

For information contact:
Cleo Silvers (646) 261-0193
or cleo0silvers@gmail.com
Jack Heyman (501)501-7080
or jackheyman@mac.com

Media Release, December 28, 2021:

Call for International Workers Action to Free U.S. Political Prisoners

Answering the call to action from the 338,000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) for an international campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, labor organizations, political and social justice activists as well as prominent individuals from around the world will assemble on February 1, 2022, for an online, global forum to demand:

For International Workers Action—

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and All Anti-Racist and Anti-Imperialist Freedom Fighters!

In endorsing the call for the February 1 forum, the Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee stated:

“We of the Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee (BPPCC) accept the challenge issued by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) for an international campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. We also join the call of the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (LAC) of San Francisco/Bay Area to extend the campaign to call For International Workers’ Actions to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all Black Panther prisoners and other anti-racist and anti-imperialist freedom fighters (Sundiata Acoli, Ruchell Magee, Jamil Al-Amin, Leonard Peltier, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, Julian Assange, Rev. Joy Powell and many others) — victims of the FBI’s COINTELPRO program and/or local police/district attorneys’ judicial lynching.”

These political prisoners, many languishing for decades, are imprisoned for their opposition to capitalist, racist oppression, exploitation and repression. Many of these men and women are critically ill. They all need to be released immediately. To free Mumia and these other political prisoners, international workers action is necessary.

Speakers will include Mumia Abu-Jamal (via recorded statement); Angela Davis, Distinguished Professor Emerita, University of California, Santa Cruz*; Irvin Jim, General Secretary, NUMSA; Muhammad Ahmad (Max Stanford, Jr.), founder, Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM); Jalil Muntaqim, veteran BPP/BLA, former Political Prisoner; Pam Africa, International Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal; Rachel Wolkenstein, former lawyer for Mumia Abu-Jamal; Jack Heyman, Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, organizer of the 1999 International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) shutdown of West Coast ports and a 25,000-strong march for Mumia in San Francisco.

The forum moderator will be Cleo Silvers, Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee, Black Panther Party and the Young Lords, League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

Endorsers include National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa; Trent Willis, Pres. of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10;* Spirit of Mandela International Tribunal; Noam Chomsky; International Labor Solidarity Committee of Doro-Chiba Railway Union (Japan); CODEPINK; *San Francisco Bay View National Black Newspaper*; Charles Brave, Pres. of International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422*; Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, Writer/Activist; Oakland Education Association; Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author; Jordi Aragunde, International Labor Coordinator, International Dockworkers' Council-IDC* (Barcelona, Spain).

There is no justice in the racist capitalist courts! Mumia Abu-Jamal is the embodiment of that cruel fact. For 40 years—30 of them on death row—Mumia was locked in the dungeons of Pennsylvania, framed by the cops and judicial system, for a crime he didn't commit. The current Philadelphia DA, “progressive” Larry Krasner, repeats the lies of the cops and blocked Mumia's recent legal appeal for a new trial, which had been granted by the first Black judge to hear his case. Other anti-racist and anti-imperialist political prisoners have spent decades imprisoned, are also aging, ill, and serving Life Without Parole sentences, (slow death sentences) by having been denied parole!

Who then, what force, will finally deliver some measure of justice to these political prisoners? It is the task of the multiracial, multi-ethnic, millions-strong international workers movement to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all Anti-Racist and Anti-Imperialist Freedom Fighters!

The struggle is ongoing. Worldwide massive demonstrations prevented Mumia from being executed in 1995 and 1999. In January of 1999, in the face of month-long media frenzy in opposition, the Oakland Education Association (OEA) held a day of teach-ins on Mumia Abu-Jamal and against the racist death penalty. On April 24, 1999, the ILWU led an exemplary action shutting down all West Coast ports leading a march of 25,000 in San Francisco chanting: “An injury to one is an injury to all—Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!” In conjunction with that action, the teachers' union in Rio de Janeiro, initiated a statewide work stoppage. On Juneteenth last year, in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd, the ILWU shut down all 29 U.S. and 7 Canadian ports protesting systemic racism and police brutality.

That is workers power in action. That is what must be organized and brought to bear in defense of the oppressed and the political prisoners who have fought, and suffered, for doing so. And it is for that reason, that the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and the Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee have issued the call for the February 1, online forum to spearhead concrete workers actions around the globe.

On November 30, 2021, Clarence Thomas, retired Secretary-Treasurer, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 10*, Co-founder of the Million Worker March wrote:

The International Longshore Warehouse Union (ILWU) has a long tradition of defending oppressed nationalities and political prisoners such as Angela Davis in the 1970s

There are Black Panther Party members who were a part of the Black

Liberation movement that have been languishing in prison for more than half a century. Native American political prisoner Leonard Peltier has been imprisoned since 1977. The horrific imprisonment and the abuse of these political prisoners, represent the long legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, apartheid, and racial violence perpetrated against African-Americans.

The labor movement can and must play a vital role in the release of all political prisoners. The ILWU recognizes that the prosecution of radical labor leaders such as Tom Mooney and Harry Bridges is directly connected to efforts by the US government to use lies and frame-ups to put away these fighters for freedom and justice that was promised yet denied to African Americans and people of color in the US.

On December 7, Angela Davis announced:

Now is the time for us to rekindle international support for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the other political prisoners, as he has. I am pleased to announce that I will be participating with Irvin Jim, General Secretary of NUMSA and others in an international “call to action” forum on the first of February, Black History Month, titled “For International Workers Action—Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and All Anti-Racist and Anti-Imperialist Freedom Fighters!” Please join us.

For International Workers Action—
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and All Anti-Racist and Anti- Imperialist Freedom Fighters!

* organization listed for Identification purposes only

--30--