



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)



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Imminent Execution of Farzad Kamangar

Dear Commissioner,

We are writing to you on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation and the European Trade Union Confederation to draw your urgent attention to the imminent threat of execution of the Iranian labour activist **Farzad Kamangar**.

Over the last few years, separate teachers' groups have been formed, many of which are registered with the Interior Ministry as authorized teachers' organizations, and these groups coordinated labour activities. Notably in 2007 rounds of protests became successively larger and larger, eventually encompassing some 12,000 teachers from across the country.

The teacher activism has led to several incidents of repression by the Iranian authorities, and in the case of Mr. Kamangar, he was sentenced to death on 25 February 2008 by the Tehran Revolutionary Court in connection with his trade union activities.

Farzad Kamangar is a 33-year old teacher and member of the Kurdistan Teachers Trade Association, and is accused of being a terrorist. According to his lawyer, Khalil Bahramian, there is no evidence to justify the judgement that Mr Kamangar has "endangered national security" or is moharebe "in enmity with God". Farzad Kamangar's trial was not in accordance with article 168 of the Iranian Constitution: "Political and press offences will be tried openly and in the presence of a jury, in courts of justice." In this case, only one judge reviewed the case within five minutes and the defendant was not allowed to speak. Nevertheless, the death penalty was confirmed by the Supreme Court of Iran on 11 July 2008.

Various national and international campaigns have been organised in support of Farzad Kamangar with the aim of commuting his death sentence. Amnesty International and Education International both issued urgent appeals on his behalf. He has been defended by the Iranian centre headed by Nobel Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, the Defenders of Human Rights Center. His case was taken up by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran. Human Rights Watch also expressed its deep concern about his case

Now the ITUC and the ETUC have been informed by Education International that he has been taken from his cell 121 in ward 209 of Tehran's Evin prison as a preparation for his execution, which reportedly was set for today on 26 November 2008. Jail security officers are said to have told him he is about to be executed whilst making fun of him and calling him a martyr. We have just had confirmed that he was not on the list for executions today anyway, even as other prisoners were executed, but the possibility that he might be executed very soon still remains.

We are extremely concerned about this development, and would like to appeal to you to intervene on his behalf with the Iranian Government in order to bring a halt to the execution immediately, and to request that a fair trial be conducted and that in the meantime that Mr. Kamangar be released from prison with no further delay.

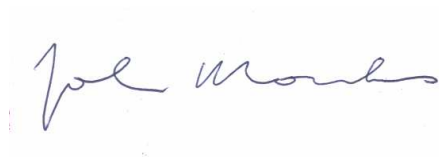
The ITUC and the ETUC also would like draw your attention to the fact that many other labour activists are being persecuted in Iran, most notably the winner of this year's Silver Rose Award, Mr. Mansour Osanloo, president of the bus worker union Syndica Sherkat-e Vahed, who remains in prison to date.

In these circumstances, we also hope that the EU will wish to impress upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran the general importance of respect for basic human rights and international labour standards.

We will not fail to inform you of further developments in this case. In the meantime, we would appreciate it if you could kindly intervene as soon as possible with the Government and keep us informed of any response that you may receive.

We thank you for your kind and urgent attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



John Monks
General Secretary ETUC



Guy Ryder
General Secretary ITUC

Cc.: European Commission, Rolf R. Timans, Head of Unit Human Rights and Democratisation