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ITF/ITUC/sh

11 July 2007

Abduction of Mansour Osanloo

Dear President,

On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing 305 trade union organisations, with a total membership of 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories, and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) representing 681 unions with a total membership of 4,500,000 transport workers in 148 countries, we strongly condemn the abduction of Mansour Osanloo, the President of the Sandikaye Kargarane Sherkate Vahed (Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company).

We have been informed by the Sherkate Vahed that its President, Mansour Osanloo was abducted by unidentified assailants as he was leaving a Vahed Company bus near his home at around 7pm on 10 July. Witnesses on the bus stated that they beat him severely, and continued to beat him as they took him away in a metallic grey Peugeot to an undisclosed location. Mr. Osanloo had apparently been followed all day by the unmarked Peugeot car. Such vehicles are well known as being associated with the Iranian Security Forces.

We understand that his family and his union colleagues do not know the identity of the assailants, but they believe that a direct order has been issued by your Labour Minister, demanding the immediate seizure of Mr Osanloo. We further understand that Mr Osanloo's wife and family members went to the 128th Branch Police Station in Narmak near their home. The Deputy Information Officer at the police station made unwarranted accusations, telling them that Mr Osanloo was a spy who received money from abroad, but the police would not acknowledge whether they had arrested or abducted him.

During the week of 18 June 2007 the ITF and the ITUC welcomed Mr. Osanloo at meetings in London and Brussels respectively, where he met with leaders of road transport trade unions worldwide and the members of the ITUC General Council. Trade union leaders from all regions of the world pledged their support to the Sherkat-e-Vahed trade union and Mr. Osanloo himself.

The ITF and the ITUC are now deeply concerned for the safety of Mr. Osanloo. Given the past history of Mr. Osanloo's treatment by the security forces there is strong reason to believe that they are indeed responsible for this attack, which we believe is directly linked to his trade union activities. As you will recall, we have already had to protest to you about this on several occasions, including two in November 2006. Then only a week ago, Ebrahim Madadi, Vice President of the union was detained for a short period by the police before being released following global trade union protests.

By virtue of its membership of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) the Islamic Republic of Iran is legally bound to respect its core principles including the principle of the freedom of association. The Ministry of Labour has repeatedly reassured the ITUC (then-ICFTU) and the ITF that it is committed to workers' rights and dialogue with the international trade union movement.

We therefore urge your government to take every possible step to ensure the safety of Mr. Osanloo and do all in your power to secure his immediate release, as well as identifying those responsible.

In the meantime, in the view of the seriousness of this matter, we are bringing it to the urgent attention of ITF and ITUC affiliates throughout the world and to the Director General of the ILO, Mr Juan Somavia. We are also submitting a complaint today to the ILO's Committee on Freedom of Association, and that complaint will include this latest attack on Mr. Osanloo.

Yours sincerely,



Guy Ryder



David Cockroft

Cc.: His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran