

Further Information on UA 08/06 (MDE 13/002/2006, 9 January 2006) and follow-ups (MDE 13/094/2006, 17 August 2006; MDE 13/129/2006, 29 November 2006; MDE 13/011/2007, 31 January 2007; MDE 13/086/2007, 13 July 2007) - Arbitrary arrest / prisoner of conscience / medical concern

IRAN Mansour Ossanlu (m), aged 47, Head of the Union of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company

Unless he receives urgent hospital treatment, the Evin prison doctor has told Mansour Ossanlu he may lose his sight within two weeks. The prison authorities have claimed, falsely, that he has been given medical treatment.

When a delegation of visiting Indonesian trade unionists, and later his wife, tried to visit Mansour Ossanlu at Evin prison on 9 October, the prison authorities claimed that he had been taken to hospital for urgent medical treatment for injuries he had sustained at the hands of the security forces in May 2005. His wife was eventually able to see him on 15 October, when he told her he had received no medical treatment at all.

Prisoner of conscience Mansour Ossanlu, leader of the Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed), was arrested on 10 July 2007. He was previously detained for eight months, from December 2005 to August 2006, and again for a month from November to December 2006 in connection with his trade union activities. He had reportedly been sentenced to five years' imprisonment in May 2007, but was believed to be free on bail at the time of his arrest.

In February 2007 he travelled to Europe to build international support for an independent trade union movement in Iran.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Independent trade unions are not permitted in Iran, and discriminatory legislation means that certain categories of people are not permitted to stand for election as workers' representatives of government-recognised unions; government supervisory bodies select who can stand for union posts, and all public sector jobs. Trades unions in Iran are represented by a body known as Workers House, whose leaders are also subject to selection criteria imposed by the state, weakening its ability to effectively represent workers' concerns. The Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, which resumed activities in 2004 after a 25-year ban, is still not legally recognised.

Iran is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 22 (1) of which states: "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests." Article 26 of Iran's Constitution states: "The formation of parties, societies, political or professional associations... is permitted provided they do not violate the principles of independence, freedom, national unity, the criteria of Islam, or the basis of the Islamic republic. No one may be prevented from participating in the aforementioned groups, or be compelled to participate in them." Similar guarantees are provided under International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions.

On 16 October, the International Transport Federation (ITF) labour organisation released a film entitled *Freedom Will Come - the Story of Mansour Osanloo*, intended for global distribution in order to galvanise the campaign to free Mansour Ossanlu and his colleague Ebrahim Madadi, and to protect the right of Iranian workers to join trade unions. The ITF plan to make the film available on its own website (see: <http://www.itfglobal.org/solidarity/osanloo2.cfm>) and YouTube. During International Road Transport Action Week 2007, from 15 October 2007, the ITF is calling on its member unions, and in particular bus drivers, to wear badges calling for Mansour Ossanlu to be released.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian or your own language:

- urging the authorities to ensure that Mansour Ossanlu is seen by a qualified doctor and receives urgent treatment by an eye specialist;
- reminding them that every prisoner has the right to adequate medical attention and that they are responsible for prisoners' wellbeing;
- expressing concern that he appears to be held solely on account of his peaceful trade union activities, in which case he should be released immediately and unconditionally;
- asking why Mansour Ossanlu was rearrested on 10 July, and asking for details of any charges he is facing;
- urging the authorities to ensure that he is given immediate and regular access to his lawyers, and his family;
- reminding the authorities of their obligations under ICCPR Article 22 (1) and ILO conventions 87 and 98, which provide for the right to form and join trade unions.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei

The Office of the Supreme Leader, Islamic Republic Street - Shahid Keshvar Doust Street
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Alireza Mahjoub, Director, Workers House

Enghlab Street - Daneshgah Street

Ravan-e Mehr Crossroads, Tehran, Iran

Salutation: Dear Sir

Director, Evin Prison

Chamran Highway

Adjacent to Azadi Hotel

Dasht Behesht Street, Tehran, Iran

Email: evin@tehranprisons.ir

Salutation: Dear Sir

Head of the Parliamentary Article 90 Commission

Mohammad Reza Faker

Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami

Baharestan Square, Tehran, Iran

Fax: +98 21 3355 6408

Salutation: Dear Sir

and to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 November 2007.*****