

Workers in Iran



News & views from the labour movement in Iran

Special May Day Issue – May 1st, 2008

May Day is the hope of the world!

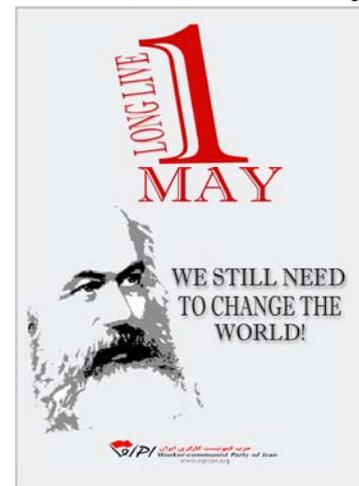
This year's international workers' day is arriving at a time when there are signs of a global financial and economic crisis. The World Bank warns governments about the threat of food riots. And the prospect of crisis and catastrophe makes a bleak world - already reeling from the shock of the New World Order and the global war of terrorists - even bleaker.

The hope of changing these conditions lies in the struggle of a class that makes up the majority of the world's population. This inverted world has been founded upon the wage slavery of this class, and for the preservation of this slavery. May Day, the day of international solidarity and struggle of the working class, is at the same time the day of unity of repressed humanity to change this inverted world. We call on the people of the world to stand up on May Day to capitalism and the catastro-

phes it causes, to starvation and war, terrorism, ignorance and domination of religion, to deprivation and inequality and in support of freedom, equality and human identity.

In Iran the working class faces the same conditions as May Day approaches. The difference is that in Iran the Islamic regime of the bourgeoisie is facing a deep economic, political and cultural crisis and there is an ongoing powerful anti-regime and revolutionary movement. The slogans "We Don't Want Islamic Regime" and "You've Been Wasting our Time since 1979" which the youths in Tehran chanted recently, clearly depict the essence of the political situation in Iran. The working class is the backbone of this revolutionary movement. This is not only because of the numerous strikes and protests by workers, which are getting even more radical each day, as in

the case of Kian Tyre workers, which ended up in barricades and direct clashes with the security forces, but also because the slogans and demands of the working class such as "Freedom, Equality, Human Identity," "Socialism or Barbarism," "End Sexual Apart-



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A state that arrests, detains and flogs workers should not be in the ILO!

To all labour organisations around the world

The ninety-seventh annual conference of the ILO will be held between May 28 and June 13, 2008. Every year this conference hosts a delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Beside the Islamic Republic, the ILO also recognises Workers' House and Islamic Workers' Councils - i.e. handmade organisations of the regime against workers - as "workers' organisations from Iran".

The International Labour Solidarity Committee of the Worker-communist Party of Iran strongly protests against the participation of the Iranian regime in the annual conference of the ILO.

Unfortunately, it has been argued that the attendance of the Iranian regime and its Workers' House at the annual conferences of the ILO is conducive to dialogue and to pressuring the Islamic

Republic to recognise and respect the minimum rights of workers. However, this approach has plainly proved itself wrong. The Islamic Republic continues to arrest and imprison worker activists. It has not recognised any of the basic worker rights such as freedom of association, collective bargaining and the right to strike. Moreover, it has shamelessly added flogging to its techniques of repressing workers. Workers in Iran, therefore, have every right to condemn the ILO for its continued recognition of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In the past year alone, hundreds of trade unions around the world called for the release of two Iranian labour leaders, Mansoor Ossanlou and Mahmoud Salehi, and for respect for worker rights in Iran. However, the Islamic Republic has simply ignored these calls. Indeed, as documented by numerous human rights organisations, the atrocities of the regime in Iran against workers and all sections of the people

have only intensified. The Islamic regime's continued membership in organisations such as the ILO has thus become totally indefensible.

Our committee values highly the tremendous solidarity shown by labour organisations throughout the world with workers in Iran. We also believe that a decisive step towards supporting the struggle of the workers in Iran is the isolation of the Islamic Republic on an international scale and its expulsion, together with its Workers' House, from the ILO. A state that arrests, detains and flogs workers should not be in the ILO! We request all labour organisations around the world to exercise their influence to expel the Islamic Republic of Iran from the ILO.

