

**Who are we ?**

● The International Workers Committee Against War, Exploitation, for a Workers' International (IWC) was set up at the World Conference held in Mumbai ( India ) on Novembre 19, 20 and 21 gathering delegates from 28 countries.

● The IWC was set up on the basis of the Mumbai Manifesto against war, exploitation and precarious labour which was endorsed by labour activist and trade union and political organisations officers from 46 countries (\*)

● Its continuations committee is composed of labour activists from all political/ trade union backgrounds:  
**Innocent Assogba** (Benin),  
**Alan Benjamin** (USA),  
**Colia Clark** (USA),  
**Constantin Cretan** (Romania),  
**Berthony Dupont** (Haiti),  
**Ney Ferreira** (Brazil),  
**Daniel Gluckstein** (France),  
**Rubina Jamil** (Pakistan),  
**Apo Leung** (China),  
**Gloria Gracida** (Mexico),  
**M.A. Patil** (India),  
**Mandlenkosi Phangwa** (Azania),  
**Klaus Schüller** (Germany),  
**Jung Sikhwa** (Korea),  
**John Sweeney** (Great Britain),  
**Mark Vassilev** (Russia),  
**Nambiath Vasudevan** (India).

(\*) Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Azania, Belarus, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Korea, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

**UNITED STATES**

**APPEAL to Free All Political Prisoners in Algeria**

(updated on August 8, 2019)

For close to six months, across Algeria, millions of people have taken to the streets in weekly protest actions to express their deep aspiration for change, chanting: "*System Clear Out! Popular Sovereignty!*" And as the mobilizations increased in numbers, so, too, the repression intensified against political activists of all political backgrounds.

In our initial appeal of June 3, 2019 to "free all political prisoners in Algeria" [see first list of U.S. endorsers below], we highlighted three victims of repression:

• **Kamel Eddine Fekhar**, an activist in defense of the rights of the Mozabite (Berber) people in the northern Sahara region of Algeria. Fekhar died in detention on May 28 after more than 50 days of a hunger strike;

• **Hadj Ghermoul**, an activist with the National Committee for the Defense of the Rights of the Unemployed who was the first person to hold up a sign in January that read, "No to the Fifth Mandate [of Bouteflika]!" He was released on July 20 after serving his full six-month prison sentence; and

\* **Louisa Hanoune**, the general secretary of the Workers Party (PT), who was imprisoned in connection with the case involving Saïd Bouteflika (the brother of the former president) and Army Generals Toufik and Tartag. She was arrested on May 9 and still is detained.

There are still several dozen political detainees who have been arrested since February 22, when the mass uprising erupted. All these activists are being held without trial, charged with "undermining national unity." They include:

**Political prisoners in Algeria**



Amokrane Challal



Guerfa Zakela



Lakhdar Bouregaa



Messaoud Leftissi



Moulard Chatri



Nadir Flici



Saïd Benarab



Samira Messouci



Toufik Inzelmath

\* **Lakhdar Bouregaa**, age 86, former commander of the National Liberation Army during the Algerian Revolution, and one of the founders of the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), was arrested on June 29 for "contempt of court and violation of Army morale."

\* **Messaoud Leftissi**, a human rights activist, was arrested for carrying the Amazigh (Berber) flag on June 21.

\* **Samira Messouci**, a local City Council member on behalf of the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), was arrested on June 28 for carrying the Amazigh flag.

\* **Saïd Benarab**, a FFS activist in the city of Bejaia, has been the victim of continued police harassment.

There also have been dozens of young people randomly arrested in the demonstrations for carrying the Berber flag; one of them is facing 10 years in prison just for carrying a flag. [See attached photos.]

Two additional cases must be highlighted, as well:

\* **Ahmed Baba-Nadjar**, the oldest political prisoner in Algeria, then an FFS militant. He was sentenced in 2005 to life imprisonment in a rigged trial for a crime he did not commit.

\* **Salah Dabouz**, who was Kamel Eddine Fekhar's lawyer. He is not in prison. He began a hunger strike to protest a court order that requires him to appear three times a week in Ghardaïa — forcing him to travel several hundred miles every week. He continues his fight to lift the sentencing and court order.

**We — the undersigned labor and community activists in the United States — express our solidarity with the Algerian people and call for the immediate release of all political prisoners!**

**Appeal initiated by Alan Benjamin, Mya Shone and Ralph Schoenman (on behalf of The Organizer newspaper) and Colia Clark, Convener, Judicial Violence Symposium, Harlem, New York.**

## First List of Endorsers

(all titles and organizations for id. purposes only)

**Baldemar Velasquez**, President, Farm Labor Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO), Toledo, Ohio  
**Nancy Wohlforth**, Secretary-Treasurer Emerita, OPEIU, Washington, D.C.

