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GREETINGS TO THE BRAVE REZA SHAHABI AND COURAGEOUS UNION OF TEHRAN TRANSIT WORKERS!

According to the information received by the Public Relations office of the Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran (UMMI), Reza Shahabi, the courageous member of the executive committee of Tehran Transit Workers (VAHED) has ended his hunger strike after 50 days at 8:00 pm on July 21st. He ended his strike after meeting with the officials in charge of his case including and in particular Mr. Khodabakhsh. The latter had promised Mr. Shahbi that he would be entitled to rest period and medical leave after being treated and undergone surgery. According to Reza

Shahabi's medical doctors he should be treated for one month to recover from the effects of his 50 days hunger strike so that he is ready for his operation. Based on the promises made, Reza Shahabi could rest at home after he undergoes surgery and spends time at home to recover. UMMI congratulates Reza Shahabi, his selfless wife and the VAHED Transit Workers for their steadfast position in defence of their rights and principles and hope that there is no occasion that labour activists should undertake hunger strike in order to press their case and defend their inalienable rights.

Public Relations of UMMI (Felezkâr-Mechanic)

July 21st 2014

Tehran Transit Workers Union (VAHED):

STOP REZA SHAHABI'S PERSECUTION AND END HIS INHUMAN CONDITIONS!

As previously stated by the Union of Tehran Bus Transit Workers (VAHED), we offer our overwhelming support in defence of the human rights of Reza Shahabi, the dedicated bus driver of Vahed Bus Company and member of the executive board of the VAHED union, and protest against his [prison] relocation and the intolerable jail conditions. We voice our objection against the violation of rights of Reza Shahabi and the terrible and grave situation of this imprisoned worker. We call on the senior Iranian state officials to end his disastrous conditions. We respect Reza Shahabi's right to protest against violation of his human rights and reiterate his demands for freedom, access to full medical treatment, return to work and complete restoration of his labour rights. However, due to his extremely dangerous physical conditions

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and in order to alleviate the anxiety of his innocent children, his anguished wife and relatives and colleagues, including his true friends, we urge him to immediately end his hunger strike and resume normal intake of nutrition.

The VAHED union, while sincerely grateful for the unsparing international support, once again is asking the international organisations, trade unions and prominent and broad minded personalities to continue defending Reza Shahabi.



STRONG-ARMING LABOUR ACTIVISTS FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

With the arresting and detention of labour activists on May 1st, the new round of pressure on imprisoned workers and their families has escalated after raiding Ward 350 of Evin prison. Illegal treatment of Shahrokh Zamani, a painter and member of the Union of Building Painting and Decoration Workers of Tehran and extradite him to Ghezel Hessar prison, and then extraditing Reza Shahabi, a bus driver and member of the Union of Tehran Transit Workers (VAHED) to Gohardasht prison, was the beginning of these pressures. On June 30th 2014 Behnam Ebrahimzadeh had a half an hour visitation with his family at Evin. After this visit, in an unprecedented action, the security agents along with the wife and sick child of Mr. Ebrahimzadeh went to his residence and searched the house, removed the computer hard disc and

confiscating the laptop computer of Neema Ebrahimzadeh [the child] and the memory cards and notes of Behnam Ebrahimzadeh while the agents were videotaping the entire raid. This action, particularly in a working-class neighbourhood and in front of the neighbours, shocked everyone in the neighbourhood. Based on the reports we have received so far, all of these are to fabricate a new case against Behnam and for transferring him to another prison. Undoubtedly, these actions will not stop here and will continue with more case-fabrication and arrests of labour activists.

As we have mentioned several times, such actions against labour activists has one message for the labour movement and that is to wear out the activists of this movement so that they leave the country, and therefore, to weaken labour movement into stagnation. These actions are taken so that the activists go on hunger strike and their body and soul is shattered.

Imprisoned brothers!

Let's frustrate this plot and not allow the enemies of Iran's labour movement succeed in destroying us bodily and morally.

We appeal to all of our imprisoned friends not to go on hunger strike and not turn this weapon against ourselves. We reiterate that your health and wellbeing is more important for the labour movement. While condemning the illegal treatment of Behnam Ebrahimzadeh and his toiling family, we state that the ploy to subdue and destroy the labour movement which has had experienced successful rises of the workers at Isfahan Polyacryl and Bafgh Mining complex, is pushing forward with grinding operations against our imprisoned brothers. We have to counteract and thwart this ploy with vigilance.

