

Egypt: locked-out IFFCO food workers continue strike

Sunday 4 August 2013, by [IFFCO Workers' Union](#) (Date first published: 5 June 2013).

Around 600 workers at IFFCO Egypt, which produces edible oils for the UAE-based food manufacturing group IFFCO, have been locked out by management after a strike in protest at IFFCO's failure to implement a collective agreement signed last year. MENA Solidarity Network received the letter below from the IFFCO Egypt Workers' Union committee, which has been sacked as bosses attempt to crush the strike. Rush messages of solidarity for the IFFCO workers to [menasolidarity gmail.com](mailto:menasolidarity@gmail.com)

In March 2012 a collective bargaining agreement was signed between us and the management of IFFCO Egypt, but unfortunately the company's management began using legal loopholes manipulate the terms of the agreement, which over time made it completely worthless. Our discussions with management reached an impasse, so we convened a meeting between them and the General Assembly of our union. Once again, management did not respond to the workers' demands so the General Assembly decided to call an all-out strike until management implements the terms of our collective agreement in full.

On the second day of the strike the chairman of the company issued a decision to close the plant in violation of the law, and on the third day sacked the entire union committee, in addition to the heads of three branch committees, bringing the number of victimized union activists to 12 in total. It appears that management hired thugs to smash the strike. These thugs fired shots at the workers, and then went to the police station and made false reports about the incident, accusing the union of causing trouble in the factory in order to overthrow the current Muslim Brotherhood government. They even stopped workers from collecting their monthly wages in order to force them to end the strike.

Despite this, workers are remaining steadfast in the face of this intransigence, and because they know very well that this is no longer only a strike to achieve their demands, but it is to maintain the dignity that they have shown during our 20-day long action. Unfortunately, the response from the government and political quarters has been completely negative, and until now, we have not seen a government in Egypt which defends workers' rights.

IFFCO Workers' Union

P.S.

* Posted on June 5, 2013 3:

<http://menasolidaritynetwork.com/2013/06/05/egypt-locked-out-iffco-food-workers-continue-strike/>