

Statement by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran on the Jail Sentence for Afshin Shams

One of the sham courts of the Islamic regime in the province of Esfahan has sentenced Afshin Shams, the well-known Iranian labour activist, one of the members of the Coordinating Committee for Organizing Labor Unions and a member in the Assembly of the Iranian Caricaturists to one-year conditional jail. He was informed about the sentence on November 1st 2008, 4 months after his arrest in the absence of his lawyer Mr. Mohammad Sharif.

Afshin Shams has made wide efforts to establish contacts between different activists in the different sections of the Iranian labor movement and to organize the workers in class and mass organizations and has fought unrelentingly in defence of the workers' rights. For these reasons, he has been persued by the security forces of the islamic regime for long time and finally he was arrested and put in prison on July 3rd 2008 in Esfahan.

The jail sentence for Afshin Shams, one of the well-known Iranian labor activists, is an attack on the relative growth of the workers struggles and strikes during the recent months, the significant efforts by the labor activists for creating workers' class and mass organizations and is a continuation to the policy of terror and oppression against the labor as well as other social activists in Iran by the Islamic regime.

The Islamic regime in Iran is struggling with a deep economic and political crisis. In this situation it sees its own survival in oppressing the social movements and in the first phase the oppression of the labor movements in Iran and dragging these movements into stagnancy. By arresting and putting Afshin Shams, the Islamic regime wants to take revenge on those labor activists and forerunners who are fighting to organize the workers in their own class and mass unions.

In these circumstances, the necessity of class solidarity and standing together against the regime's anti-labor policies requires that the existing labor organizations, the activists and forerunners in the different sections of the Iranian labor movement put all their efforts together for immediate release of Afshin Shams as well as other labor activists as part of their struggle against this regime, as they have always done. They should organize such wide protests against the policy of pursuit and arrest of the labor activists that would make it costly for the regime to put these oppressive policies into action and as a result would not be able to advance with these policies.

Outside Iran, many political parties, organizations, unions and activists, who consider the support for the Iranian labor and freedom-loving movements as their matter, have conducted vauable activities in the recent years in introducing the Iranian labor movement, gaining the worldwide support for this movement and putting the Islamic regime under pressure for its anti-worker nature. The labor movement in Iran needs these efforts to be continued and made more widespread. May the struggle to free Afshin Shams and other labor activists be another step towards the spread of these activities.

**The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran
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