

PUBLIC

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09 January 2006

UA 08/06 Arbitrary arrest/possible prisoner of conscience/medical concern

IRAN **Mansour Ossanlu (m), Head of the Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (*Sherkat-e Vahed*)**

Mansour Ossanlu, the Head of the Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (*Sherkat-e Vahed*) has been detained since 22 December 2005 in Section 209 of Evin Prison in the capital, Tehran. He may be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely on account of his peaceful trade union activities. He is said to be suffering from a serious eye complaint, and could lose his sight if he does not receive immediate medical treatment.

Mansour Ossanlu was among 12 officials from the Union who were reportedly arrested by police at their homes on 22 December 2005, apparently in connection with their peaceful trade union activities. Four of the 12 were released shortly afterwards. On 25 December, members of the Union were arrested while staging a bus strike in Tehran, demanding the release of their colleagues. On 26 December, all those who had been detained were released, with the exception of Mansour Ossanlu and six other members of the Union's Executive Board. These six were released two days later, leaving only Mansour Ossanlu in detention. Mansour Ossanlu has not been granted access to a lawyer, and reports suggest that he may be facing charges including contact with Iranian opposition groups abroad and instigating armed revolt against the authorities.

On 31 December, reports indicated that seven Union members including Mansour Hayat Ghaybi (or Ghaybati); Ebrahim Madadi; Reza Tarazi, Gholamreza Mirza'i; Abbas Najand Kouhi and Ali Zad Hossein had been summoned to appear before a Revolutionary Court in Tehran the following day on charges including public order offences. However, following protests by Union members outside the court on 1 January, the seven were reportedly told that their trial had been postponed.

On 7 January 2006, Bus Company workers staged another strike, during which five drivers were reportedly detained. All were later reportedly released.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company is said to have been founded in 1979 and resumed activities in 2004 after a 25-year ban. It is still not legally recognised.

Iran is a State Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 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.

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

- expressing concern at the continued detention of Mansour Ossanlu, who is held in Section 209 of Evin Prison and seeking assurances that he is not being tortured or ill-treated while in detention;

- expressing concern that he may be held solely on account of his peaceful trade union activities, in which case he should be released immediately and unconditionally;
- otherwise, calling on the authorities to charge him promptly with a recognizably criminal offence and bring him to trial promptly and fairly;
- expressing concern at reports that Mansour Ossanlu requires urgent medical treatment for a serious eye complaint, and calling for him to be given immediate access to any necessary medical treatment;
- urging the authorities to grant him immediate and regular access to a lawyer of his choice and his family;
- reminding the authorities of their obligations under the ICCPR, Article 22 (1) of which provides for the right to form and join trade unions.

APPEALS TO:

(Please note that it may be difficult to get through to fax numbers in Iran. Please keep trying. If you are unable to get through, please send appeals via email or by post).

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street
Qom

Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 251 7 774 2228 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")

Email: istiftaa@wilayah.org OR info@leader.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email: irjpr@iranjudiciary.org (mark "Please forward to His Excellency Ayatollah Shahroudi")
Or via the Judiciary's website: www.iranjudiciary.org/feedback_en.html**

Fax: + 98 21 8 879 6671 / 6 640 4018 / 6 640 4019

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of the Interior

Hojatoleslam Mustafa Purmohammadi
Ministry of the Interior
Dr Fatemi Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 8 896 203/ 899 547/ 6 650 203

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES 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 20 February 2006.