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Link to workers' news in Iran:

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Joint May Day resolution of labour organizations in Iran

May 1, 2011 (11 Ordibehesht 1390)

The first of May, the International Workers' Day, is a day of unity and of global protest against the oppression and inequalities of the capitalist system. This day is a day commemorating the struggle of workers for their human rights. Iranian workers and the workers of the world, hold this day dear, and every year come together to raise the sound of their demand for their rights; by all possible means.

On the first of May the sound of the passion and militancy of workers in their millions, their demonstrations for freedom across great swathes of the world, reaches and inspires the workers of Iran who fight for their social rights and organizations amongst the harshest oppressions and threats; to their lives and livelihoods. Any kind of workers demonstration or demand for justice is met with detention and prison, in line with the methods of the capitalist ruling class, with the backing of the international organizations of capitalism, whilst they oppress workers and ruin their families, no one has the right to give a free opinion on this matter. Whilst they increase the price of petrol, energy and fuel, close factories, add thousands of workers to the unemployment lines, fiddle unemployment insurance against the workers interests, hurt the social interests of workers by taking steps to shut hospitals and medical centres, dream up new schemes of retirement to make us work longer and raise the price of basic goods to dizzying levels, they cut workers wages by an average of nine percent.

In our view these actions will cause nothing but poverty and misery for millions of working class families. We will not accept this destruction of us, our spouses and children that we are forced to witness. We will stand united and struggle against the immiseration and deepening poverty that is imposed on us and our reduction to a group without social rights. Thus, we, workers in Iran, denounce the existing conditions and call on all workers all over the country, to set out the following demands, with unity and without hesitation:

1. The unconditional freedom to found independent worker's organizations, strike, demonstrate, march, freedom for political parties, freedom of speech as our inalienable rights. All oppressive governmental organizations in places for living and working should be removed, and these rights should be officially recognized as the unchangeable rights of the workers, and the masses of people in Iran.
2. We will not accept a society in which wealth and capital are in the hands of a minority whilst the majority must struggle to find a loaf of bread for their evening meal. A 9% minimum wage decrease, whilst huge price rises go on, is an insult to the idea of human dignity and justice for workers. We see this as the creation of misery and poverty for millions of working class families and struggle with genuine worker's representatives to fight for the highest standards of modern living.
3. We demand an end to temporary contracts and signed blanked contracts. We demand the overturning of existing subcontracting companies. We demand the right to transparent collective bargaining and agreements and the highest standards of health and safety in the work place.
4. All outstanding wages should be paid in full, without excuse or delay and workers should be compensated for all damages arising from their non payment of

Why a IASWI Newsletter?

IASWI has been issuing news updates and bulletins on the struggles of Iranian working class for the past eleven years in Farsi, English and French. We have now decided to produce an English Newsletters on a regular basis. This will make referencing and other information more accessible and organized. It is also a matter of providing ongoing and reliable information for non-Farsi readers on highlights of campaigns and issues related to workers' struggles in Iran. The IASWI issues many statements in Farsi throughout the year. We will try to translate some of our materials to English as well. IASWI Farsi website is updated on the daily basis.

About IASWI:

The International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran (IASWI) is a progressive, non-partisan campaign in support of workers' rights and struggles in Iran. The IASWI was formed in 1999 and formally launched in January 2000 with the following objectives:

- Support workers' movement demands and struggles in Iran, including the right to organize free and independent labour organizations and the right to strike.
- Strive for an absolute end to the systematic repression, persecution, imprisonment, torture, assassination and execution of labour activists and political opponents in Iran.
- Promote the implementation and enforcement of internationally recognized human and workers' rights and freedoms for all people in Iran.

The IASWI has been working in collaboration with many labour and

wages.

