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03.03.2008 № 115/45

На № _____ от _____

STATEMENT

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) have declared the 6th of March 2008 as an Action Day in solidarity with the Iranian workers.

The Federation of the Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR), as an affiliated organization of the ITUC, supports the initiative of the ITUC/ITF to participate in this global action day.

On behalf of our Federation with 28-million membership, we express the deep concern of Russian workers as regards the continuous deterioration in the situation of trade union and other fundamental human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

For the past years we have learned about reports of arrests operated by the Government of Iran against trade unionists in various cities of your country.

Four prominent trade union leaders, Brs. Mansour Osanloo, Mahmoud Salehi, Alireza Hashemi and Mohammad Khaksari have been imprisoned on charges directly relate to their trade union activities.

Mansour Osanloo has just had another eye operation on 24 January and has again been sent back to prison against the doctor's recommendations. On 17 January Mahmoud Salehi was taken from the prison's medical clinic to Tohid Hospital's emergency unit. Alireza Hashemi has been sentenced to three years in jail and Mohammad Khaksari has also been sentenced to one year in prison in January.

We would like to draw your attention that the Islamic Republic's membership of the International Labour Organization (ILO) imposes an obligation under international law, to respect workers' freedom of association; this includes refraining from legal persecution of persons for their trade union activities.

Expressing their international solidarity the workers of Russia, represented by FNPR, once again demand immediate and unconditional release of our trade union colleagues.

We are also demanding that fundamental workers' rights be respected in Iran, in accordance with the ILO core conventions.

President of the FNPR

Mikhail Shmakov

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