

[2010-05-10] Farzad Kamangar: EI Outrage at Iranian Teacher's Execution

Education International is deeply troubled to hear reports that Iranian teacher trade unionist Farzad Kamangar was among five people who were summarily executed in secret on 9 May.

Farzad Kamangar, a 35-year-old member of the Teachers' Union of Kurdistan, was accused of "endangering national security" and "enmity against God". He had lived with the threat of the death penalty since February 2008, when it was imposed upon him after a sham trial that lasted less than five minutes.

Although the Iranian authorities had accepted Farzad's appeal, the case stalled when it should have been sent to the Supreme Court for review. After further delays, Farzad's lawyer was told that his file had been lost. Despite the evident lack of independent inquiry into the allegations and the absence of a fair judicial process, Farzad has still been reportedly executed.

EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, said: "We are all deeply shocked and saddened to hear that Farzad has been executed. His case was particularly troubling to our 30 million members because of the opaque and secretive manner in which his trial was conducted, the lack of basic rights he had access to whilst in prison, and the fact that neither his family or legal representatives were informed of his execution. This is a terrible day for teachers, union activists and human rights. EI expresses our solidarity with Farzad's family, colleagues and students."

He added: "EI recognises the rights and responsibilities of all governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences but this must be in line with international and national standards of fair trial. EI is also unequivocal that the Iranian government must ensure respect for all trade union and human rights."

The trade union and human rights community had campaigned against the death penalty and prosecution of Farzad. EI and its affiliates have been particularly vocal and lobbied the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association, which subsequently 'urge[d] the Government [of Iran] to immediately stay the execution of Farzad Kamangar's death sentence, annul his conviction and secure his release from detention.'

Call for action:

- EI is joining international networks and campaigns to remember Farzad and support other Iranian teachers and union activists, including Rasoul Bodaghi, Hashem Khastar and Bahman Goudarzzade, who remain in prison within Iran.
- EI is writing to the Supreme Leader and Iranian authorities to request a transparent investigation into the execution of Farzad and to halt any further executions.
- EI is informing and calling on all EI affiliates to write to their respective country's foreign office to express their shock at the execution of Farzad, to call for open and fair trials, and an end to the death penalty.
- EI is encouraging its affiliates to hold vigils to mark the sad news of the death of Farzad.

Address: Education International, 5 boulevard du Roi Albert II, 1210 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 22 40 611, Fax: +32 (0)2 22 40 606

General enquiry: headoffice@ei-ie.org , Public relations: info@ei-ie.org