5. Sackings and unemployment, by any excuse, must cease and all workers, upon reaching working age, should be paid unemployment insurance based on a human living standard.
6. With attention to the fact that the organization of social security has become one of Iran's richest institutions on the back of workers' wages and contributions, yet this organization has become trapped in the capitalist logic accumulation of profit, merely trying to reduced medical benefits and charging workers for services. Social security insurances are fundamental rights of all people and we call for it to be run by elected representatives of the workers, all over the country.
7. Whilst condemning the attacks on workers and popular demonstrations we call for the nullification of the death sentence and the immediate and unconditional release of imprisoned workers and activists of other social movements. We call for an end to prosecution of these activists and the security environment.
8. We call for the annulment of all laws that discriminate against women and call for their complete and unconditional equality with men in political, legal, social, economic, cultural and family life.
9. We call for all retired people to have a life free from poverty and economic worry. We call for all pensions to be paid immediately and without discrimination and for pensioners to receive all necessary social and health services.
10. All child labour must cease. Educational and health necessities must be provided freely the same for all children and their families, independently of the economic and social realities of their families, and regardless of their gender, ethnicity, nationality or religion should not become poisons.
11. We consider the desire for social change a fundamental right of all human beings all over the world. We support the popular protests and struggles all across the Middle East and condemn any attempts by governments and rulers to sneak through change from above to counter act them. We condemn any attempt to crush popular demonstrations and any attempt to interfere in the people's struggles in countries of the Middle East.
12. We are a section of the workers of the world and condemn any discrimination against migrant Afghan workers in Iran, or workers of any other nationality, on any excuse.
13. We appreciate the solidarity shown to Iranian workers from the international workers and popular movements and stand in support of them, united with them in their demands all around the world, and call, now more than ever, for international workers unity for freedom from the capitalist system's miseries.
14. The first of May should become an official national holiday, noted in official calendar. All limitations and bans on the commemoration of this day should be lifted.

Long Live the First of May!

Long Live International Worker's Solidarity!

- The Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Vahed Bus Company
- The Free Union of Workers in Iran
 - The Founding Committee of the Syndicate of Building 's Painters and Decoration's Workers
 - The Committee for the Refoundation of Metal and Mechanical Workers' Syndicate
 - The Centre in Defence of Workers' Rights
 - The Committee to Pursue the Establishment of Workers' Organizations
 - The Coordinating Committee to Help Form Workers' Organizations

Translated by IASWI. Original resolution in Farsi:

http://www.etehadbinalmelali.com/HTML_11/27_4_11/ghatnameh.htm

progressive activists and organizations in Iran and around the world to strengthen worker-to-worker solidarity in defence of workers' rights and struggles in Iran and against the repressive Islamic Republic of Iran and its capitalist and neo-liberal policies and practices.

As an international solidarity campaign in support of workers in Iran, the IASWI has colleagues and branches in North America, Europe and other parts of the world that work collaboratively towards the realization of the above objectives.

Contact IASWI:

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International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran Statement on May Day 2011

In the outset of 21st century, with May Day 2011 around the corner, the world is still in the hands of a few, and their circles shrinking by the day. Accelerated process of attack towards Labour and Human Rights in advanced capitalist countries from ideological attacks on Humane and Socialist ideals to augmenting ultra reactionary, radical religious, ethnic ideas, has only increased, and has been a part of the recent history of the world community.

Workers and Freedom loving individuals have not kept quite in this regard. Particularly in the year that just passed people of the globe from France, Spain, Greece, U.S., Tunisia, Egypt, Iran,... arose to confront this issue.

In Iran and by the presence of the Islamic regime the situation of workers is truly intolerable. While Iranian officials have announced the inflation rate to be more than 22 percent, according to independent workers organizations the price of necessary items such as meat, eggs, cooking oil, rice and sugar has experienced a 50 to 120 percent increase in the year. Based on international standards the wage of an average Iranian worker is 4 times below the poverty line. Not only that, the removal of subsidies and lack of timely payment of wages as well as temporary work contracts have joined hands to put added pressure on Iranian workers.

However, the workers of Iran have started this year in a proactive note, determined and focused. Immediately following the Norouz Holidays, about three thousand contract workers went on strike, and announced they are no longer willing to be slaved. The recent victory in Mahshahr Petrochemical Complex and the strike's success in a move to eliminate contract work and subcontracting companies, is a pattern that shall be continued. This strike remains a strike to both support and learn from.

