

ACTION

# DEFEND TRADE UNION RIGHTS – SUPPORT ERIK HELGESON!

February 15, 2025



## Take Action Now!

The dismissal of Swedish Dockworkers Union (SDU) spokesperson and national deputy chair Erik Helgeson is a blatant act of retaliation for the union's legally-sanctioned boycott of military cargo to and from Israel. This dismissal represents an attack on trade union rights, freedom of speech, and the democratic decision made by dockworkers across Sweden.

In December 2024, SDU members voted with a 68% majority to launch a six-day boycott of military cargo in response to the genocide in Gaza. The boycott was not only legal but also upheld by a unanimous preliminary ruling from Sweden's labor courts. Yet, on the very day of this legal victory, Erik was dismissed by his employer, Gothenburg RoRo Terminal – a move designed to silence union voices and intimidate workers everywhere.

The SDU vote and action has been one of the strongest actions taken by workers anywhere in Europe in solidarity with the people of Palestine since 2023. It was voted on

democratically, carried out lawfully, and targeted military cargo – not the operations of the employer.

Erik's dismissal is an attack on all of us who believe in the right to organise, to speak out against injustice, and to take meaningful action in solidarity with oppressed peoples. We must act together to demand Erik's immediate reinstatement and to defend the right of workers to stand up for justice without fear.

## **Take Action Now!**

We need your help to build pressure on Gothenburg RoRo Terminal and its majority owner, DFDS. Here's how you can support:

- **Call-In Day of Action:** Contact DFDS to demand that Gothenburg RoRo Terminal reinstate Erik. **Mass call-in to DFDS headquarters (+45 33 42 33 42) on Wednesday, 19 February**, two days before negotiations on Erik's dismissal begin with his employer
- **E-mail** Erik's employer to demand they reinstate Erik to [roroid@gotroro.com](mailto:roroid@gotroro.com). See draft email below.
- **Leaflet at DFDS ferry terminals:** Spread the word to DFDS ferry passengers, employees and the wider public about Erik's case and the importance of union rights. For a list of locations in your country, see below and here: <https://www.dfds.com/en-gb/office-locations>
- **Organise** or attend a protest at one of DFDS's dozens of offices and worksites across Europe. See here for a list of DFDS offices: <https://www.dfds.com/en-gb/office-locations>
- **Spread the Word:** Share this call to action with your networks, unions, and community groups.

Together, we can make it clear: We will not stand by while employers trample on workers' rights. Solidarity knows no borders – and our collective power is stronger than their intimidation.

**Defend Erik. Defend Gaza solidarity. Defend the right to organise.**

**Sample Email to Send to DFDS and Gothenburg RoRo Terminal**

E-mail to: [roroid@gotroro.com](mailto:roroid@gotroro.com)

Subject: Reinstate Erik Helgeson – Respect Trade Union Rights

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the dismissal of Erik Helgeson, spokesperson and national deputy chair of the Swedish Dockworkers Union (SDU). Erik was fired on the very day that Sweden's labor courts upheld the legality of the union's boycott of military cargo to and from Israel – a boycott undertaken in response to the crisis in Gaza and supported by a democratic vote of the union's members.

The decision to fire Erik appears to be a retaliatory measure against legitimate union activity, a move that undermines both trade union rights and freedom of speech. Sweden's labor laws, as well as international standards on freedom of association, protect workers' rights to organise and speak out about workplace actions without fear of retribution.

I urge you to:

1. Immediately reinstate Erik Helgeson to his position.
2. Publicly withdraw the baseless accusations against him.
3. Commit to respecting the rights of workers to organise and take collective action.

The world is watching how DFDS and Gothenburg RoRo Terminal respond to this situation. Defending Erik's rights is not just about one individual – it is about upholding democratic principles and protecting the right of all workers to stand in solidarity with those facing injustice.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

[Optional: Affiliation/Union/Organisation Name]

### **DFDS offices and worksites across Europe**

For a complete list of DFDS offices with contacts across Europe, please visit:

<https://www.dfds.com/en-gb/office-locations>

## **UK**

### ***DFDS Newcastle***

International Passenger Terminal, Albert Edward Dock Royal Quays, North Shields, NE29 6EE

### ***DFDS Newhaven***

Newhaven terminal, Newhaven Ferry Port, Rail Approach Newhaven, East Sussex, BN9 0DF

### ***DFDS Dover***

Dover terminal, Eastern Docks, Dover Kent, CT16 1JA

## **France**

### ***DFDS Calais***

Terminal Car Ferry, Gare Maritime Est, F-62100 Calais

### ***DFDS Dieppe***

DFDS Seaways S.A.S., Terminal Car Ferry 7, Quai Gaston Lalitte, F-76200 Dieppe

### ***DFDS Dunkirk***

Port 5670, Terminal Car Ferry, Route de la Maison Blanche, F-59279 Loon-Plage Dunkirk

## **Netherlands**

### ***DFDS IJmuiden***

DFDS Seaways IJmuiden B.V., Felison Terminal, Sluisplein 33, 1975 AG IJmuiden

## **Ireland**

### ***DFDS Rosslare***

Rosslare Harbour, Calafort Ros Láir, Ballygillane Big, Co. Wexford,

## Germany

### ***DFDS Hamburg***

Bella-Spanier-Weg 6, D-20097. Hamburg

### ***DFDS Kiel***

Ostuferhafen, Ostuferhafen 15, 24149 Kiel

## Denmark

### ***DFDS Copenhagen***

Dampfærgevej 30, 2100 København Ø

### ***DFDS Frederikshavn***

Frederikshavn Havn/Port of Frederikshavn, Færgeleje 4/Berth 4, Færgehavnsvej 16, 9900 Frederikshavn

## NorwayDFDS

OsloAkershusstranda, 310150 Oslo



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Instagram



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