



**CENTER FOR TRADE UNION & WORKERS SERVICES
(CTUWS)**

Honored the French Republic's Human Rights Prize

NOW
IN FRONT OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
REAL ESTATE TAX EMPLOYEES CALL FOR
RELEASING THEIR FUND AND
DEFENDING THEIR INDEPENDENT UNION

Now, in front of the Ministry of Finance hundreds of the Real Estate Tax Employees who came this morning from various governorates, are calling for the issuance of a decision to establish their fund which secures social protection for them when they reach retirement.

Members of the Real Estate Tax Employees Union were surprised yesterday morning to find that the Founding Decision which they went to receive from the Ministry has been withheld in spite of the fact that they were told the day before yesterday that the decision was reviewed and signed by the Minister of Finance. There were unconfirmed news that Mr. Hussein Megawer president of the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) has exercised considerable pressure to withhold the decision. His meeting with the Minister of Finance lately was within a series of his efforts to stop the establishment of the fund which would serve about fifty thousand workers.

It is worthy mentioning that the Real Estate Tax Employees Independent Union which started its establishment procedures in December last year and deposited its credentials at the Ministry of Manpower on 21/4/2009 has and is still confronting several forms of intentional restrictions and constrains created by the ETUF. Such actions escalated last month to the limit of beating two of the Union's secretaries in Gharbiya Governorate and in Sharkiya Governorate. Leaders of the Union in Kalyubia and Beni Suef Governorates were presented to the Administrative Prosecution. they were prosecuted because they called for the establishment of the Union. In addition, ETUF exercised pressure on the Real Estate Authority and addressed the Authority formally to issue a decision to stop all the activities of the Independent Union.

It is also worthy mentioning that the Real Estate Tax Employees Independent Union, which is the first independent trade union in Egypt since over 50 years ago, was the offspring of a big protest movement which was organized throughout about two years when the workers of the Real Estate Tax Employees in local administrations called for equal treatment with their colleagues who are directly subject to the Ministry of Finance. They elected the Strike Independent Committee to negotiate on their demands. They managed to realize their justified demands and their democratic movement developed towards the establishment of an independent trade union. They became a source of inspiration for other Egyptian workers and promoted the current of the Egyptian trade union movement towards the formation of trade unions free from any restrictions imposed on them.

Even before its foundation procedures were completed, the independent union started its first negotiations with the Ministry of Finance to establish a fund to provide social care for the real estate tax employees. It is a complementary fund which gives one lump sum payment for the workers upon the end of his/her service. The Union made the feasibility studies of the fund together with its regulations and benefits. The fund gets its finance from the workers monthly contributions. It took

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the Union several months to negotiate with the Ministry of Finance on its contribution in the Fund, the members' contributions and the advantages of contributing to the fund.

Negotiations with the Ministry succeeded and both parties reached an agreement on the broad lines of the fund's system. The agreement took place Monday 6/7/2009 in a meeting chaired by the Assistant of the Minister of Finance Mr. Nabil Rashwan. It was jointly signed by the president of the Real Estate Tax Authority Mr. Tarek Farrag, the president of the Independent Union Mr. Kamal Abu Eeta and its general secretary Mr. Abdel Kader Nada.

Then the Union members agreed to draft the fund's suggested regulations so as to agree on its final form with the Assistant and the legal advisor of the Minister of Finance. The preparatory work took more than ten days and their remained one thing: the signature of the Minister of Finance to approve the establishment of the Fund.

While the Real Estate Tax Employees and the elected board members of their union do their best to establish the Fund, negotiate in a responsible and rational manner, enter into transparent and democratic dialogue and count the days in order to announce the foundation of their social fund ... the ETUF exercises pressure to stop their endeavors!!

The Center for Trade Union and Workers Services (CTUWS) announces its full support to the Real Estate Tax Employees and their independent union. The CTUWS is confident that they are capable of resisting these pressures and that they will materialize their right to social protection. At the same time, the CTUWS announces its condemnation of all forms of pressure against the independent union of the real estate tax workers and calls upon all the democratic powers in our society and the international labour and trade union movements to express their support to and solidarity with the young union and the Egyptian workers' right to establish their trade unions without restrictions.

To express your solidarity please address your messages to:

H. E. The Minister of Finance

Fax: ++ 2 (0) 2 26861861

Email: mofinance@idsc1.gov.eg

and

H. E. The Minister of Manpower

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The Center for Trade Union and Workers Services (CTUWS)

Thursday 30/7/2009