



Three Years Imprisonment for Five Leaders of the Independent Union of Containers' Handling in Alexandria

The Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress and the Center for Trade Unions and Workers Services, 24 September 2012:

In a very serious development, Alexandria Court of Misdemeanors judged yesterday 23/9/2009 to imprison five workers from the Containers' Handling Company in Alexandria for three years. The sentence was issued in the suit of the Company's workers strike and their call for the resignation of the chairman of the board of directors of Alexandria Port Authority who is accused of corruption. They also called for returning once again to the government the Port's platforms which were rented to unknown Chinese companies.

The board chairman of Alexandria Containers' Handling Company filed a report against the company's workers who went in strike. The Company accused them together with the board members of the Independent Union of provoking the workers to go in strike, jeopardizing public wealth, detaining the workers and preventing them from doing their loading and unloading job. The Prosecution decided to leave the investigation in the Company's report on file.

The Company filed a complaint against the Prosecution's decision to leave the investigation on file. As a result, investigations were reopened.

The accused workers stood before the Port Prosecution last March to resume the investigations. They were summoned three times for investigation and they were released every time. The workers' lawyer asked the prosecution to send an expert from the Faculty of Engineering, Alexandria University to determine the alleged damage to public wealth so as not to rely solely on the Company's report which mentioned faked damages. Then the Prosecution referred the case to Alexandria Misdemeanors Court which issued its sentence in absentia to imprison the following five workers:

Ahmed Hassan Sadek (president of the Company's Independent Union), Yusry Marouf (the general secretary), Ashraf Ibrahim, Mohamed Abdel Monem and Essam Eldin Mohamed Mabrouk (representatives of the workers in the negotiations with the leadership of the Northern Military Zone and presented the workers' demands during the strike of last March).

While the Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress and the Center for Trade Unions announce their full support and solidarity with the workers and leadership of the Company's Independent Union who used their right to strike according to the international conventions and norms, they refuse any restrictions on the workers' right to go in strike. The Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress and the Center for Trade Unions condemn targeting the independent unions and their leaders who were freely elected by their workers without intervention to represent them in negotiations with the employers and the state officials.

The Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress and the Center for Trade Unions emphasize their stand beside those workers and undertake to provide all sorts of support as well as the necessary legal assistance. At the same time, they emphasize the need for an enlarged solidarity campaign against this fierce attack against the independent unions and the achievements of the Egyptian working class represented in establishing independent unions freely and without interference.