

Turkish workers must support independent rank-and-file investigation into the death of US Stellantis worker Ronald Adams Sr.

Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu
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The Socialist Equality Group in Turkey supports the call by the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) for an independent investigation—led by rank-and-file workers—into the preventable death of Ronald Adams Sr.

Ronald Adams Sr., a 63-year-old machine repairman, was crushed to death on April 7, 2025, at Stellantis’ Dundee Engine Complex in southeast Michigan. He was killed in the early morning hours while servicing a Cinetic Washer, when an overhead gantry crane unexpectedly engaged, pinning him and fatally crushing his upper torso.

That the company, the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the authorities have not yet made an enlightening and convincing statement points to a cover-up and whitewash.

As stated by the IWA-RFC, an independent inquiry “is essential to uncover the truth, expose systemic safety violations and prevent future deaths... Such a workers’ investigation is crucial to laying the basis for genuine rank-and-file oversight over safety and production conditions in the factories.”

The SEG urges autoworkers and all sections of the working class in Turkey and internationally to support the IWA-RFC’s investigation and join the fight to transform the auto industry into a public utility under workers’ democratic control.

Workplace accidents and deaths, caused mainly by the unbridled capitalist profit motive, are an international problem of the working class and are on the rise worldwide amid escalating attacks by the ruling class on working conditions.

As reported by the *World Socialist Web Site*, “Worldwide, the International Labour Organization

(ILO) estimates that nearly 3 million workers die worldwide each year from work-related injuries and diseases. Roughly 330,000 of these are the result of traumatic injuries, while more than 2.6 million are caused by chronic occupational illnesses, such as cancer, circulatory failure, and respiratory disease. The global death toll is rising—up more than 12 percent since 2000. These staggering numbers do not include the millions of people who have died from COVID-19 over the past five years.”

According to the Ankara Medical Chamber’s report dated December 2024, “Based on data from the Social Security Institution (SGK) and the Eurostat in 2019, the rate of fatal occupational accidents in Turkey is approximately ten times higher than the European Union (EU) average. Turkey, which has the highest rate of worker deaths in Europe, is among the countries with the highest number of deaths from work accidents.”

According to a report by the Health and Safety Labour Watch (?S?G), at least 1,897 workers in Turkey were killed at work in 2024. The report explained that 103 of these deaths were in the metal sector, adding that “Precariousness is at an extreme level in this huge area [the metal sector], from auto body workshops to large automotive factories, from explosives production to the production of cables, pipes, iron-steel, etc.”

According to the latest ?S?G report, 611 workers were killed at work in Turkey in the first four months of this year. On Monday, an explosion in a coal mine in the central city of Sivas killed one miner and injured two others.

The rank-and-file investigation into the death of Adams should not only shed light on one accident but

must also be the beginning of the prevention of work accidents everywhere. The ruling class are indifferent to the health and safety of workers. The trade union confederations stand by and watch as thousands of workers fall victim to preventable work accidents every year. This investigation should inspire workers in Turkey and internationally to mobilize and conduct their own independent investigations to stop workplace homicides.

Erol E?rek's death is an important example of why such investigations are urgently needed. He was beaten by bodyguards and security guards in front of the Istanbul headquarters of a holding company where he went to demand his rights on May 9. Like Adams' death, E?rek's murder is a crime against the entire working class and an indictment of the capitalist system.

Workers must not accept these deaths and dangerous working conditions and must defend the lives and safety of themselves and their colleagues. As decades of experience have shown, however, the fight against workplace homicides cannot be left to the judiciary, the authorities or the trade union apparatus.

In the Soma mine disaster of 2014, in which 301 miners were killed, the owner of the company involved served just eight days in prison for each worker killed. Throughout the trial, both prosecutors and judges were replaced. Yet no official responsible party was sentenced. The confidence that they will not be punished gives companies and owners the green light to commit new mass killings.

The mass deaths at workplaces in Turkey in 2024 vindicates this bitter reality:

- In February a massive landslide occurred at the Çöpler Mine of Anagold, owned by US-based Canadian company SRR Mining, in the ?liç district of Erzincan. Nine workers were killed and 10 million cubic meters of waste soil containing many toxic substances such as cyanide and sulfuric acid was released.
- In April, in Be?ikta?, Istanbul, 29 workers lost their lives in a fire that broke out during the renovation of a nightclub in the basement of a 16-storey building.
- On December 24, 11 metal workers were killed in an explosion at the ZSR Patlay?c? Sanayi A.?. Factory in Karesi, Bal?kesir.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu calls on all organizations,

media outlets and individuals who advocate for necessary workplace safety measures and an end to workplace homicides to make public statements supporting the rank-and-file investigation into the death of autoworker Adams.

All workplace homicides must be investigated, and the perpetrators held accountable. Workers must take matters into their own hands, forming rank-and-file committees to lead independent investigations. This must be an integral part of a broader international struggle for socialism, where the lives and safety of working people take precedence over capitalist private profit and wealth accumulation.

Support the struggle to uncover the truth, defend lives and build rank-and-file committees as the basis for workers' power! Send your messages of support for the rank-and-file investigation into Adams' death here.



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