President Ahmadinejad,

I write to you again on behalf of Education International (EI) to deplore the confirmation of the death sentence of the teacher trade unionist Farzad Kamangar. EI supports the campaigns of the Iranian Teachers’ Association and of Amnesty International to have the case re-examined through a fair trial that meets Iranian and international standards. EI also urges the authorities to commute Farzad Kamangar’s death sentence, as the application of the death penalty is irreparable and no judicial system should run the risk of condemning an innocent person.

According to Mr Kamangar’s lawyer, there is no evidence to justify that Mr Kamangar has “endangered national security”. EI joins with other human rights organisations to deplore the bias against Farzad Kamangar because he is of Kurdish origin, was a member of the Kurdish Teachers Trade Association and has been active in defending human and minority rights.

Recent information received by EI also indicates that three teacher unionists from Kamiaran—Farzad Kamangar’s village—namely Hasan Ghorbani, Ahmad Ghorbani and Kaveh Rostami, disappeared on 23 July after having attended a meeting organised by the Tehran Teachers Trade Association to stop Farzad’s death sentence. This suggests a pattern of intimidation against teacher trade unionists.

Iran is a longstanding member of the International Labour Organisation and is therefore requested to adhere to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which guarantees freedom of association. The arrest, detention and condemnation of trade unionists because of their legitimate human and trade union activities are not only serious violations of trade union rights, but also create an atmosphere of fear prejudicial to trade union activities in Iran.

In addition, EI deplores that Mr Kamangar has been tortured while in detention and was denied medical treatment. EI urges the Iranian authorities to investigate into the reports of torture and to ensure that, in future, no detainee is tortured or ill-treated.

In May, EI asked for an audience with His Excellency Ali Asghar Khaji, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Brussels. To this date, the Brussels embassy has not been able to identify a suitable date for such a meeting. EI wishes to open a dialogue with the Iranian authorities as a means of developing better understanding in a spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit.

EI would welcome a positive response to these requests, and will, in the meantime, continue to closely monitor the situation in Iran.

Sincerely yours,

Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary

 Copies sent to:
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