

## **The formation of the Constituent Body of the Egyptian Independent Trade Union Federation**

Egypt is witnessing presently unforgettable days... Its people is showing unprecedented valor in its struggle to protect its right to live the life it deserves... its right to dignity, freedom and social justice... its right to equal decent work opportunity and fair wages... its right to live in a democratic society capable of embracing all its members and that provides to each and every one of them his share of the country's wealth and national income... a society where some individuals do not own private jets while the majority of the people lack a decent conveyance and where the income of those at the top of the pyramid is thousands of times higher than minimum wages.

A society where individuals can breathe freely... talk, interact and express themselves freely, where different categories and classes can defend and negotiate their interests... a society that does not oppress its members nor curbs their ambition and their human yearning for capacity development and better life conditions.

Egyptian workers and employees fought long and participated, especially four years, in a recurrent protest movement – in an unprecedented way in modern Egyptian history- to defend their legitimate rights. Despite the lack of an organized independent union – from which they were deprived for long decades- they were able to attract to their side wider social sectors and to gain a broader sympathy from the Egyptian society and among labour movements and trade unions.

Workers fought for the right to work against the unemployment demon – that haunts Egyptian youth- and called for a fair minimum wage that guarantees a decent standard of living for all wage earners. They fought a great battle for their democratic rights to association in independent trade unions.

This struggle undertaken by workers paved the way in Egypt for the current revolution of the people... Therefore, the Egyptian workers and employees refuse that the “governmental” General Federation of Trade Unions represents them or speaks on their behalf. This federation that denied them their rights and their demands and that issued lately an infamous statement on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January announcing that it will make every effort to contain any workers protest movement during these days.

Hence, the independent unions and bodies –the Union of the Real Estate Tax Workers, the Union of Wage Earners, the Union of Health Technicians, the Independent Teachers Association and the independent bodies and groups representing industrial workers – who find it impossible now to stand idly by, announce the founding of the Egyptian Independent Trade Union Federation and the establishing of Constituent Body as of today the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 that took the following decisions:

To adopt the demands of the Egyptian people and youth revolution announced on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January underlining the following:

1. The Egyptian people right to work – since it is a fundamental right granted by the state and any prejudice of this right entails the right to “unemployment compensation”.
2. To fix the minimum wage at no less than a thousand and two hundred LE (Egyptian pound) to be increased annually accordingly to the increase of prices while granting the rights of all workers to incentives and allowances suitable with their jobs nature and especially the right in adequate

compensations for the damages that may occur due to the working environment and risks. The maximum of wages must not exceed ten times the minimum wages.

3. All the Egyptians have the right to a fair social protection including the rights to healthcare, housing and education “with the guarantee of a free education with developed programs that cope with the scientific and technologic evolution” and the right of the retired to decent wages with the compensation of all the derogated bonuses.
4. The right of all workers, employees and wage earners to associate in independent unions where they put the regulations themselves and which is subject to their will and to remove all the legal restrictions on the exercise of this right.
5. The release of all the recently imprisoned and detained individuals since the 25<sup>th</sup> of January.

The Constituent Body of the Egyptian Independent Trade Union Federation calls upon all the Egyptian workers to form popular committees in the neighboring facilities and sites in order to defend the facilities, workers and citizens in this critical situation. These committees will also organize the protest and strike movements in workplaces. The constituent body calls upon all workers in Egypt to participate in these movements in order to achieve the demands of the Egyptian people with the exception of vital facilities of strategic importance due to the prevailing situation.

**The Egyptian Independent Trade Union Federation**  
**“The Constituent Body”**  
**30/01/2011**