In support of Iranian workers, IASWI strongly condemns the government and employer's attack on worker's livelihood and actively supports their demands and campaigns. The most urgent demands of workers on the eve of 2011 May Day are as follows:

- 1) 27 thousand Toman (25 dollar) increase in monthly minimum wage is a clear insult on the worker's sanctity and dignity and in a way is playing with the lives of millions of people especially children of working class families, as it would put them at risk of various health risks. Workers demand monthly minimum wage to be set based on highest human standards, which is about four times higher than the current 330 thousand toman (about \$275.00) as well as the ability to determine the minimum wage through real representatives and independent labour organizations.
- 2) Iranian workers viewed subsidies as inadequate, however workers see the removal of subsidies by the government an offensive towards their livelihood and demand an immediate end to these cut backs, which is carried out by the IRI under "the targeted subsidy plan".
- 3) Iranian workers demand the immediate closure of all contract agencies and dismissal of all temporary and open contracts and replacing them with secure employment and punishment of all employers whom have been taking cheques and promissory notes as accrual from workers.
- 4) Iranian workers demand immediate and full payment of their back wages as well as in time and full payment of all their wages and benefits. Lack of timely payment must be deemed as a crime and be prosecutable by judiciary officials and the worker must be paid compensation as the result.
- 5) Iranian workers demand safe working environment in accordance with internationally recognized standards and demand criminal prosecution of employers who are violating this commitment.
- 6) Iranian workers demanded full and unconditional freedom in the right to form independent workers' organizations and to strike. Also all suppressing governmental organizations such as security forces, Workers' House and the Islamic Councils must be dismissed from work places to allow workers to form their own organizations without

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Why a Newsletter?

IASWI has been issuing news updates and bulletins on the struggles of Iranian working class

interferences by any government authorities.

7) Iranian workers demanded full and unconditional freedom of expression, publication, press, assemblies, and demonstrations.

8) Iranian workers demand the immediate and unconditional release of all imprisoned workers and labour activists, including Mansour Osanloo, Ebrahim Madadi, Reza Shahabi, Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, and stop any dismissal, persecution and prosecution of labour activists.

9) Iranian workers demand an end to gender discrimination and oppression and abolishment of all laws and regulations against women in all facets of life and consider realization of equal and humane right between man and women a basic demand of the Working class.

10) Immigrant workers, especially Afghan workers, are under exceeded oppression and complete exploitation of their rights. Iranian workers demand an end to discrimination against immigrant workers and call for punishment of violating employers and institutions.

11) Thousands of children in Iran are working under slavery-like conditions. Iranian workers demand an end to Child Labour and call for full support of these children concerning their education, shelter, health, appropriate nutrition and a decent life altogether.

12) Dismissal and unemployment of workers by any excuse must be stopped and all dismissed workers and those whom have reached the employment age must be entitled to unemployment benefits until they find suitable job.

13) All forms of discrimination based on nationality, language, religion, and gender discrimination are the capitalist regime's ways of causing division amongst people and is at the expense of solidarity among workers. Iranian workers demand equal and human rights among all residents of this country

14) Iranian workers call for an end to intimidation, threats, arrest and torture of activists in different social movements and demand unconditional release of all political prisoners.

15) Iranian workers demand the unconditional abolishment of all types of the abhorrent and extremely inhumane and reactionary capital punishment.

16) Iranian workers view themselves as a part of the International Working Class, and support all struggles of the working class throughout the world particularly recent movements for social justice, equality and freedom in North Africa and the Middle East.

17) May First must be recognized as the International Workers' Day and a public holiday and added to the national calendar as an official national holiday and all restrictions on rallies and ceremonies by independent labour organizations must be removed.

International Alliance in Support of Workers of Iran congratulates May Day to all workers around the world and while it supports demands and campaigns of Iranian workers, especially the joint resolution of independent labour organizations in Iran (see attached), on the occasion of May Day 2011, we humbly invite all workers and workers activists in Iran to work towards solidarity and unity irrespective of nationality, gender, race, colour, language, age, opinion and creed.

