Workers’ Union of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company statement

The following statement is by the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Vahed), a trade union in Greater Tehran. It was translated into English by Sepideh Jodeyri.
(taken from: https://www.counterpunch.org/2026/01/12/support-for-the-peoples-just-struggle/)

Popular protests and strikes across cities throughout the country have now entered their eleventh day. Despite an intensified security crackdown, the heavy deployment of police and security forces, and widespread violence against protesters, the movement remains broad, dynamic, and diverse. According to reports, protests have taken place at no fewer than 174 locations in 60 cities across 25 provinces, with hundreds of demonstrators arrested. Tragically, at least 35 protesters—including children—have been killed during this period.

From December 2017 to November 2019, and again in September 2022, Iran’s oppressed people have repeatedly taken to the streets to demonstrate their rejection of the prevailing political and economic order and its structures of exploitation and inequality. These movements are not driven by nostalgia for the past, but by the determination to build a future free from the domination of capital—one grounded in freedom, equality, social justice, and human dignity.

While expressing our solidarity with popular struggles against poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and repression, we categorically oppose any return to a past marked by inequality, corruption, and injustice. We believe that genuine liberation can only be achieved through the conscious, organized leadership and participation of the working class

and oppressed people themselves—not through the revival of outdated and authoritarian forms of power.

Workers, teachers, retirees, nurses, students, women, and especially young people—despite mass repression, arrests, dismissals, and relentless economic hardship—continue to stand at the forefront of these struggles. In this context, the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Vahed) stresses the necessity of sustaining independent, conscious, and organized forms of protest.

We have stated repeatedly, and we reaffirm once again: the path to liberation for workers and the oppressed does not lie in the imposition of leaders from above, nor in reliance on foreign powers, nor through factions within the ruling establishment. It lies in unity, solidarity, and the building of independent organizations in workplaces, communities, and at the national level. We must not allow ourselves to once again become victims of power struggles and the interests of the ruling classes.

The Syndicate also strongly condemns any promotion, justification, or support for military intervention by foreign governments, including the United States and Israel. Such interventions lead not only to the destruction of civil society and the killing of civilians, but also provide further pretexts for repression and violence by the state. Past experience has shown that Western hegemonic powers place no value whatsoever on the freedom, livelihoods, or rights of the Iranian people.

We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all detainees and insist on the identification and prosecution of those responsible for ordering and carrying out the killing of protesters.

Long live freedom, equality, and class solidarity.

The path forward for workers and the oppressed is unity and organization.

-Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Vahed)

The Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company

(Vahed) is a significant, independent trade union in Iran, established in 1958, representing thousands of bus drivers in the Greater Tehran area who work primarily for the United Bus Company.