International Labour Solidarity Committee of the Worker-communist Party of Iran
Shahla Daneshfar, Coordinator
Bahram Soroush, Public Relations
18 March 2008

Call for demonstration in front of Office of the ILO in Geneva The Islamic Republic of Iran should be expelled from the ILO

The 97th annual International Labour Conference of the ILO starts on May 28, 2008 in Geneva. Similar to previous years, a delegation representing the Islamic Republic of Iran is supposed to participate in this conference. Those who attack and oppress workers should not be allowed into the ILO. The Islamic Republic regime should be expelled from the ILO for oppressing workers and depriving them from their most basic rights.

The way that the Islamic regime in Iran treats workers is a disgrace to humanity. The Islamic Republic of Iran has continuously and systematically responded to worker's protests and their demands for improving workers' living conditions with violence and brutality. The ruling regime in Iran does not have even least of respect for the workers' right that are recognized on the basis of international conventions. On several occasions, workers' protests have been attacked and even been violently sup-

pressed. Worker leaders have been detained, imprisoned, and tortured. Worker activists have been flogged. May Day organizers have been trailed and imprisoned. Huge bails are set for the release of arrested worker activists in order to prevent them from further activities. In a number of cases, the Islamic regime has even used kidnapping and assassination as methods of suppressing the workers. The wages of hundreds of thousands of workers have not been paid for several months and these workers have been forced to live in absolute poverty.

In the past couple of years the worker organizations of the world have responded the Islamic regime in Iran with widespread protests and actions in solidarity with the workers in Iran. Still, stronger actions are required in response to suppressing the workers in Iran. Some worker organizations have maintained that they would submit their official complaints against the Islamic

Republic of Iran to the ILO. This is a step forward, but it is not sufficient. The Islamic Republic of Iran should be expelled from the ILO. We, together with the workers in Iran, call upon worker organizations of the world to demand expulsion of the Islamic republic of Iran from the ILO.

The Worker-communist Party of Iran organizes a demonstration to protest the presence of the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the ILO while the delegation of the Islamic regime is in Geneva. The WPI calls upon all the libertarians of the world to participate in this demonstration in Geneva. The WPI also calls on worker organizations to support this action. The date of the demonstration will be announced subsequently.

**Worker-communist Party of
Iran-Organization Abroad
April 24, 2008**

May Day is ... *From page 1*

heid," "Abolish the Death Penalty," "Woman's Liberation is Society's Liberation," and "Human Life is Our Certain Right", are echoed in mass demonstrations of teachers, women and youths on different occasions. Public executions, the attacks on millions of women for not observing Islamic veiling, punishing gays by throwing them down from heights, stoning to death, amputating hands and feet as a form of punishment, brutal attacks on leftist student activists, jailing workers', teachers' and women's rights activists, flogging worker leaders for celebrating May Day - these are all a reflection of the Islamic Republic's efforts to stop this unstoppable movement. May Day in Iran is in the front-line of this massive social confrontation, and it terrifies the Islamic regime more than anything else. The government's "Workers' House" has not even dared to organise the state-sponsored rally for this May Day in Tehran because in the past years they lost control of these masquerades, and the puppetry turned into workers' march chanting socialist slogans.

This year's May Day should be celebrated stronger and in greater numbers than ever before. Great masses of workers and all those yearning for freedom should be mobilised for May Day. In recent years, the workers' movement in Iran has been supported internationally more than ever before, acknowledged as a political force that can change society. These are strong foundations upon which to build a powerful May Day. This May Day in Iran should attract massive sections with the call for "Freedom, Equality, Human Identity" and should be made the hope of the working people of the world.

WPI calls upon all workers, students, women and youths to mobilise for a magnificent and powerful May Day.

Long Live May Day!

Long Live Socialism!

**Worker-communist Party of
Iran (WPI)**

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Statement of the 2nd conference of the WPI organisation abroad

The Islamic Republic of Iran must be isolated and expelled from International organisations!