Long live May Day!

Long live international solidarity of workers!

International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran (IASWI)



Behzad Kazemi Long-time IASWI Activist Dies At 57

The news is very painful and heartbreaking: our beloved comrade and colleague Behzad Kazemi (Alireza) has passed away. On Sunday, April 10, 2011, Behzad was hospitalized in London after what seemed to be a brain stroke. Though

for the past eleven years in Farsi, English and French. We have now decided to produce an English Newsletters on a regular basis. This will make referencing and other information more accessible and organized. It is also a matter of providing ongoing and reliable information for non-Farsi readers on highlights of campaigns and issues related to workers' struggles in Iran. The IASWI issues many statements in Farsi throughout the year. We will try to translate some of our materials to English as well. IASWI Farsi website is updated on the daily basis.

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- Promote the implementation and enforcement of internationally recognized human and workers' rights and freedoms for all people in Iran.

The IASWI has been working in collaboration with many labour and progressive activists and organizations in Iran and around the world to strengthen worker-to-worker solidarity in defence of workers' rights and struggles in Iran and against the repressive Islamic Republic of Iran and

Doctors' initial diagnosis was a Brain Stroke, later on they said it was a case of Meningitis, and the infection has spread to his entire brain, causing it to stop functioning completely. On Friday afternoon 22 April 2011, while being visited in the hospital by his partner and friends and comrades, Behzad Kazemi passed away. He was 57.

Behzad Kazemi was an informed labour and socialist activist, indefatigable in his quests, organizing various projects. He was simultaneously involved in many campaigns, always worked to the best of his abilities and at times went beyond what his ailing body could permit. Behzad was an integral part and participant in IASWI for many years, and played an outstanding role in campaigns and activities in support of workers in Iran. He and some other comrades also created a Socialist Journal of Research (in Persian) called "Saamaan No," which has been regularly published for the past three years. He was also a founder and a coordinator of the invaluable "Socialists' Unity" Pal-talk.

His loss has profoundly saddened all of us. We know there are hundreds of others in different countries that share our grief and pain. We pay condolences to Behzad's partner, Eva, to all his fellow labour and socialist activists, and all his friends and relatives.

His memory will always be with us, his path shall have many travellers.

Memorial information will be provided later on. For further information please contact: ettehad_ma@yahoo.co.uk

[Click here: Link to sympathy messages from labour and progressive organizations/activists from Iran and abroad](#)

International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran (IASWI)
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A report on "the fifth general assembly of The Coordinating Committee to Help Form Workers' Organizations

The fifth general assembly of the Coordinating Committee to Help Form Workers' Organizations was carried out in April, 2011. First of all, the participants selected new executive committee and afterward a few subjects were chosen for debating in that meeting.

The participators addressed the following issues:

- 1- The former executive committee's report
- 2- Report of the inspectors of the fourth general assembly
- 3- Report of the director of financial affairs
- 4- Amendments to the constitution
- 5- Elections
- 6- Adopted decisions

Below are highlights of the executive committee's report to annual general assembly:

Dear coordinating committee's members, friends and honourable guests!

Today, we're seeing this reality that the capitalist system has been facing a severe economic, political and social crisis. Today, unemployment, poverty, addiction, corruption, terrorism, war, petrification, injustice, and more disasters have been expended around the world. That which is too clear, the capitalist states never can solve these problems of the human societies or change this difficult condition because all of

its capitalist and neo-liberal policies and practices.

As an international solidarity campaign in support of workers in Iran, the IASWI has colleagues and branches in North America, Europe and other parts of the world that work collaboratively towards the realization of the above objectives.

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them are heedless and incapable.

The executive committee' report also declares: "We support oppressed people of the North Africa and the Middle East. We defend struggles and uprisings of the working class and the oppressed of the region."

The executive committee' report emphasizes that when the coordinating committee to help form workers' organization entered a new term of its activities, all of us saw that the Iranian labour movement was still fighting against capitalists and their defenders to goal of reaching its demands. In this period, we saw how the Iranian labours' strikes and protests were met the government's attacks, and how many of labour activists were arrested and persecuted by the ruling capitalist establishment. As well, we saw that a number of the coordinating committee's members were prosecuted and put in jail in the past months.

