

U.S. LABOR AGAINST THE WAR



Media Advisory for Wednesday, June 15, 2005

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Iraqi labor leaders to brief members of U.S. Congress on need to support trade unions to help rebuild Iraq

Iraqi trade unionists to tour U.S. June 10-25 to discuss effects of U.S. occupation on working people

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Six leaders of the Iraqi trade union movement, who will be touring the U.S. June 10-25, will hold a congressional briefing from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesday to talk about life and work in Iraq under the U.S. occupation. Invited to speak to Congress by Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA), Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA), Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), Rep. John Conyers (D-MI), Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) and Rep. Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D-IL), the six labor leaders will talk about how support for Iraqi workers' right to organize could ultimately shape the rebuilding of Iraq.

The group, representing the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), the Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq (FWCUI), and General Union of Oil Employees (GUOE), is the first delegation of Iraqi labor leaders to visit the United States, and one of the few groups of any sort not brought here by the U.S. government. Hosted by U.S. Labor against the War (USLAW), the six labor leaders plan to visit more than 20 U.S. cities – including Baltimore, New York City, Montpelier and Burlington, VT, Boston, Hartford, Stony Brook, NY, Philadelphia, St. Paul, MN, Chicago, Atlanta, Detroit, Madison, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Cleveland, Los Angeles, San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, San Francisco, Martinez, CA, Portland, and Seattle.

During their stay in the U.S., the group will meet with U.S. workers, union officials, antiwar and social justice activists, religious and community leaders and the media. They will discuss their continued fight to gain the right to form unions; ongoing efforts to thwart U.S. government plans to privatize all Iraqi businesses and contract out Iraqi jobs; and how unemployment is skyrocketing, currently the nationwide rate is 70 percent.

WHO: Abdullah Muhsin, International Representative, IFTU
Adnan al Saffar, Executive Officer, Union of Mechanics, Printing and Metals Workers
Falah Awan, President, FWCUI
Amjad Ali Aljawhry, Representative, FWCUI and Union of the Unemployed in Iraq (UII)
Hassan Juma'a Awad Al Asade, Chief of the Executive Bureau, GUOE
Faleh Abbood Umara, General Secretary, GUOE

WHAT: Iraqi Labor Leaders Congressional Briefing

WHEN: 10:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesday, June, 15, 2005

WHERE: U.S. Capitol Building, Room HC7, Washington, D.C.

U.S. Labor against the War (USLAW) is a national coalition of 112 labor organizations representing more than four million union members. USLAW aims to protect its members and the lives and livelihoods of working people everywhere. The group advocates, educates and mobilizes the U.S. labor movement to work for a just foreign policy, bring about an end to U.S. occupation of foreign countries, facilitate a redirection of the nation's resources, build support for U.S. troops and their families by bringing the troops home now, protect workers' rights, civil rights, civil liberties and the rights of immigrants, and stand in solidarity with workers and their organizations around the world.

For more information visit www.uslaboragainstwar.org

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