



TUC Iraq Bulletin

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Teachers' union wins pay victory

The Iraqi Teachers' Union notched up a significant victory over pay on 8 January, when the Government announced a range of increases. This followed sustained campaigning by Iraqi teachers, including a one day protest across Iraq in December with a National Rally in central Baghdad Furdos Square, central Baghdad. A national strike was threatened for January but has now been called off.

TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber sent the Iraqi Teachers' Union President Jasim Al-Lami a message of congratulations, saying; "your victory gives us all hope that collective bargaining is alive and well in Iraq, and that unions are able to represent their members and deliver on their core demands."

The Ministry of Education announced that it has decided to increase teachers' salaries as follows:

- teachers with a Diploma will get a pay increase of 25% of their monthly wage;

Oil unions join the world trade union movement

Hashmeya Muhsin Hussein Al-sa Dawa, President of the GFIW's Power Workers Union, and the most senior woman trade unionist in Iraq, has been elected to the global executive committee of the International Chemical, Energy and Mining Confederation ICEM, the global union federation for the sector. Hashmeya visited the UK in 2005 and is being invited back this summer for the Tolpuddle Rally.

Meanwhile Hassan Juma'a Al-Awad, President of the Basra-based General Union of Oil Employees (GUOE) was in London before Christmas for a conference and talks with the TUC following on from the solidarity the TUC and others organised for the GUOE strike in the summer, and he will be returning at the end of February for more discussions.

The GUOE has, along with several GFIW unions in the energy sector and the FWCUI affiliate (the GUOE is independent of any national union confederation), affiliated to ICEM, and now both of the Kurdish oil unions have applied to join as well, which would give ICEM all of the energy unions in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan.

Other global union confederations with Iraqi and Kurdish affiliates include Education

International (the Kurdish Teachers' Union), the International Federation of Journalists (both Kurdish and Iraqi unions) and the International Transport Workers Federation (with several affiliates in Iraq). PSI had Iraqi trade unionists at its global congress last autumn but the continuing problems over union recognition in the public sector have prevented affiliations.

TUC supports campaign to stop violence against Iraqi women

The TUC is supporting the campaign launched on 3 January by the Iraqi Women's League (IWL) Co-ordinating Committee Abroad against violence against women in Iraq.

Iraqi women are being killed and subjected to all forms of violence every day. What they have suffered in the city of Basra is perhaps something unprecedented in Iraqi society. Women have been killed and their bodies thrown in streets, especially since July 2007.

According to Basra police chief Abdul Jalil Khalaf, the bodies of 50 women were found in different areas of the city during recent months. This may not be the real figure, as families of victims are often reluctant or too frightened to report these horrific crimes.

For more details, see the TUC website at www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-14160-f0.cfm

Transport workers coming in February

The delegation of Iraqi transport unions which was due to visit Britain last autumn will now be visiting in February, seeing trade unionists in South Yorkshire and London, and taking part in the TSSA Executive. They will also be visiting the House of Commons and the International Transport Workers Federation, which is based in London and to which several Iraqi unions belong. The delegation is part funded by the TUC and the FCO, and a report will be produced after the visit.

Teachers' union leaders are coming to Birmingham

NASUWT, one of the TUC's teaching unions, has invited the leaders of the Iraqi and Kurdish Teachers' Unions to its annual conference. Kurdish Teachers' Union leader Wishyaar Hamad Haji-Harooti and Iraq Teachers' Union President Jasim Hussein Mohammed Al-Lami will be guests at the conference which is being held in Birmingham this Easter.

TUC Iraq Solidarity Committee

The TUC Iraq Solidarity Committee, chaired by Sue Rogers from the General Council, works in solidarity with the GFIW, the trade union movement in Iraqi Kurdistan and other sectoral trade union organisations in Iraq. Members are drawn from seventeen TUC affiliated unions.

TUC Aid for Iraq Appeal: the TUC continues to raise money for Iraqi trade unionists. This has been used for bringing Iraqi trade unionists to Britain and to the ITUC 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.