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RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LABOR RIGHTS IN IRAQ

Whereas, Hassan Juma'a, Chairman of the Federation of Oil Unions in Iraq, has been criminally charged by the Ministry of Oil for allegedly organizing a strike at the Southern Oil Company; and

Whereas, strikes in this sector have been taking place with increasingly regularity as workers in the oil industry seek to protect their rights and interests; and

Whereas, if convicted, Hassan Juma'a could face stiff fines or even imprisonment, and the Federation of Oil Unions could be severely crippled -- all part of an effort by the Maliki government to remove a huge obstacle that has thus far impeded the privatization of Iraq's oil resources; and

Whereas, the attacks on Hassan Juma'a and the Federation of Oil Unions -- which are attacks on freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively -- reflect the government of Iraq's intention to hold on to repressive laws and policies issued under the Saddam Hussein regime, namely, Decree 150 of 1987 and Labor Law No. 71, both of which are in contradiction with ILO conventions and international labor standards, though Iraq has ratified sixty six international labor conventions; and

Whereas, US Labor Against the War, Solidarity Center and the Iraq Civil Society Solidarity Initiative have been spearheading an international labor campaign to protest the ongoing violation of worker rights in Iraq, particularly the violation of the rights of the Federation of Oil Unions and of Hassan Juma'a; and

Therefore be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council joins with USLAW, Solidarity Center, the Iraq Civil Society Solidarity Initiative and unions the world over to demand that the government of Iraq immediately drop all charges against Hassan Juma'a and immediately cancel the orders issued by the Ministry of Oil to union activists, including all transfer orders, reprimands and arbitrary penalties against union activists. All workers, including public sector workers, must be permitted to freely join trade unions, without government interference in union activities; and

Therefore be it Finally Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council forward this resolution for concurrence to the California Federation of Labor, with copies to USLAW and Solidarity Center.

Submitted by Allan Fisher, AFT 2121, and Alan Benjamin, OPEIU Local 3, and adopted unanimously by the San Francisco Labor Council on April 8, 2013.

Respectfully,

Tim Paulson
Executive Director

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