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Iran: Global Union Organisations Express Deep Concern

Global Action for Justice for Iranian Workers on 26 June

Brussels, 17 June 2009 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has expressed deep concern of the situation in Iran, following the contested election in which President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was declared victor against claims of election fraud by opposition Presidential candidates. Several people have been killed and many more injured by government forces which have been brutally repressing huge demonstrations demanding that the election be recounted or annulled.

"The violent response of the authorities against peaceful demonstrators must be condemned, and those responsible for the deaths and injuries have to be brought to justice. The people of Iran have the right to nothing less than full democracy and transparency, and we call upon those in power to ensure that democracy and internationally-recognised human rights are fully respected," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

Despite an official clampdown on the media, reports are also emerging of arrests of political activists and journalists. The ITUC and its Global Unions partners are continuing to focus their actions on campaigning for the release of trade unionists who have been imprisoned due to their activities in support of workers' rights in recent years. Among those in jail is bus workers' union leader Mansour Osanloo, who was beaten and detained by security forces on 10 July 2007, less than 3 weeks after he addressed an ITUC General Council meeting in Brussels. Rallies and other activities are being held on June 26, the international action day for justice for Iranian workers, in actions coordinated by the ITUC, EI, ITF and IUF. Events already scheduled include:

Rallies at Iranian diplomatic missions in Belgium, France and the Netherlands;

In Australia, unions and community organisations will rally outside the Iranian embassy in Canberra at midday on June 26. Events are also planned in Sydney and Melbourne;

In India, the All India Railwaymen's Federation will organise rallies, marches, and demonstrations;

In Indonesia, unions will rally in Jakarta and conduct a prayer meeting in the port of Tanjung Priok;

In Japan, unions will hold a mass meeting on 24 June to adopt a motion in support of the campaign. This will be taken to the Iranian Embassy in Tokyo on 26;

In Wellington New Zealand, unions plan to bring "a brass band, lots of signs, drums and a street play depicting locked-up Iranian trade unionists" to the Embassy;

In Nigeria, a rally will be held at Murtala Muhammed Airport in Lagos;

In Thailand, trade unionists will demonstrate at the Iranian Embassy as well as visiting the ILO (International Labour Organization) office to raise the issue of the violation of workers' rights in Iran; and,

In London, United Kingdom, a demonstration will be held at the Iranian Embassy.

"The Iranian authorities have a lamentable record on workers' rights issues, preferring to repress independent union activity rather than respect the global standards of the International Labour Organisation. The imprisoned trade unionists must be released without delay, and the full respect for the fundamental rights of working people have to be a central part of what must become a truly democratic Iran," said Ryder.

For more details, see: www.justiceforiranianworkers.org or contact:

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