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Mexico

We salute the triumph of the Mexican Electricians Union

- News from around the world -

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Six and a half years after having been unfairly dismissed - through the use of the army and in flagrant violation of their most basic employment rights - the Mexican Electricians Union (Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas - SME) has completed a successful negotiation that guarantees the employment reintegration of its 16,599 resisting workers and the continuation of payment of their pensions to 22,000 retirees.

The conditions under which their resistance developed could not have been more challenging: they faced a furious media campaign of demonization of the alleged "privileges" enjoyed by their workers; a judiciary and legislative regime subject to the dictates of the government and, more seriously, a very weak social and associative movement to provide support. The SME has forced the neoliberal government to recognize the existence of employment liabilities that have been covered with the creation of an electricity generation company and a cooperative providing products and services for the energy sector, while obtaining liquidation, in accordance with the collective agreement, for all workers in resistance. This ensures the survival of this historic organization of Mexican trade unionism.

Its triumph is the result of one of the most heroic battles waged by the Mexican working class in recent decades. Permanent mobilization, legal battles, hunger strikes, organization of electrical energy consumers (Asamblea Nacional de Usuarios de la Energía Eléctrica - National Assembly Electrical Energy Consumers), an initiative to unite class-conscious trades unionism (Nueva Central de Trabajadores - New Workers' Confederation) and the formation of a class-based party (Organización Política del Pueblo y los Trabajadores - Political Organization of the People and Workers), are examples of the militancy and creativity developed by electricity workers throughout this struggle. For the SME a new period has opened, full of new challenges to ensure safe and decent work for all its members in times of severe worsening of the economic and political crisis of the Mexican regime. The brutal offensive of capital against the working class has meant serious defeats for many unions at the global level, but its triumph shows that worthy and consistent struggle, although it involves many sacrifices, is the best option rather than dropping our banners. Once again it is demonstrated that only struggle pays.

Proletarians of the world unite!

International Committee

Amsterdam, The Netherlands, February 29, 2016