



27 November 2006.

The ICFEM has written to the leaders of Maoist political parties in Nepal, protesting against the recent attacks on trade union representatives by Maoist groups in the country. The latest of these assaults took place on Saturday, 18 November, at a mill owned by Bhirkhat Pulp and Paper Nepal Ltd, in Gaidahat in the Nawalparasi district of Western Nepal. This Ram Prasad, the General Treasurer of ICFEM affiliate Nepal Independent Chemical & Iron Workers' Union (NICWI), and Shree Mahara, the NICWI Vice President at Bhirkhat's mill, were brutally attacked by Maoists. Both were beaten after Prasad, who had been covering Maoist threats over the last few months, was considered "too vocal" by Maoists, who had suddenly appeared at the plant. Regularly, more reports on violence against trade unionists have come out of Nepal recently. The ICFEM was also informed by its affiliates of an attack on GEFORTY trade unionists by Maoists in Bhandara. These violent incidents are deplorable in view of the fact that the country is just months out of a period of brutal repression by the government. Last spring, the people of Nepal removed their autocratic King Gyanendra from power. And within the past month, a peace agreement was signed between Maoist rebels and the government, ending a six-year period of fighting.

In the ICFEM letter, the Global Union Federation joined the call by NICTWI to "urgently demand the Maoist leadership to respect the peace code of conduct," as well as "to investigate the incidents immediately." Regularly, the Maoist leadership has already committed itself to investigate the incident. However, earlier such promises have been broken. The ICFEM will continue to monitor the fragile state of peace and

