



TUC Iraq Bulletin

Number Five: February 2007

In this issue:

- **TUC condemns anti-union terrorism** 1
 - **Unions protest about Iraqi oil law** 1
 - **Unions lobby over labour law** 1
 - **Iraqi teachers' XI visit Britain** 1
 - **Transport unions on their way** 2
 - **Artists' freedom in Iraq** 2
 - **Iraqi journalists join IFJ** 2
 - ***Hadi never died* goes transatlantic** 2
 - **TUC Aid for Iraq Appeal** 2
-

Unions protest about Iraqi oil law

Iraqi union representatives from the oil industry met in Amman before Christmas and condemned the plans for Iraq's oil which have been reported in UK and other newspapers in the last few months. Brought together by the US equivalent of the TUC, the AFL-CIO, trade unionists from Iraqi Kurdistan, the GFIW and the GUOE condemned plans to give US oil companies too much profit for too long from Iraq's oil. The TUC is helping oil unions to lobby the Iraqi government over the draft hydrocarbons law which is the first step in opening up the oil industry. And Norwegian oil unions met with Iraqi oil industry officials when they visit the country recently.

TUC condemns anti-union terrorism

The TUC has issued a stern condemnation of anti-terrorist attacks on the Iraqi union movement. On 31 January, GFIW legal adviser Dr. Adnan Al-Abed was found murdered with two university colleagues, GFIW Vice President Khalil al-Mashhadani was injured when his car was bombed, and the GFIW building in Nineveh was attacked.

TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber wrote to the GFIW's President Rasim al-Awadi, saying: "Trade unionism is founded on the principle that an injury to one is an injury to all, and I have no doubt that, contrary to their intentions, the actions of these terrorists will only redouble the commitment of Iraqi trade unionists, and the solidarity of trade unionists around the world for your struggles."

Unions lobby over labour law

The GFIW has held talks with Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih about the state of Iraqi labour law, and he will be ensuring that the Prime Minister meets trade unions to discuss developments. Barham Salih was a member of the Labour Party in Cardiff when he was in exile in the 1980s, and the meeting with the GFIW was brokered by Ann Clwyd MP when the TUC told her of the Iraqi union movement's problems.

Iraqi teachers' XI visit Britain

Britain's teaching unions, led by NASUWT, are hosting a delegation of eleven Iraqi teacher union representatives this month. They are spending two weeks at the NASUWT training centre in Rednal, Birmingham, and a further week in London with the ATL, NUT and TUC.

Transport unions on their way

A delegation of four Iraqis and two from Iraqi Kurdistan from transport unions will be coming to Britain in May, with funding from the TUC and the FCO. They are planned to visit the TUC Trades Councils' Conference in Newcastle, the ASLEF conference in Scarborough and unions and MPs in London. The delegation will include unionists from the airline, ports and rail sectors.

Artists' freedom in Iraq

UK actors' union EQUITY has an international committee for artists' freedom (ICAF) which has provided financial support to the Independent Film and Television College in Baghdad, and has been organising screenings of films made by students at the college to raise further funds. For further information contact Matt Payton at mpayton@equity.org.uk or visit www.iftvc.org

Iraqi journalists join IFJ

The Iraqi Journalists Syndicate has joined its sister organisation in Iraqi Kurdistan (HQS) in becoming a full member of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), and they will be making a joint presentation to the next IFJ Congress later this year. Now claiming 3,000 members, the Iraqi union is organising training seminars covering trade union organisation and safety, which is their number one concern – 130 journalists have been killed in the last three years. Send donations to the Iraqi Journalists Appeal, IFJ Safety Fund, Fortis Bank, Rond-Point Schumann 10, 1040 Brussels, Belgium – international account BE64 2100 7857 0052.

Hadi never died goes transatlantic

The TUC booklet on trade unionism in Iraq, commemorating the life of Iraqi union international secretary Hadi Saleh, has been re-launched at events on both sides of the Atlantic.

On 24 October, Prime Minister Tony Blair hosted an event for Iraqis and trade unionists at No 10 Downing Street, and then on 6 December,

the AFL-CIO (the US trade union confederation) launched it in the USA at its headquarters.

Profits from *Hadi never died: Hadi Saleh and the Iraqi trade unions*, go to the TUC Aid for Iraq Appeal, but there are reductions for bulk purchases. The TUC Iraq Solidarity Committee has agreed to ask unions to sell it at union conferences this year.

If you can publicise the booklet, please do – you could:

- post Hadi Saleh (and if possible Iraq Appeal) banners onto your website - there are a set at www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-8684-f0.cfm; and
- the TUC has produced a flyer to advertise the book. Contact Owen at otudor@tuc.org.uk if you could distribute copies.

Copies of the booklet are available online from the TUC at the cover price of £10 at www.tuc.org.uk/publications/viewPub.cfm?frmPubID=479.

TUC Aid for Iraq Appeal

The TUC Iraq Solidarity Committee, chaired by Sue Rogers from the General Council, works in solidarity with the General Federation of Iraqi Workers (GFIW), the trade union movement in Iraqi Kurdistan and other trade union organisations in Iraq. Members are drawn from seventeen TUC affiliated unions. The TUC continues to raise money for Iraqi trade unionists. This has been used for bringing Iraqi trade unionists to Britain and to the ICFTU World Congress, supporting global union training projects and more. [Click](#) to give money online or find out more.

Solidarity leaflet

A striking leaflet is available for bulk purchase by unions for inclusion in journals, bulletins and mailings to members – see it at www.tuc.org.uk/extras/iraqleaflet.pdf Contact Owen at otudor@tuc.org.uk for copies.