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A REPORT TO THE PERIODICAL MEETING OF AUTOWORKERS UNIONS IN SPAIN

250 industrial machinery workers of **Tabriz Tractor Manufacturing Company** has been gathering and rallying in front of the provincial government offices since December 18th of 2013 in protest to their unpaid wages for the months of June to November. The workers' insurance records were not recorded in the books of the social security system since May/June of 2013, because of the \$3,000,000 unpaid premium by the employer to the social security organization. Also, 30 workers who are covered under the "Aayandeh Saaz" retirement fund are not getting any service due to the same reason. This plant manufactured only 33 tractors in 2012/2013 manufacturing year, which translates to only 3% of its capacity. In other words, the workers are present at the plant, but are not making anything. 15 retired workers have not yet received any compensation for years of service, and those who should be retiring, are not retired due to financial shortages.

Paying the unpaid wages and compensations for years of service, renewing the social security cards, paying the owed monies [by employers] to the social security organization and banks and resuming production are amongst the demands of the industrial machinery workers of Tabriz Tractor Manufacturing Co.

250 industrial machinery workers have not been paid in the past 11 months, and more importantly, are faced with uncertainty and insecurity, shutting down of the production line, and abandoning of the plant by the owner (Bank Mellat Investment Co.), and the high ranking provincial authorities have walked out of the issue.

On January 7th 2014 for the second time the workers of Tabriz Tractor Manufacturing Company held a protest action inside the plant and then took

the matter to the office of Industry and Mines Ministry in Tarbiz.

On January 11th, as the protest action of workers heightened, the senior authorities of the province walked out of the issue. The workers first rallied in front of the office of Friday Prayer's Iman and then gathered in front of the provincial government office and chanted: "Martyrs! Martyrs! Come and see that they have violated our rights and are having fun in America with our money." The rally was confronted with police force and a number of workers were arrested for a few hours. This time, the chief of police and the Friday Imam and governor promised to look into the situation in the plant.

Unfortunately nothing has been done so far to resolve the problems at Tabriz Tractor Manufacturing Company.

**Greetings to the World Automotive Workers!
May the International Solidarity of Workers Expand!
Happy May 1st, the International Workers' Day!**

The Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran
April 30th, 2014

GENERAL SECRETARY OF ITUC WRITES TO IRANIAN PRESIDENT

In a letter addressed to Hassan Rouhani, Iranian President, Ms. Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, demanded an end to arrest, persecution, and maltreatment of detained labour activists. Pointing to the detention of a number of labour activists including Ja'afar Azimzadeh and Jamil Mohammadi, Sharan Burrow stressed that some imprisoned trade union activists such as Shahrokh Zamani, Mohammad Jarrahi, Behnam Ibrahimzadeh and Reza Shahabi have been punished purely for their trade union activities. Meanwhile, the Iranian

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Labour News Agency (ILNA) reported that Maziyar Gilaninejad (Public Relations Officer of the Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran) had been released from Rajaei-Shahr Prison. Mr. Gilaninejad had been arrested together with a number of other trade union activists in West Tehran on May 2nd.

IRAN'S TEACHERS UNION LEADER ADDRESSES INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF TEACHERS



Ismail Abdi, at the International Teachers Conference, Turkey

Ismail Abdi, General Secretary of Teachers Trade Association of Iran (ITTA), addressed the international conference hosted by Turkey's Education and Science Workers' Union otherwise known as Eğitim-Sen. Thanking Eğitim-Sen for inviting Iranian teachers union to this international Conference, Ismail Abdi spoke on behalf of 45 non-governmental teachers' bodies working under the umbrella of the Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers Trade Associations (CCITTA).

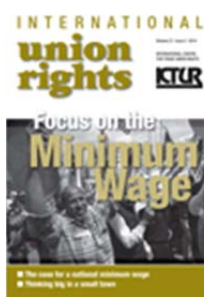
Abdi reported that the authorities in Iran have brutally suppressed all trade unions and workers guilds in Iran. He added that although CCITTA is a recognised member of the Education International, it is treated inside Iran with force and pressure. He said that after widespread teachers protest outside the Iranian Parliament (Majlis) in 2006 in response to the CCITTA initiative, the authorities treat teachers protest as a national security matter. He named a number of active teachers who have been

handed lengthy prison terms of up to 10 years and others who have been forced into internal exile.

In 2009, during the presidency of Mahmud Ahmadinejad, Iranian Kurdish teacher Farzad Kamangar was executed and plunged the whole country and in particular Kurdistan province in sorrow and mourning.

The Iranian teachers' leader concluded his address by stating that the Iranian regime's approach in dealing with teachers has always resulted in imprisonment, exile, humiliation and arrest.