From the beginning, the coordinating committee's plan of practice was emphasized on inserted aims of the constitution. The Coordinating Committee paid more attention on its activities for forming workers' organizations and ensuring that labour organizing becomes a priority of all members of the coordinating Committee. For this reason, is operations and activities were on the basis of the coordinating committee's main focus inside the Iranian labour movement."

- The coordinating committee has done the following activities in the past two years:
Active involvement and disseminating information on labour actions and protests.
Reporting on arrests and imprisonment of labour activists
- Active involvement in the fundraising campaigns in support of arrested the imprisoned members of Haft Tapeh Workers' Syndicate.
- Organizing outings in support of jailed workers, which unfortunately ended up with the arrests of a number of participants but raised solidarity Morale.
- Participating at the international labour day of the 2010, and issuing a joint statement with other independent labour formations.
- Issuing many statements and position papers on various issues affecting working class, including wages and wage arrears, subsidies, solidarity and so on.
- The coordinating committee has been refocusing its websites on key workers' issues and struggles.
- In this period, we have been trying to increase knowledge of this committee's members about its goal and objectives as an independent open organization.
- According to the fourth general assembly's decision, we asked the ministry of labor to register the coordinating committee. This request was failed, and we wrote a protest letter to the Ministry and filed a complaint with the ILO.
- The coordinating committee issued a statement for the international woman day in March 2011 which was used by its members as a frame of reference in their related activities.

An open letter to WFTU: Stop collaborations with the Workers' House of the IRI

We are writing this open letter to once again strongly condemn the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) leadership's collaboration and close relationship with the Workers' House of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) and its Islamic Labour Councils, which are both notoriously known to be government-sponsored repressive organizations.

We have been informed that representatives of the Workers' House of the Islamic Republic of Iran have been invited to attend the WFTU's 16th World Trade Union Congress, Athens Greece, April 6-10, 2011. This will be considered a big slap in the face

of the Iranian labour movement and independent workers' organizations in Iran and their activists who are being incessantly persecuted and imprisoned while Workers' House's representatives are walking freely and travelling abroad with the full-backing of the capitalist Islamic regime of Iran. The WFTU leadership must stop this disgraceful practice immediately. The working class of Iran will never forget the collaboration of the WFTU leadership with the Iranian government and their agents at the Workers' House.

We wrote the open letter attached below to the WFTU in October 2007 and since then we have been sending news and campaigns about workers' rights and struggles in Iran and on the plight of Iranian labour activists who are imprisoned, sacked and persecuted to many of WFTU affiliates and its headquarters as well. We, among many other progressive labour organizations in Iran and abroad, have been issuing numerous statements about the Workers' House' anti-worker/ pro-regime character. We strongly believe that there are no more excuses for the WFTU leadership to continue their collaboration and friendly relationship with the Workers' House. Unfortunately, the WFTU's leadership has decided to disregard our letters and also the protests of other Iranian labour activists against their collaborations with the Workers' House of the brutal and anti-worker regime in Iran.

We once again assert that labour gatherings and congresses must be places for the real and genuine representatives of workers and not government-sponsored, anti-worker individuals and establishments such as the Workers' House and its delegates.

We are calling on all affiliates of the WFTU, many of whom have been supporting independent labour movement in Iran despite the official position of the WFTU, to pressure the leadership of the WFTU to sever all their ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran and its so called "Workers' House".

Please see the statements below for more information; or contact the following persons:
Mahchid Modjaverian (mahchid@wanadoo.fr)
(CGT-France Transport)
Farid C. Partovi (info@workers-iran.org)
(President, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 4772) ***

cc: WFTU affiliates, and labour, progressive and anti-capitalist organizations in Iran and other countries.

