

# URGENT ACTION

## TWO TRADE UNIONISTS RELEASED, TWO STILL HELD

**Mansour Ossanlu, head of an independent but unrecognized trade union in Iran, was released from Reja'i Shahr prison on medical leave on 2 June 2011. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, another trade unionist, was released on bail equivalent to US\$30,000 on 27 April 2011. Two other trade-unionists remain in custody.**

**Reza Shahabi** (also Reza Shahabi Zakaria), the Treasurer of the Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed) remains detained in Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran. On 25 May 2011, his trial on charges of "propaganda against the system" and "gathering and colluding against state security" concluded before a branch of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran.. His lawyer has stated that the prosecution is seeking to bring a fresh charge of "enmity against God" against Reza Shahabi for his alleged contact with the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), a banned opposition group, **Ebrahim Maddadi**, (also Madadi), Deputy Head of the Union, is currently serving a three-year prison sentence for "acts against national security", which is due to end around September 2011. Amnesty International believes both men are prisoners of conscience, held solely for their peaceful trade union activities, and should be released immediately and unconditionally.

On 2 June, Parvaneh Ossanlu, **Mansour Ossanlu's** wife, stated he had been granted a four-day medical leave for medical treatment. Amnesty International is unaware of the exact conditions of his release, but some reports suggest that he has been released on bail.

Iran is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that "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", and to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which guarantees the "right of everyone to form trade unions and join the trade union of his choice".

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- Welcome the release of Mansour Ossanlu and Gholamreza Gholamhosseini but urge the Iranian authorities not to imprison them in the future solely for their peaceful trade union activities;
- Urge the authorities to release Reza Shahabi Zakaria and Ebrahim Maddadi immediately and unconditionally as they are held solely for their peaceful trade union activities;
- Urge the authorities to uphold their obligation to allow people in Iran to form and join independent trade unions.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 July 2011 TO:

Head of the Judiciary  
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani  
Office of the Head of the Judiciary  
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of  
Serah-e Jomhuri  
Tehran 1316814737  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email:** [info@dadiran.ir](mailto:info@dadiran.ir) or  
[bia.judi@yahoo.com](mailto:bia.judi@yahoo.com)  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Head of the Provincial Judiciary in  
Tehran  
Ali Reza Avaei  
Karimkhan Zand Avenue  
Sana'i Avenue, Corner of Alley 17, No.  
152  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email:** [avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir](mailto:avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir)  
**Salutation:** Dear Mr Avaei

**And copies to:**  
Secretary General, High Council for  
Human Rights  
Mohammad Javad Larijani  
High Council for Human Rights  
c/o Office of the Head of the Judiciary  
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave., south of  
Serah-e Jomhuri  
Tehran 1316814737  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email:** **Email:** [info@humanrights-iran.ir](mailto:info@humanrights-iran.ir) (In  
subject line: **FAO Mohammad Javad  
Larijani**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 130/10. Further information:  
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/013/2011/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Union (or Syndicate) of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed) was banned after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Workers resumed the union's activities in 2004, although it is not legally recognized. On 22 December 2005, police arrested 12 of the union's leaders at their homes, including Mansour Ossanlu, but quickly released four of them. Other members were arrested on 25 December 2005 after they went on strike to call for the release of their colleagues. Hundreds more were arrested during a further strike in January 2006 (see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/002/2006/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/008/2006/en>).

Reza Shahabi was arrested in June 2010 three days after the arrest of Saeed Torabian, the union's spokesperson. Held incommunicado detention for some weeks, he later contacted his family and told them he was being held in Evin Prison, Tehran. In September, after the authorities announced Reza Shahabi could be released on bail, his family paid the required 600 million rials (US\$50,000) only to have the authorities demand a further sum equivalent to US\$100,000. He began a hunger strike on 4 December 2010 in protest at his continued detention. Seven days after starting his hunger strike, Reza Shahabi was hospitalized as his health deteriorated. Due to his continued poor health, Reza Shahabi ended his hunger strike on 19 December 2010. Reza Shahabi is believed to still be detained in Evin Prison's Section 209, which is controlled by the Ministry of Intelligence.

Mansour Ossanlu had been serving a five-year prison sentence in poor conditions in Reja'i Shahr Prison, in Karaj, near Tehran. He was tried on fresh charges in August 2010 and received another year's prison sentence, to be added to the five years he was already serving. His health deteriorated while in prison, exacerbated by poor prison conditions. On 6 May 2011, Mansour Ossanlu was transferred from Raja'i Shahr Prison, in Karaj, near Tehran to an undisclosed private hospital for treatment of blocked arteries. He was subsequently returned to Raja'i Shahr Prison on 21 May 2011.

Saeed Torabian and Reza Shahabi were suspended from work, without pay, for approximately four years following the strikes in 2005. They were eventually reinstated after the Court of Administrative Justice investigated their case. This Court is empowered to investigate complaints against government employees.

Other trade unionists have been arrested or harassed recently, including members of the Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Company (HTSCC) Trade Union, also not recognized by the government. The union's Leader, Reza Rakhshan, began serving a six-month prison sentence on 3 January 2011 imposed by an appeals court for "spreading lies", after he had been acquitted of this charge by a lower court, apparently in connection with an article he wrote in December 2009 entitled "We are One Family", condemning arrests and harassment of his fellow workers. On 18 November 2010, three members of the Haft Tapeh Trade Union were sentenced to six months in prison by the Ahvaz Appeals Court. Behrouz Nikoufard, Alireza Sa'eedi and Behrouz Molazadeh were reportedly convicted of "insulting the Leader", although none is believed to have begun serving their sentence yet.

Rasoul Bodaghi, a member of Iran Teachers' Trade Associations (ITTAs), which is affiliated to Education International (EI), held since September 2009, is currently serving a six year sentence in Raja'i Shahr Prison, in Karaj, near Tehran. He had been sentenced in August 2010 to one year in prison for "propaganda against the system" and five years in prison for "gathering and colluding with intent to disturb national security", both vaguely worded charges. He was also banned from all civil society activities for five years. Following the fifth day of a hunger strike by several political prisoners in protest of the treatment of prisoners and conditions inside the prison, including denial of visitation and phone privileges, and other forms of pressure on political prisoners that began on 22 May 2011, Rasoul Bodaghi was transferred to solitary confinement on 27 May 2011. There are fears for his health.

In April 2011, three members of Hamadan's teacher's union in north-west Iran, Ali Najafi, Mohammad Khani and Saeed Jahanara, were summoned to court, possibly to face charges of "propaganda against the system".

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