MESSAGE OF THE UNION OF METALWORKERS AND MECHANICS OF IRAN REACHES TO ILO



The annual meeting of the Administrative Council of the International Centre for Trade Union Rights (ICTUR) in Geneva, June 2014, received a detailed account of the conditions of work and struggle of trade unions in Iran. ICTUR had invited a representative of the Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran (UMMI) to address the Annual Administrative Council in Geneva. However, because of the arrest of a number of key activists of UMMI during the May Day events in Tehran, Assistant General Secretary of CODIR (the progressive Iranian solidarity organisation) attended the meeting and presented a report about the situation. He briefed the audience, leaders and representative of trade unions and workers delegations attending the 103rd ILO Conference and labour lawyers about the difficult conditions in the country and the extent of repressive measures taken by the authorities against trade unions. In his presentation CODIR leader spoke about the history of trade union movement in Iran, their role in the developments in the country, the regime

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reactionary attitude to trade union activities and the labour law. CODIR leader detailed the attacks on labour activists in Tehran on May 1st and 2nd when they were trying to celebrate the international workers day. ICTUR Administrative Council resolved to prioritise actions to promote trade union rights in Iran and to ensure that all breaches of terms of ILO conventions by the Iranian regime and employers are documented. ICTUR supports activities aimed at exposing attacks on workers' rights and for improving human and democratic rights, and in particular trade union rights in Iran.

ABOUT "PAYAM-E SANDICA"

"Payam-e Sandica" [union message] newsletter in Farsi was originally launched in August 2011 as "Payam-e Felezkâr" [metalworker message] by the editorial board of the Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran. On May 1st of 2013, when the workers from the labour unions "Tehran Bus Transit Workers" (VAHED), "Building Painting and Decoration" and "Haft-Tappeh Sugarcane" joined forces in publishing this monthly newsletter, its name was changed to "Payam-e Sandica". The capabilities of this independent trade/labour Farsi publication were fortified when the union of Masonry Workers and the Union of Project Workforce joined the editorial board of "Payam-e sandica" in November of 2013 and on May 1st 2014, respectively. Currently the monthly "Payam-e Sandica" (the internal Farsi publication of Iranian trade unions) is published by unionists in print and electronically in Tehran, to be distributed among and sent to the members of unions and workers in plants and factories across Iran, and also to be available internationally to those who are interested in labour issues in Iran.

"Payam-e Sandica" [union message], as the name says it, is the voice of the independent unionist of

Iran which is managed by the workers for the workers in Iran, according to the Article 26 of Iran's Constitution, and based on the universal charter of labour unions. Its goal is to help organize and raise awareness of workers, and it should address the working class issues, in line with unionism principles, in plain and educating language understandable to working people, without any political, religious or philosophical orientations.

From June 2014 issue of Payam-eSandica

Statement of UMMI:

STOP THE WAR AND KILLING OF WOMEN, CHILDREN AND WORKING PEOPLE IN GAZA!



What has been happening in Gaza is a crime against humanity and a clear genocide. Israeli army strikes from air and ground and destroys the homes of the innocent working people and

kills women and children. Israel launched this firebombing in Palestine over the killing of 3 Israeli citizens. We condemn the killing of these three Israeli citizens which has to be investigated by an international fact-finding commission to find and expose the perpetrators and motivation of this crime. This war has targeted the working families on both sides, whether Palestinian or Israeli, and does not benefit anyone but extremists and warmongers. Israel claims that the reason it is mobilizing its war machine, is the launching of rockets by extremist Palestinians. But how could the killing of hundreds of innocent civilians be justified with the ineffective rockets that are mostly

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targeted and destroyed in the sky by Israel's defense shield? In the last two weeks, the Palestinian women and children have been the target of the state terrorism of Israel which doesn't think about anything but war and occupation of Palestinian territories and fortifying its power. It is very questionable that Israel aggression is launched at a time when a practical alliance has been formed amongst the political forces in Palestine, a national unity government has been formed in the recent months, and extremist forces were not in a position to continue their past practices and policies.



In all of this, the forces allied and affiliated with imperialism are trying to fan the flames of war in Gaza to cover up what their terrorist cronies in Syria and Iraq are doing. We are very concerned about the continuation of this war which undoubtedly will engage Lebanon too. This war will certainly make the political atmosphere of the region more unstable, will expand the field of action of terrorists, dictators and fascists, and will hinder dialogue and negotiations and collective wisdom. Working people want peace and it is under peaceful conditions that their struggle for their rights can advance and succeed.

We call upon the working people and trade unions in Iran, Palestine, Israel, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Cyprus and Lebanon to collectively protest this evil ploy of global capitalism and the state of Israel, and

condemn this crime and genocide and launching war in the region. Let's all demand the UN to step in and act within its charter to end this disastrous war.



Let's call upon the government of Egypt to open the Rafah passage in its border with Gaza for the humanitarian aids and drugs and food to reach in Gaza.

We call upon the leadership of WFTU to organize a united and simultaneous demonstration and ask all the trade unions in the region to condemn this war and bloodshed, and with the slogan of peace and brotherhood, unite the working people of the region from any race and with any religion or ideology.

The Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran

July 23rd 2014



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