For more background information, click on: [Open Letter to the WFTU](#)

International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran (IASWI)
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Arrests of union activists in Iran

By Derek Blackadder and Farid C. Partovi

Published by CUPE Global Justice- Spring 2011

http://cupe.ca/updir/Global_Justice_Spring_2011-English-web-march7.pdf

ORGANIZING INDEPENDENT labour organizations in Iran are met with state repression. Last May, teacher Farzad Kamangar was executed after a five minute trial for "endangering national security" and "enmity against God."

Being elected to a leadership position in a union guarantees a prison term or dismissal. Activists at the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company are regularly arrested as the government attempts to disrupt their organizing activities. Currently, four members of the union are in jail. Mansour Osanloo and Ebrahim Madadi, president and vice-president, have been in jail for the past three and half years. Meanwhile Reza Shahabi,

the union's treasurer, has been incarcerated since June 2010 without trial and activist Gholamreza Gholamhosseini* has been held incommunicado since November 3, 2010.

Almost all elected representatives of the Syndicate of Workers of Haft Tapeh Sugarcane Company have been in and out of jail since 2009. These include past president Ali Nejati who spent more than six months in jail and current president Reza Rakhshan who was transferred to Fajr prison in Dezful on January 3, 2011 to serve a six month prison sentence and is charged with spreading lies after he published an article titled "We are all one family." In addition, Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, a well known labour activist who has been incarcerated since June 2010, has now been sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

These attacks on labour activists and organizations in Iran are taking place while the government is engaged in massive neo-liberal policies of privatization and subsidy cutbacks to the most basic needs of the Iranian population.

For more information on workers' struggles in Iran, you can follow: labourstart.org and info@workers-iran.org.

* Mr. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini was released on heavy bail conditions on April 27, 2011.

Workers' struggles continue: in defence of movements for bread and freedom in North Africa and Middle East

Recent months' workers' protests throughout the world once again exposed the real nature of the capitalist system and its states throughout the world. Workers and other deprived social sectors fed up with capitalist exploitation and inequality, once again stepped into streets all around the world, challenging the neo-liberal policies and attacks on their rights and freedoms. In Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Libya, Algeria, Bahrain, Syria, Iraq, Iran and other countries in Middle East and North Africa, poverty, unemployment and increasing exploitation has taken away any prospect of an honourable humane life from the workers and their families. Workers have long been dominated by the brutal rulers of capital and deprived of the most basic rights; these workers and deprived populations are now challenging the ruling capitalist regimes in the region.

Without anyone expecting it, the people of Tunisia sparked a revolution, which rapidly reached beyond its borders. Official unemployment rate in Tunisia is 14% and goes up to 20% amongst the youth. In 2010, inflation was at 25% and the actual price of food was much higher than that. Tunisian state, led at the time by Ben Ali for more than 20 years, initially tried to crush the movement but people's fierce, bare handed resistance in front of armed police proved to be unstoppable. The state was pushed back to the dangerous level of being completely overthrown. People's insurrection led to Ben Ali's escape to Saudi Arabia, thus the first act in this revolutionary drama concluded with people's victory for the moment.

With Ben Ali overthrown, Tunisian ruling class with promises of election in an undetermined future attempted to send the people back home, to provide an opportunity to organize and maintain itself. But sending a people who just had an insurrection was not that easy, since other than Ben Ali's removal no other major demand was met. The state formed after Ben Ali was composed of all the individuals who were at the center of the power with him. With Ben Ali's escape the protests ebbed for a while, but on February 29th it began anew, demanding the ouster of Ghanoushi, after his resignation in a week, the movement entered a new level, yet

The outstanding and hopeful feature of the revolutionary struggle in Tunisia, which could also be seen in other countries, especially Egypt, is its vibrant anti-capitalist and pro social justice tendency. Neither political Islamic currents nor other Bourgeois factions

were able to steal away the leadership of the movement. The slogan, "Work Bread Freedom" has been the central demand since the beginning. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Tunisian workers have had a very significant role in this revolutionary process, they haven't been able to participate as a class for itself, not merely as individual workers, with their own specific, class-based, set of demands. Tunisian workers yet to establish their own radical autonomous, nation-wide formations. Although the dominant bureaucracy of unions caved in to workers' pressures and was forced to organize some strikes, it represented Ben Ali's ouster as the final victory. We all know that the toppling of Ben Ali toppling was a first victory in a hard and long revolution.

