



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
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Bildungsinternationale

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President

Susan Hopgood

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To His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info_leader@leader.ir

To His Excellency Hassan Rouhani
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: media@rouhani.ir

Brussels, 4 July 2015

Sirs,

**REQUEST FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE
IRANIAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, MR ESMAIL ABDI**

I am writing to you on behalf of Education International (EI), the global federation of education unions and teachers' associations representing more than 32 million educators and education support professionals in 170 countries. We urge you to immediately release Mr Esmail Abdi, the General Secretary of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Association (ITTA).

The Iranian teachers' association is a member of Education International. We will hold our 7th World Congress in Ottawa, Canada, from July 21st to July 26th. "Unite for Quality Education – Better Education for a Better World" will be the theme of this congress. More than 1500 representatives of member organizations of Education International will discuss their professional ambition to achieve quality education for all young people around the world. Mr Esmail Abdi is registered as a Congress delegate.

According to reports that we have received, Mr Abdi was taken into custody on June 27 after he had been prevented from traveling to Armenia to obtain travel visa for Canada. We have also learned that after Mr Abdi's passport had been confiscated at the border, he was instructed to return to Tehran to meet with your prosecutors. After having reported to the prosecutors' office he was arrested.

We are of the view that Mr. Abdi's detention and your efforts to prevent him to attend our World Congress represent infringements of various international human rights' conventions, including those protecting the freedom of expression and association, as well as the right to travel. We are also of the view that by preventing an EI Congress delegate to attend the meeting of our Governing Body, you are obstructing the democratic functioning of our international organization. We have requested the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Director General of ILO and the Director General of UNESCO to contact your government on this matter.

Finally, with global education on top of the agenda of the international community, no government wishing to enhance educational opportunities for its young citizens, should want to prevent representatives of their country's teaching profession to attend Education International's quadrennial congress.

We strongly urge you to facilitate the immediate release of Mr Esmail Abdi and to secure his right to travel to Canada and attend our 7th World Congress.

Yours sincerely,

Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary