

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/094/2006

17 August 2006

Further Information on UA 08/06 (MDE 13/002/2006, 9 January 2006) 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*), was released on 9 August after payment of bail amounting to 150,000,000 Toumans (approximately US\$163,000). He had been detained since 22 December 2005 in Section 209 of Evin Prison in the capital, Tehran.

Along with 17 other trade unionists (see UA 26/06, MDE 13/008/2006, 02 February 2006, and follow-up) Mansour Ossanlu is said to be awaiting trial before Branch 14 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran on charges which may include propaganda against the system through leaflets and interviews with foreign anti-government radio stations, and acting to disturb internal state security by establishing links with hostile opposition groups and foreign countries. The exact nature of the charges is not yet known.

If he is convicted solely on the basis of charges which are not recognisably criminal, and relate solely to his peaceful exercise of his internationally recognized right to form and join trade unions or to freedom of expression, Amnesty International would consider Mansour Ossanlu and any others convicted of such charges to be prisoners of conscience and would call for their immediate and unconditional release.

There is no further news on Mansour Ossanlu's eye complaint, which was said to be endangering his sight.

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, or your own language:

- welcoming the release on bail of Mansour Ossanlu;
- seeking information concerning the precise charges and nature of the evidence against him;
- asking to be informed of the date of any trial sessions which may take place;
- urging the authorities to drop any charges against him which relate solely to his peaceful exercise of his internationally recognized right to form and join trade unions or to freedom of expression;
- stating that if Mansour Ossanlu were to be convicted and imprisoned solely on the basis of such charges, Amnesty International would consider him to be a prisoner of conscience, and would call for his immediate and unconditional release;

- 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:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

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

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

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: Please send emails via the feedback form on the Persian site of the website:

<http://www.iranjudiciary.org/contactus-feedback-fa.html>

The text of the feedback form translates as:

1st line: name, 2nd line: email address, 3rd line: subject heading, then enter your email into text box.

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: Via foreign affairs: +98 21 6 674 790 and ask to be forwarded to H.E Ahmadinejad

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir OR via website: www.president.ir/email

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 6 646 1746

Minister of the Interior

Hojatoleslam Mustafa Purmohammadi
Ministry of the Interior

Dr Fatemi Avenue

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

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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 28 September 2006.