

The Arab Labour Organization at the Crossroads

Sunday 15 May 2011, by [CTUWS](#) (Date first published: 14 May 2011).

The Arab countries witness popular revolutions against their despotic regimes which fostered corruption throughout these countries, deprived their peoples from their simplest rights and caused the deterioration of their basic services (such as education, health and housing). These revolutions toppled down the regime of Bin Ali of Tunisia and forced Hosni Mubarak the former Egyptian president to step down, put him and his aides in jail under investigation of the cases of corruption and the crimes they perpetrated by killing the demonstrators.

At this time, Cairo will host tomorrow the annual conference of the Arab Labour Organization (ALO). The role of this organization was absent in defending the simplest labour criteria and the workers right to form their democratic, representative and independent trade unions which are essential for promoting social justice in our Arab countries.

The ALO conference will discuss an ordinary agenda as if nothing is changed in our region !! while all the studies and researches indicate that the Arab workers live under the poverty line and the citizens revolt calling for freedom and social justice.

The ALO was absent for a long time. It did not carry out its role for the Arab workers. In Egypt, where its headquarters is located, it kept silent regarding the suffering of the Egyptian workers who went during the past five years into more than 3000 strikes and sit-ins calling for the simple rights which should be secured for the workers. In addition, the ALO took a hostile stand regarding the Arab labour movement in general and the Egyptian labour movement in particular. Not a single official from the ALO has met (even by a mistake) with any leader from these movements. It was a continuous supporter and assistant for the governmental federation whose leaders came through forged elections. Moreover, the ALO defied arrogantly the feelings of the Egyptian workers when it granted Hussein Megawer the president of the governmental federation the post of its Assistant General Director. Hussein Megawer is in jail now under investigation. He is accused of participating in the attack against the demonstrators at Midan al Tahrir on 2 February in what is called the 'Camel Battle'.

Tomorrow, the conference will be attended by ministers for governments whose hands are stained with the blood of their peoples who called for freedom, justice and dignity, but the despotic governments faced them with bullets. Together with these ministers will be trade unionists who put their trade union organizations under the service of these despotic regimes and were, during the revolution as with the case in Egypt, at the frontlines of the powers against the revolution.

While the Center for Trade Union and Workers Services "CTUWS" condemns hosting this event, it calls to freeze the ALO until it is restructured to play its mandate as an organization for active dialogue between the three parties of labour and until it performs its role to secure the international labour standards in work environment.

The CTUWS calls upon all the honest trade unionists attending this conference to boycott all the ministers and the trade unionists whose hands are stained with the blood of their peoples the

martyrs of the Arab revolution.

The Center for Trade Union and Workers Services "CTUWS"

14th May 2011

P.S.

* The Center for Trade Union & Workers' Services (CTUWS) - Honored the French Republic's Human Rights Prize- is an Egyptian non-governmental organization established in March 1990 by some labor leaders and activists guided by their experience in the Egyptian labor movement. They vowed to meet the urgent need to form an independent organization that advances and supports the needs of workers in a democratic manner, provide direct support and services to the workers and fill the void created by the "official" trade union organization which failed to achieve its fundamental obligations.