It should be noted that Tunisian people's insurrection against dictatorship and misery, also contributed to the rise of Egyptian people. In a very short time span millions of people poured into streets and overthrow Mubarak. Workers' struggle in Egypt has a long history. In the 20th century, since 1919 unions have led anti-colonial struggles. In 1921, National Federation of Egyptian Workers was composed of 90 unions. It was active for 5 years until it was banned by the government. In 1949 workers in Sues Canal boycotted a Dutch ship in solidarity with Indonesian workers. Unions distributed anti-colonial pamphlets, and despite British and French pressures prevented the Dutch ship from passing through the canal. From 1940 to 1950 more than 500 workers' formation were created in response to Capitalist colonial conditions imposed on workers. During Nasser's rule from 1956-1970 the workers initially supported his regime, but when workers were executed, his support diminished.

Mubarak's era was the height of repression against workers. Strikes from 1980 to 1990 were followed by massacre of Steel workers, and arrest and torture of labour activists. Textile workers' strikes of 1994 and 2008 were the highlights of this period. These strikes were organized despite the totally dependent leadership of the unions at the time. Although these strikes were not successful at the time they provide the basis for future actions, the movement known as the April 6th originates from the 2008 strike. In the past three years strikes in Egypt have been a daily occurrence. More than 40% of Egyptians live on 2.00 dollars a day.

Mubarak is out, but the struggle is not over yet. Could workers put their stamp on this revolution? The military council in power after Mubarak has promised to organize an election of the reformed constitution, through a committee created by the military. This is an empty promise which leaves workers short of their core demands. The army's repression of people in recent weeks and persecution and prosecution of activists are seriously alarming. However, the continuation of strikes and actions is an expression of the revolution's continuity.

The destiny of these movements and freedom and justice seeking revolutions more than anything else depends on what role the workers in Egypt, Tunisia and other countries will play. If workers organize their own organizations in their factories and neighbourhoods, create their own political platform and charter, as opposed to other alternatives, and build their political own organization, then there is hope that they could inflict the final blow and capture political power.

The movements currently under way in the region are primarily justice seeking, these are movements for Bread, Freedom, and Human Dignity; they are challenging the neoliberal, austerity measure capitalist policies and repressive regimes that have been implementing these policies. In one part of the world the hungry have risen up for freedom and social justice which has the potential of overthrowing the capital's rule. This is a fire whose flames could reach much further, portending workers' emancipation from the exploitation, repression, insecurity, war, and poverty under the yolk of capital and its rulers throughout the world.

Workers in Iran have been closely following the struggles of the working class and

freedom-seeking people of North Africa and Middle East. Workers in Iran stand in solidarity with their movements. In their May Day 2011 joint resolution of independent workers' organizations in Iran, they strongly supported people's struggles for freedom and justice in the region while denouncing top-down manipulation and interferences by any states or powers to undermine and derail popular movements.

We are hopeful that our colleagues and fellow workers in the region draw lessons from the Iranian Revolution of 1979, and the ensuing 32 years of freedom-seeking, liberation-seeking struggle against the repressive capitalist regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Our plight under the Islamic Republic of Iran is a tragic example that our neighbours and comrades can draw on; thus, they hopefully never allow any autocratic and capitalist forces, their parties or their personalities, under any pretext, continue the exploitation and oppression of people by force or empty promises. The current legitimate struggles of workers and oppressed people shall be pursued until annihilation of the exploitative and repressive forces and capitalist orders in the whole region. Without a doubt, Iranian working class, and freedom-seeking people of Iran, will be learning many lessons from the struggles in the rest of Middles East and North Africa.

**Workers' struggles continue
Long live international solidarity**

International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran (IASWI)
www.workers-iran.org / info@workers-iran.org
April 2011

A Radiolabour interview with: Farid C. Partovi, International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran:

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