The 2nd conference of the WPI's Organisation Abroad which was held in April 2008 pledged to step up the international campaign to politically, diplomatically and culturally isolate the Islamic Republic of Iran and expel the regime from international organisations and bodies. The active participation of progressive people, and labour, secularist, student and women's rights organisations is crucial in the campaign's success.

The political Islamic movement is a dilemma for the world. Fighting this reactionary movement, therefore, is an international obligation and task of people across the world. The Islamic Republic of Iran is the moral and political pillar of this movement. Prior to the Islamic regime taking power in Iran, this movement did not enjoy any significant power in Iran or the Middle East. With its taking power in Iran, this reactionary political movement has grown significantly. The Islamic regime of Iran is the source and material, moral and political backbone of the political Islamic movement in Islam-ridden societies. With western government political support, and its justification as a result of cultural relativism, the political Islamic movement has grown in the west as well. This movement has now become a dilemma for the world at large. This movement must be defeated and its influence removed from people's lives.

Overthrowing the Islamic regime of Iran by the people of Iran is a requirement to defeat this movement and liberate people everywhere from its destructive consequences. Overthrowing the most authoritative force of the political Islamic movement would be significant blow to the forces of this movement internationally.

The people of Iran are at the forefront of the battle against the Islamic Republic of Iran. In Iran there is a considerable and extensive struggle to bring an end to the rule of political Islam. Therefore, the support for the struggle of the people of Iran is an internationalist duty. The people of the world share an interest in ending the Islamic regime in Iran.

There are some occasions in history that a country becomes the juncture of the battle of reaction and liberation. Iran today is in such a position. Religion and political oppression have on the one hand turned Iran into a huge prison for the majority of the population and on the other an extensive and massive resistance is underway by women, workers, students, and the youth to be free from political and religion oppression and for a better world.

Moreover, the battle of two camps of international terrorism, on the one hand led by the USA and Islamic terrorism led by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the other, has cast a dark shadow of war over the world. The people of Iran however have chosen a third path. With the overthrow of the Islamic regime in Iran and their own liberation, they will defeat the bullying policy of the U.S. Therefore the fight of the people of Iran deserves the warmest of support.

People of the world!

The Islamic regime of Iran is the sponsor of terrorism and the main pillar of insecurity internationally. To achieve security for the world, one must support the struggle of the people of Iran to bring an end to this regime. Overthrow of the Islamic regime will break the back of Islamic terrorism. Anyone who desires an end of religion in people's lives must participate in the fight to

bring this regime down in Iran. With the overthrow of the Islamic regime, religion will receive a massive blow and would be forced to the margins of society. This too, is the duty of all secularists. Anyone who fights for the equality of men and women in this world has an interest in the overthrow of the misogynist Islamic regime in Iran. Iran is a prison for women. With the overthrow of the Islamic regime, sexual apartheid would receive a massive setback and would herald liberation of women in Middle East and the Islam-ridden societies. The treatment that workers receive under the rule of the Islamic regime is the shame of the world. Any attempt to improve life, working condition or labour organisation in Iran has been met with imprisonment, torture and lashings. Workers of the world therefore must stand shoulder to shoulder with the workers in Iran to bring down the Islamic regime in Iran. Students and the youth, too, have been heroic in their fight against the regime; one must support them too. Anti-war activists who want to face the US military and its allies must strengthen the third camp, and face both camps of reaction in the world today and join the people of Iran.

The Worker-communist Party of Iran calls on the people of the world to actively take part in the isolation of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its expulsion from all international organisations and bodies.

Worker-communist Party of Iran -
Organisation Abroad
17 April 2008

www.kargaran.org

www.wipbriefing.com

www.wpiran.org

PETITION

In solidarity with Iranian workers

A regime which arrests, detains and flogs workers should not be in the ILO!

We, the undersigned:

- Express our solidarity with Iranian workers
- Condemn the regime in Iran for its persecution of workers
- Condemn the regime in Iran for jailing and flogging workers for

taking part in May Day celebrations. Celebrating May Day is workers' undeniable right!

