

- International Automotive Workers Coordination -

International Coordinating Group
Internationale Koordinierungsgruppe
Grupo Internacional de Coordinación
Grupo Internacional de Coordenação
Groupe de coordination internationale

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Great success in struggle:

All Ssangyong workers in Pyeontaek (South Korea) will be reinstated!

The last 119 of the workers, which have been dismissed in 2009, now must be reinstated by Ssangyong Motors till July 2019. This is the result of negotiations between the trade union KMWU and the Ssangyong management in September 2018. Ssangyong receives support from the government for the reintegration of the dismissed workers.

In 2009, the Ssangyong workers and their families went on strike for 77 bitter days against the planned dismissals of 3,000 workers. With a brutal police raid, including helicopters and electric tasers, the occupation of the factory was ended by a special unit (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F025_4hRLIU). 100 trade union officials were arrested, including the trade union leader of SsangYong Motors. Around 2,000 colleagues are still working at the plant today. Several hundred activists were sacked for refusing to take either unpaid leave or voluntary retirement.

Since then, the workers have fought with their union KMWU against all resistance for their demands: Reinstatement of all workers, legal clearing and compensation for affected families and support for traumatised workers. They are organised for this purpose till today. They protested daily at the gate of Ssangyong location. An action and relief committee for families was founded because many colleagues and family members have been traumatised for years by the military action and the longstanding mass psychoterror. 29 colleagues and relatives died prematurely, partly due to suicides or heart attacks. A strike leader was in prison for years, and after a short release he was arrested again until today, on the charge of continuous organising protests.

That makes success all the more important! We must all learn from this important struggle for future struggles. Their unbendingness, steadfastness and unity made the workforce of Ssangyong known and superior throughout the country, also against brutal police action and years of criminalisation. The sympathies of the broad masses are on their side today, despite the smear campaign of media of the Ssangyong corporation. International solidarity has also contributed to this. A representative of the Ssangyong workforce reported first-hand at the 7th Automobile Workers' Counsel in 2012 about the struggle, the occupation of the plant and the criminalisation by board members of management and the government.

We demand the fulfillment of all demands of the Ssangyong workers. In preparation for the 2nd International Automotive Workers' Conference 2020 in South Africa, we will make this important struggle known worldwide and call for solidarity messages and greetings to Korean Metal Workers Union. mailto: kmwusouthkorea@gmail.com and icog@iawc.info

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