

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIRECTORATE GENERAL

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

18 JUN 2010

Brussels,
RE/JVDA D(2010) - 350628
Vos. ref. HTUR/MP

Dear Mr Van Leeuwen and Mr Ryder,

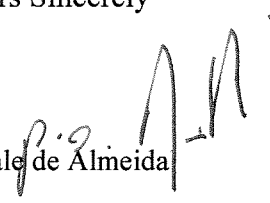
Thank you for your letter of 11 May 2010 addressed to the High Representative / Vice President of the Commission Ms Catherine Ashton, drawing her attention to the difficult situation of trade unionists in Iran.

The European Union is fully aware of these problems and considers that the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms such as the right to freedom of assembly and association must remain an essential pillar of our present and future relations with Iran. The EU raises such issues in all meetings with Iranian representatives, at all levels. Furthermore, during the last months the EU has issued several statements on the human rights situation in Iran and EU Member States actively contributed to the Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights in Iran that took place under the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva last February.

The EU is strongly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances. The use of the death penalty in Iran is a cause of grave concern. High Representative Ashton has issued a public statement on behalf of the EU strongly condemning the execution of Mr Farzad Kamangar and four other individuals. The EU urges Iran to comply with its obligations concerning the right to a fair trial and the respect of minimum standards in cases of capital punishment. In line with its overall policy against the death penalty, the EU calls on Iran to introduce a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, as a first step towards its abolition.

While the human rights situation in Iran remains very problematic, we shall continue to spare no efforts to convey very clear messages to the Iranian authorities, first and foremost about the necessity that they respect the obligations stemming from international conventions they freely signed and ratified.

Yours Sincerely


J. Vale de Almeida

Mr Fred van Leeuwen and Mr Guy Ryder
General Secretary of Education International and the ITUC

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