- Call for the immediate and unconditional release of Mansoor Ossanlou, president of Tehran's bus workers' union, and other jailed labour activists

- Call for the expulsion of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the International Labour Organisation (ILO). A regime which arrests, detains and flogs workers should not be in the ILO!

* * *

Please adopt and sign this petition at your union branch!

Speech at the ILO Conference June 2006

Bahram Soroush

I am delighted, ladies and gentlemen, for the opportunity that I have to address this conference about the situation of workers in Iran.

Unfortunately Iranian workers are not represented at this conference. So I am honored to be bringing their voice to this conference.

As you may know, various sections of Iranian workers have written to the Director-General of the ILO, Mr. Juan Somavia, to say that the so-called "worker's delegation" from Iran does not represent Iranian workers, that these people are members of the Iranian government's Islamic Labour Councils and worker's House, which are state sponsored bodies, charged with worker's surveillance and repression.

One of the delegates at this conference, namely Mr. Akbar Eivazi, personally led a vicious attack last year on the office of Tehran's bus workers' union, inflicting serious injuries on Mr. Osanlou, the president of that union, and many other unionists.

Mr Ossanlou is still in prison, after nearly six months, for trying to build a union.

In January, nearly 1,000 bus drivers and workers in Tehran were arrested and jailed for going on strike. In Iran you are arrested for trying to form labour organizations and for going on strike.

Just a couple of months ago, over 50 workers of Iran Khodro car manufacturing company were flogged for going on strike.

Over a million workers have been with

out pay, from several months to 2 or 3 years, due to non-payment of their wages. The textile workers of Kashan, Ghazvin and hundreds of other factories around the country have not been paid for months.

The minimum wage in Iran is around 1/3 of the official poverty line.

A few years ago, the security forces fired on the workers at Khatoun Abad copper mine, killing four.

The list is endless....

The Islamic Republic regime of Iran and its Islamic Labour Councils and workers' House should be expelled from the ILO for their brutal repression of workers, for denying them internationally recognized rights to organize and strike and to collective bargaining, for denying them the basic right to a decent pay, for denying them a human existence....

Ladies and gentlemen! Honorable trade union representatives and workers' delegates!

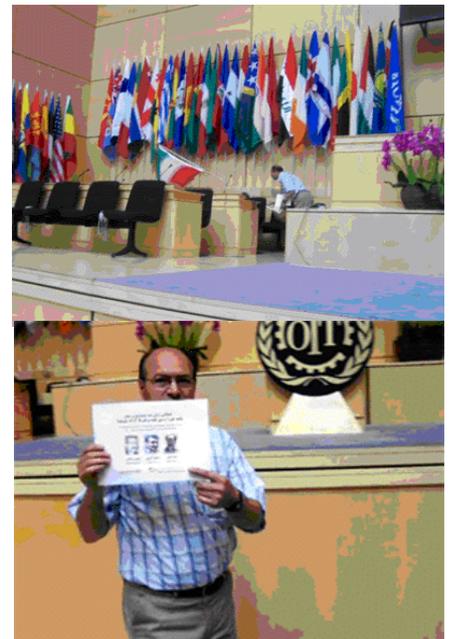
Please use your rights and powers as members of the ILO to urge the immediate expulsion of the Iranian regime and its Islamic Councils and workers' House from the ILO.

No ILO legitimacy should be given to these persecutors of workers. Genuine representatives of Iranian workers should be allowed to take part at ILO conferences.

Iran and its Islamic Councils out of ILO!



ILO Conference, June 2006. Protest at the presence of Iranian regime's delegation and for the release of jailed labour activists in Iran. Bahram Soroush, of ILSC-WPI, speaks on behalf of Iranian workers.



ILO Conference, June 2007. Continued protest at the presence of the Iranian regime's delegation. Jilali Jilili, from WPI, holds picture of jailed labour activists. Islamic Republic's flag is symbolically thrown on the floor.