

Algeria Solidarity: What is CISA ?

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The first Algerian autonomous unions, such as the National Autonomous Union of staff of public administration (SNAPAP), were born in the early 90s during the brief constitutional opening to pluralism in politics and among unions. The first principle of these unions is full autonomy from power and political organisations.

They exist today in the sectors of education, health, public administration, etc. They often have the majority in these sectors and represent an alternative to the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA). The autonomous unions defend a grassroot, democratic and offensive unionism. Moreover many women are involved in these unions, which today are real tools to fight for the rights of women.

The civil war during the 90s saw the establishment of a state of emergency... which has still not been lifted and gives a pretext to the power to systematically harass the autonomous unions, deemed too troublesome : prohibition of public assembly, right to strike denied, arbitrary suspensions of union members, arbitrary transfers, constant monitoring and multiple pressures. Unionists need more than ever international solidarity.

It is in this perspective that the International Committee supporting Independent Algerian Unionism (CISA) was formed. Bringing together Algerian and French trade unionists and also, among others, activists from associations defending human rights, the committee aims at developing an international solidarity network. Firstly to inform about the situation in Algeria. Also to multiply meetings between the autonomous unions and international unions, associations and NGOs... The Committee supports the campaigns carried out by the unions and promotes them.

The collection of financial support is essential : it allows unions to rent premises, equip, develop their work, travel to meetings abroad ...

The CISA is an association under French law (loi 1901) open to all : individuals, associations and unions.

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<http://www.cisa-solidaritesyndicats-algerie.org/spip.php?article2>