

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL JOINT PUBLIC STATEMENT



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Call for the opening of a new chapter in the treatment of trade unions in Iran

Iran has announced that the inauguration of the new President, Dr Hassan Rouhani, will take place on 4 August 2013. For the first time in the life of the Islamic Republic, Iran has invited leaders and dignitaries from across the world, including the UK, to attend its presidential inauguration ceremony as international guests. We hope this welcome will be matched by an improvement in Iran's respect for its international obligations.

We the undersigned, as representatives of national and international organisations concerned with trade union, human and democratic rights, have long been calling on the Iranian authorities to recognise and respect the fundamental right to form and belong to independent trade unions and to engage in trade union activities as specified under the terms of international labour conventions. We believe that genuine and independent trade unions are one of the cornerstones of modern democratic societies and serve as reliable vehicles for ensuring popular sovereignty, progress, stability and social justice.

We who have been concerned about the fate of trade unions and trade unionists in Iran for many years would like now to call upon President-elect, Dr Hassan Rouhani, to use his inauguration to make a commitment that Iran will turn over a new leaf in respect of human and trade union rights during his presidency.

We urge the Iranian authorities to end the repression of trade unionists by immediately and unconditionally releasing those imprisoned for their trade union work, dropping charges against others currently facing trial for similar reasons, and ending other repressive measures which marginalize trade unions and their members. In particular, we call for the release of trade unionist and prisoner of conscience, Mr. Reza Shahabi, Treasurer General of the Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed) and trade unionist and prisoner of conscience, Mr. Ali Nejati, the former leader of the Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Company (HTSCC) Trade Union.

We also call on the new President to commit to signing and fully implementing the terms of relevant international conventions and protocols and, in particular, International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions 87 and 98: the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (1948); and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (1949).

Public Document

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