

H.E. Mr Hamid Baeidinejad
Ambassador
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
16 Prince's Gate
London SW7 1PT

24 October 2018

Dear Ambassador

Request for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr Mohammad Habibi, member of the Iran Teachers Trade Association board of directors

I write on behalf of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), representing over 5.5 million workers in the UK, to denounce the deplorable treatment of trade unionist Mohammad Habibi, a welding teacher and member of the board of directors of the Iran Teachers Trade Association. I urge you to call upon the Iranian authorities to release Mohammad Habibi immediately and unconditionally from prison.

Mohammad, who is serving a 10-and-a-half-year sentence solely for his peaceful trade union activities and exercising his human rights, is in poor health and is being denied the urgent specialised medical care he needs. In August 2018 Mohammad, who is now jailed in Tehran's Evin prison, was briefly transferred to a hospital in Tehran, where he was seen by a general practising doctor who said that he needed to have his kidneys examined urgently by a specialist physician. Despite this, he was taken back to prison without receiving the specialised medical care he needed. Mohammad Habibi says that he has also been experiencing severe pain in his chest and lungs since his violent arrest in May 2018. However, the prison medical clinic has simply administered an inhaler to him.

The TUC is very concerned for the health, wellbeing and human rights of Mohammad, as his imprisonment is a direct infringement of several international conventions including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which Iran has ratified. These impose an obligation on the Iranian authorities to respect the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, as well as the right to form and join trade unions of one's choice. Trade unionists are also protected under the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, which highlights the obligation on states to respect the right to defend human rights, including trade union rights, and protect human rights defenders from persecution.

Therefore, we urge you to demand that the Iranian authorities release Mohammad Habibi immediately and unconditionally. He is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his human rights, including through his trade union activism. And we request that you ensure the Iranian authorities give Mohammad immediate access to the specialised medical care doctors say he needs in a medical facility outside prison, in compliance with international standards and medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent.

Finally, we urge you to call for an investigation into Mohammad Habibi's allegations of torture or other ill-treatment, both in detention and during his arrests in March and May 2018 and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice in fair trials.

I look forward to hearing that our urgent call has been conveyed to the Iranian authorities.

Yours sincerely

FRANCES O'GRADY

General Secretary