

NUJ Iran International Chapel Resolution

We the members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) at Iran International Television hereby declare our support of colleagues who in recent days have been fired on the pretext of redundancies.

We the journalists of Iran International, while declaring our solidarity with these colleagues, emphasise our legal right to membership of the trade union that we have chosen. The inclusion of four members of the NUJ in the restructuring process which has resulted in the dismissal of three of them is very worrying in the current situation.

It is no secret that Iran International continually faces staffing shortages, with manpower insufficient to produce 24-hour news coverage. Conversely, the network is currently in the process of recruiting additional staff for the expansion of news coverage and the in-house production of news programmes. In such conditions, the dismissal of our colleagues with the justification of redundancies is very concerning.

In addition, in recent weeks and months union members have come under pressure by the employer of the company, Volant Media. An unjust accusation made against an elected union representative, leading to his resignation from the chapel committee is another example of this pressure. Against the efforts to attain recognition of the NUJ chapel at Iran International, the adjudication of which has now been referred to the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC), the union has heard various excuses from the collective management.

The secretive signing of a recognition agreement with the British Association of Journalists (BAJ) is another example of management efforts to work against the NUJ at Iran International. The recognition agreement with BAJ was then unilaterally cancelled by the BAJ.

This process was marked by recent claims and motions from Volant Media that they had signed a second agreement with the BAJ. This was a move which in the employer's view would block the pursuit of the NUJ chapel to achieve recognition. However, in correspondence between the NUJ and the BAJ it has been determined that there is no second agreement.

Unfortunately, during this period, in efforts to withhold recognition of the NUJ at Iran International, Volant Media has continued to threaten and intimidate our colleagues.

It is no secret that one of the colleagues affected, and eventually dismissed in the process of restructuring, was a member of the executive committee of the NUJ chapel at Iran International, and was the Father of the Chapel. He played a key role in negotiations for the chapel's recognition and has been a regular figure in its activities over the last three years.

Unfortunately, it seems that his dismissal, as well as the dismissal of two other colleagues, was a manoeuvre to encumber the legal process of NUJ chapel recognition.

Given the urgent need for experienced staff across all areas of Iran International it is evident that this was nothing more than an intended impediment in the process for chapel recognition, and a violation of its members' rights.

Iranian journalists living outside the country have always been a reflection of the voices of those who in the past decades have had their rights violated by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and whose fundamental right to live in a free and fair society has been encroached upon.

These journalists have been at the forefront in reflecting the voices of those whose rights to unionise have been unapologetically violated by the Iranian government. Currently journalists working at Iran International face similar treatment by the collective management.

We urge the management of Iran International to reconsider their hasty and unjust decision to dismiss these colleagues and that they return them to their working conditions.

Trade union rights are inalienable human rights.

With solidarity

Kind regards

Members of the NUJ at Iran International Television