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ITF – INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION

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Dear Friends,

We are writing to request your organisation to join an International Day of Action on Thursday 9 August concerning two prominent trade union prisoners in Iran: Mansour Osanloo and Mahmoud Salehi. We know that the summer period is not a very good one to launch international solidarity action, particularly in the northern hemisphere. We believe, however, that the particular circumstances in these two cases call for urgent and determined action if our two detained colleagues are to be released in the foreseeable future.

M. Osanloo, President, Tehran Bus Workers' Union (Vahed Syndicate)

Many of you will have seen or at heard of Mansour Osanloo's high-profile visit to the ITF and ITUC statutory meetings in London and Brussels last June. The ITUC General Council, in particular, after giving Mansour a standing ovation, decided to offer him full solidarity in case he ran into trouble after returning to Iran. This is, unfortunately, exactly what happened: it is now two weeks since Mansour Osanloo was abducted, while traveling on a Tehran bus on 10 July. He is now back in the notorious Evin Prison and has reportedly been charged with "conspiring against national security"; his file is apparently being handled by Iran's intelligence services. The ITUC and the ITF have already written a joint protest letter on 11 July to the Iranian government and have submitted additional information to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association. Furthermore, the ITF has launched its online petition "Free Mansour Osanloo". It is generating a large response. If you have not signed that petition yet, you may want to spare a moment and do so by visiting the following URL:

<http://www.itfglobal.org/solidarity/osanloo2.cfm>

In the meantime, many affiliates have sent protest letters. Several unions have organised protest actions at the Iranian embassy/consulate already. Transport workers' Unions in the Arab countries have expressed their solidarity towards Mansour Osanloo and the union collectively.

M. Salehi, Coordinating Committee to Form Workers' Organisations

The health condition of Mahmoud Salehi is quickly deteriorating. As you probably know, he is a founding member of the Saez Bakery Workers' Association and of the above-mentioned Coordinating Committee. His activities have attracted constant persecution from the authorities and, despite his poor health, he is currently imprisoned in Sanandaj in the Kurdistan Province, far away from Saez and his family. Many affiliates have already responded to calls for protest action issued by the ITUC on 9 July. We are now asking you to step up this pressure, as there is very firm evidence that Salehi's life is in danger owing to inadequate medical care in prison.

Requested action on 9 August

We are hoping that both Osanloo and Salehi will be released before our target date and are maintaining constant pressure on Iran authorities to that effect. If, however, either one or both of them are still detained on Thursday 9 August, we are calling on all ITUC and ITF affiliates and Global Union Federations to consider our International Day of Action in solidarity with Iranian workers on that day. Thursday 9 August will mark one year exactly since Mansour Osanloo was released from prison after an earlier period of imprisonment. That release was undoubtedly the result of continuous protests and pressure from the international trade union movement. You may also recall the successful Action Day on 15 February 2006, in response to the mass arrests that the Iranian authorities made the previous month when the Tehran Bus Workers' Union announced a one-day strike to demand Osanloo's release.

On this anniversary day, we are calling upon our affiliates to visit the Iranian diplomatic mission in your country with protests letters and/or hard copies of the petitions collected by the ITF. If there is no Iranian embassy in your country, you may consider visiting your Ministry/Office of Foreign Affairs to raise your concern; holding a press conference; organizing a workplace meeting, or taking any other action which you consider appropriate.

Please inform us as soon as possible about your organisation's intentions with respect to the 9 August Action Day. Please write to urata_mac@itf.org.uk and turights@ituc-csi.org

Thanking you in advance, and with fraternal regards,

Guy Ryder



ITUC General Secretary

David Cockroft



ITF General Secretary