**Gene Bruskin**, NWU (UAW), Dramatist Guild, Silver Spring, Maryland

**Pam Africa**, Co-convener, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Suzanne Ross**, Co-convener, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Berthony Dupont**, Director, Haiti Liberté, Brooklyn, New York

**Eddie Rosario**, President, NYC chapter of LCLAA, AFL-CIO, New York, New York

**Donna Dewitt**, Past President, South Carolina AFL-CIO, Orangeburg, South Carolina

**Chris Silvera**, Secretary-Treasurer, Teamsters Local 808, Long Island City, New York

**Peter Olney**, Director of Organizing, ILWU (retired), San Francisco, California

**Clarence Thomas**, Past Secretary-Treasurer (retired), ILWU Local 10, Oakland, California

**Michael Eisenscher**, SolidarityINFOService, Oakland, California

**Denis Mosgofian**, Retired President, GCC-Teamsters, Local 4-N, San Francisco, California

**Lou Wolf**, Co-founder and co-publisher CovertAction Magazine, Washington, D.C.

**Theresa El-Amin**, Regional Director, Southern Anti Racism Network, Columbus, Georgia

**Saladin Muhammad**, Southern Workers Assembly, Rocky Mount, North Carolina

**James Lafferty**, Executive Director Emeritus,

National Lawyers Guild-LA, Los Angeles, California

**Alita Blanc**, Past President, United Educators of San Francisco (UESF), San Francisco, California

**Kali Akuno**, Organizer, Cooperation Jackson, Mississippi

**Bill Leumer**, Former President, IAM Local 565, San Francisco, California

**Jeff Mackler**, National Secretary, Socialist Action, Oakland, California

**Ron Dicks**, Retired Regional Director, IFPTE-AFL-CIO, San Francisco, California

**Tom Lacey**, San Francisco Peace and Freedom Party, San Francisco, California

**Al Rojas**, Vice President, Sacramento LCLAA, AFL-CIO, Sacramento, California

**Millie Phillips**, Steering Committee, Labor Fightback Network, Oakland, California

**Eric Blanc**, Author, "Red State Revolt: The Teachers' Strike Wave and Working Class Politics," New York, New York

**David Walters**, Retired, IBEW Local 1245, Pacifica, California

**Robert Irminger**, Chair, Inland Boatmen's Union, ILWU, San Francisco, California

**Steve Zeltzer**, Director, Labor Video Project, San Francisco, California

**John Leslie**, Carpenters Local 187, retired, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Dan Kaplan**, Executive Secretary, AFT 1493, Berkeley, California

**Hal Sutton**, 1st Vice President, SW Florida UAW Retired Workers Council, North Point, Florida

**Lindsay Curtis**, Los Rios Community College CFT, Sacramento, California

**Rodger Scott**, Past President, AFT 2121, San

Francisco, California

**Timothy Stinson**, Socialist Organizer, Albany, Oregon

**Mark Demming**, National Lawyers Guild, Oakland, California

**Betty Davis**, New Abolitionist Movement, Brooklyn, New York

**Ralph Poynter**, Lynne Stewart Organization, Brooklyn, New York

**Marilyn Vogt-Downey**, author and activist, Brooklyn, New York

**Fred Lonidier**, Professor Emeritus, UC/AFT Retirees, San Diego, California

**Julian Kunnie**, Free Mumia Campaign, First Nations Enforcement Agency, Tucson, Arizona

**Carole Seligman**, Co-editor, Socialist Viewpoint, San Francisco, California

**Allan Fisher**, Past President, AFT 2121, San Francisco, California

**Bruce Neuburger**, Past President, CFT Local 4681, San Mateo, California

**Howie Hawkins**, Retired Teamster, Green Party, Syracuse, New York

**Marsha Feinland**, Peace and Freedom Party of California, Berkeley, California

**David Walsh**, Former President, International Association of Machinists Lodge 1089, Boston, Massachusetts

**Elizabeth Wright**, Professor Emerita, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California

**Bradley Wiedmaier**, SEIU Local 2015 delegate to San Francisco Labor Council, San Francisco, California

**C.T. Weber**, Legislative Committee Chair, Peace and Freedom Party, Sacramento, California

## CHINA

### *"The Strike as an Efficient Means for Imposing Social Change"*

Ming Lam, head of international relations

at the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU), speaks out

The current situation is the result of the government's will not to respond to the demands of the population, and particularly not to withdraw the draft bill on extradition. From that point, the citizens called for the organisation of another general strike. Being the largest independent trade union confederation, the HKCTU has totally supported this call. On August 5th, we called on all our trade unions and all our members to organise the strike.

There have been 7 demonstrations: approximately 350,000 workers were on strike. 290,000 participated in the demonstrations.

The civil aviation union organised the strike. Over 200 flights were cancelled.

The social services union, the bus drivers' union and the teachers' union all called for the strike, as did the underground employees union. Seven of the nine Hong Kong underground lines were paralysed by the movement of the demonstrators, and also by the striking workers. Even the Hong Kong Disneyland union succeeded in disrupting service.

This is the first political strike in many years. Many rank-and-file workers were on strike, or stopped working. And that is an important success. It has put significant pressure on the government, which was forced to call a press conference in the afternoon. The stock exchange lost 5%. This shows everyone that not only can a strike have an important immediate effect, but also it is a lesson for the people: the

strike is an efficient means for imposing social change.

In China, in the absence of freedom of the press, the propaganda is trying hard to make believe that these demonstrations are about pro-independence. That is simply not true. Of course there are pro-independents in the demonstrations. But the demonstrations are massively for the withdrawal of the draft bill on extradition, for civil liberties and human rights. Concerning the Chinese labour movement, most of the activists are either under surveillance or have already been arrested. This makes it extremely difficult to establish links. In Hong Kong, it is a whole new generation that is awakening, and that wants to make its voice heard. ■