



Resolution on Solidarity with Teachers, Trade Unionists, and Iran Protests

The 9th Education International Asia-Pacific (EIAP) Regional Conference, meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 18–20 October 2022:

(1) Affirms:

- (i) The critical importance of exercising freedom of association, freedom of opinion and expressions, and the right to organise freely in order to advance the rights of trade unions and other social justice movements.
- (ii) Education sector employees and trade unions should enjoy, without state interference, internationally recognised civil, political, social, and cultural rights applicable to all citizens, including the right to free speech and writing and publishing materials that air criticisms on past and present authorities, without any censorship, reprisal, persecution, or prosecution by the state or other authorities.

(2) Asserts:

- (i) Iranian teachers have long been advocating for their right to self-organise, for better working conditions, and for free quality public education for all. They have also been at the forefront of the struggle against the increasing privatisation of the education system.

(3) Notes with concern that teachers in Iran and the representatives of the EI-affiliated Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers' Trade Associations (CCITTA) in Iran have been enduring incessant repression, arrests, detention, dismissal, and long-term imprisonments. Currently, there are dozens of teachers and members of other trade unions in prison, while hundreds of other teachers are facing charges and trials.

(4) Further notes with concern that in recent months alone, attacks on teachers, trade unions, and freedom of association and expression in Iran include the following:



- (i) Since the International Workers' Day, May Day 2022, more than 250 teachers and trade union activists have been arrested, summoned, investigated, and/or interrogated by the government security apparatus without any legal basis.
- (ii) Since May Day 2022, the CCITTA representatives Rasoul Bodaghi, Eskandar Lotfi, Shaban Mohammadi, Masoud Nikkhah, Jafar Ebrahimi, and Mohammad Habibi; and members of Tehran bus workers syndicate Reza Shahabi, Hassan Saeidi, and Davood Razavi; and workers' rights activists Reyhaneh Ansarinejad, Anisha Asadollahi, Keyvan Mohtadi and Valeh Zamani all had to go through many weeks of solitary confinement and interrogation.
- (iii) Eskandar Lotfi, the spokesperson for the CCITTA, and Shaban Mohammadi and Masoud Nikkhah, members of the board of directors of Marivan Teachers' Trade Association, as well as Anisha Asadollahi and Reyhaneh Ansarinejad, were released on heavy bails in August 2022; however, on 8 October 2022, the intelligence agents suddenly and violently raided homes of Eskandar Lotfi and Shaban Mohammadi and arrested Mr. Lotfi but Mr. Mohammadi was not at home; they also arrested Mr. Nikkhah on the same day.
- (iv) Many other well-known teachers, including Esmail Abdi, former chair of the Tehran Teacher Association, continue to serve unjust prison sentences. He has been condemned until 2031 on trumped up charges.
- (v) In recent weeks, over 200 people, including many youth under the age of 18, across Iran have reportedly been killed and many more injured as public fury and protests over the killing of the 22 year-old Mahsa Jina Amini have continued. Hundreds of protesters, including many secondary and post-secondary students, have been arrested and imprisoned since the protests started. Mahsa Jina Amini was killed in September 2022 by religious police called "Guidance Patrol" simply for not complying with the country's draconian dress code.

(5) Therefore, the EIAP Regional Conference:

- (i) stands in solidarity with the teachers' struggles in Iran against privatisation, and for full access to free and publicly funded education for all students, and for better working conditions and a decent life for everyone.



- (ii) echoes the Iranian trade unions' demands for their rights to organise, assemble, free speech and protest, without the ever-increasing fear of the government's oppressive interferences, and for the unconditional freedom of all imprisoned teachers and trade union activists in Iran.
 - (iii) joins Education International, global union federations, and the International Trade Union Confederation in condemning the continued brutality of the Iranian authorities against the recent protests in Iran following the killing of the 22-year old Mahsa Amini and calls for stronger international solidarity with the people of Iran and further pressure against the Iranian regime to hold them accountable for its repressive policies and actions against trade unions, women, and other oppressed groups.
- (6) Further, the EIAP Regional Conference calls upon the EI leadership to:
- (i) monitor, publicise, and proactively campaign against all threats to and violations of teachers' and trade union rights in the region including in Iran;
 - (ii) file formal complains, in collaboration with the CCITTA, against the government of Iran at the International Labour Organization for the violation of the internationally recognised conventions and rights;
 - (iii) facilitate regional dialogues amongst affiliates and allies on freedom of association and expressions and how to further assert solidarity even in the direst circumstances; and
 - (iv) work with the CCITTA and allies internationally for the freedom of all arrested teachers, trade union activists, political prisoners, and the imprisoned students in Iran.