

## **NASUWT INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AWARD FOR IRANIAN TEACHERS LEADER**

The **NASUWT-The Teachers' Union**, has today presented its International Solidarity Award to Esmail Abdi at its Annual Conference in Birmingham.

The award was presented to Mr Abdi in recognition of his commitment to fighting for the rights of teachers and for quality education in Iran.

Mr Abdi is leader of the Tehran branch of the Iran Teachers' Trade Association (ITTA) and was convicted of national security offences in February 2016, after organising peaceful protests.

He was given a six-year prison sentence and although recently he was allowed to leave the notorious Evin Prison he was rearrested after only 11 days and taken back to custody.

The NASUWT is continuing to work closely with the ITTA and other partners, including Amnesty International and Education International, to press for Mr Abdi's unconditional release from prison and to call on the Iranian authorities to respect human and trade union rights.

The NASUWT Conference also recognised and highly commended the work of Roberto Baradel from the CTERA union in Argentina.

**Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT**, said:

"Esmail Abdi is an inspiration to teachers and trade unionists across the world, through his courage to stand up for trade union and human rights in the face of oppressive and harsh treatment.

"Esmail has shown tremendous courage and fortitude. In making this award, NASUWT and its members wish to honour his courage and offer him hope and our solidarity and support in his tremendous struggle. Our deepest regret is that he will be unable to be with us in Birmingham to accept the award in person.

"Esmail's courage and determination to continue to fight for quality education in Iran, despite the terrible personal cost he has had to endure, is truly humbling.

"The NASUWT is continuing to maintain solidarity with Esmail and with teachers in Iran, working with partners, including Amnesty International, to press for Esmail's unconditional release."

**Patrick Roach, Deputy General Secretary** said:

"The NASUWT also places on record the recognition of the teachers throughout the UK for Roberto Baradel's leadership, advocacy and campaigning on behalf of teachers, children and young people and for free, quality public education.