, FGTB/ABVV, CSC/ACV and CGSLB/ACLVB and the other international trade union organisations based in Brussels, including the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

Mansour Osanloo, leader of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed) was abducted at about 7 p.m. on 10 July. Having been bundled into an unmarked car and beaten by a group of men in plain clothes, he was taken to Tehran's Evin prison where he was detained. On 12 July, he was transferred to section 209 of the prison (political prisoners' wing) and he has since then been put in solitary confinement. His lawyers are prevented from making contact with him and his family are afraid that he has been physically abused. Mansour Osanloo was imprisoned for eight months from December 2005 to August 2006, and also for a month from November to December 2006 for trade union activities and was due to appear in court again. He had come to Europe recently to rally international support for Iran's independent trade unions and had addressed the ITUC General Council in Brussels on 21 June 2007.

Mahmoud Salehi is the spokesman of the founding committee for establishing trade unions, former president of the Bakery Workers' Association of Saqez and a co-founder of the Coordination Committee for the Establishment of Workers' Organisations. He was sentenced on 11 November 2006 to four years' imprisonment for "conspiracy to commit crimes against national security" pursuant to Article 610 of the Islamic Penal Code. This sentence was reduced to a year's imprisonment and a three-year suspended jail sentence at an appeal that ended on 11 March. Despite being seriously ill, Mahmoud Salehi is not receiving the specialist treatment that his state of health requires, according to the information we have received. Mahmoud Salehi is not allowed to receive visits from his lawyer or his family, but his relatives have been able to speak to him on the telephone.

The International Trade Union Confederation and the International Transport Workers' Federation and Amnesty International believe that Mansour Ossanloo and Mahmoud Salehi are prisoners of conscience, detained solely because of their peaceful trade union activities, and demand their immediate and unconditional release. Their imprisonment coincides with a strong upsurge in the climate of repression in Iran over recent weeks, with the arrest of many human rights activists, trade unionists and lawyers, a number of reported cases of torture and dozens of public hangings being broadcast by state television. Today, Thursday, 9 August 2007, following a call by the three organisations, thousands of trade unionists and human rights activists will demonstrate across the world, from Austria to Panama. In Brussels at 11 a.m., a delegation will try to secure an audience with Iran's diplomatic representatives at the Iranian Embassy, 15 avenue F. Roosevelt, B 1050 Brussels. It will be supported by many Belgian, European and international trade unionists as well as Amnesty International activists.

For more information, see the ITUC website:

[Iran: Union Leader Ossanloo was being held in Evin prison \(13 July 2007\)](#)

[Iran: Union Leader Ossanloo Beaten and Abducted \(11 July 2007\)](#)

[Iran: Anti union repression continues \(5 July 2007\)](#)

[Violent Attacks and Judicial Farce Herald New Wave of Anti-union Repression \(18 April 2007\)](#)

Founded on 1 November 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates. Website: [www.ituc-csi.org](http://www.ituc-csi.org)

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