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Iraq

Joint Statement Issued by the Iraqi Trade Unions

- News from around the world -

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The Iraqi economy has been severely affected by decades of sanctions, wars and occupation. The Iraqi trade unions and federations believe in the capacity of the country with all its oil and mineral resources to provide a decent living standard for Iraqis. The federations and unions consider that the wars and occupation have caused a dramatic decrease in the living and social standards of Iraqis and especially of workers.

[https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/free-market_photo_2.jpg]

US soldier watches Iraqi oil workers collect their pay

The federations and unions stress the importance of complete sovereignty for Iraq over its petroleum and natural resources so as to develop them in a way that assures a complete reconstruction of the country. We wish to stress the following points in regard to the policies of the IMF and World Bank in Iraq:

- 1) Increasing transparency and additional representation for Iraq in the decision-making structures of the IFIs.
- 2) To stop imposing structural adjustment conditions for loans.
- 3) Agreeing to provide funding for public services and state-owned enterprises without demanding their privatization.
- 4) Canceling debts owed by Iraq that have resulted from the policies of the former regime.
- 5) Rejecting the reduction of spending on social services especially the elimination of government support for the food distribution system or the reduction of the number of items covered.
- 6) Strongly rejecting the privatization of publicly owned entities and especially of the oil, education, health, electricity, transportation and construction sectors.
- 7) Rejecting the increase in the price of petroleum products, considering the negative impact of the increase on the living standards of Iraqis.
- 8) Adopting a new labor law and a pension and social security law that assure workers' rights and are in conformity with international labor standards and human rights conventions. The World Bank and the IMF must also respect these standards.

The unions and federations that have signed this statement announce the formation of a permanent coordinating committee that will make its positions known to the Iraqi Government and to the IFIs. They also demand that the IFIs engage in dialogue, discussion and negotiations with the trade union federations regarding their policies in Iraq.

Finally, they request the assistance of international trade union organizations to provide all possible support to the above-mentioned demands.

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General Federation of Iraqi Workers (ex-IFTU)

General Union of Oil Employees in Basra (now creating an Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions - IFOU)

Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq

General Federation of Workers Trade Unions in Kurdistan

Federation of Workers and Craftsmen Trade Unions in Kurdistan