

INDONESIA

Sweatshops/Indonesia

Millions of women work in low-paid and dangerous jobs in Indonesia. Working as garment workers for big companies, they make only 16 cents an hour and work 70 hours a week. Living under an authoritarian regime, protests seemed to be out of the question. A young union organizer, Dita Sari, began to work with women in the garment industry. At age 23, she was sentenced to five years in prison in 1996 for “sedition” after leading 20,000 striking workers in a nonviolent march to protest labor conditions. She continued to lead her movement from prison.

But growing pressure from her members and an international outcry forced the authorities to release Dita Sari after three years. She once again is organizing women workers and is the president of the National Front for Indonesian Workers’ Struggle, a trade union federation in Indonesia.

