

IRN 220109.1
Follow-up of case IRN 220109
Release on bail/ Fear for safety

17 March 2009

The International Secretariat of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) has received new information about the following situation in **Iran**.

New Information

The International Secretariat of OMCT has been informed by a reliable source and Antenna International, a member organisation of OMCT SOS-Torture Network, about the release on bail of Mr. **Aziz Samandari**, Ms. **Jinous Sobhani**, Mr. **Payam Aghsani** and Mr. **Didar Raoufi**, all members of the Baha'is community, on 11 March 2009, from Evin prison in Tehran, on payment of a bail of 700,000,000 Rials (about 73'000 USD), an extremely high amount. All had been detained since 14 January 2009 without access to a lawyer and mostly in solitary confinement.

According to the same information received, Mr. **Shahrokh Taef**, who was detained along with them on 14 January 2009, would still be detained in solitary confinement in Evin prison.

The International Secretariat of OMCT welcomes the release on bail of Mr. Aziz Samandari, Ms. Jinous Sobhani, Mr. Payam Aghsani and Mr. Didar Raoufi. However, it remains concerned for their physical and psychological integrity as well as of Mr. Shahrokh Taef, who remains detained. OMCT recalls that incommunicado detention facilitates torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. OMCT is concerned about these arrests which are consistent with a pattern of persecution and arbitrary arrest of members of the Baha'i minority in Iran¹. OMCT recalls to Iran that according to article 9 1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) "*no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention*".

Reminder of the situation

According to the information received, on 14 January 2009 early in the morning, Iranian Intelligence Ministry officials had arrested at their respective homes Mr. Aziz Samandari, Ms. Jinous Sobhani, Mr. Shahrokh Taef, Mr. Payam Aghsani and Mr. Didar Raoufi, after raiding the homes of twelve Baha'is (*including of the five*) in Tehran. Security agents had reportedly seized laptops, books and photographs related to the Baha'i Faith. The five were all reportedly held incommunicado in Evin Prison. No charges were reportedly brought against them but a relative was informed that they would have been arrested for "threat to inner security and collaboration with hostile countries".

Action requested

Please write to the authorities in Iran urging them to:

- i. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Aziz Samandari, Ms. Jinous Sobhani, Mr. Shahrokh Taef, Mr. Payam Aghsani and Mr. Didar Raoufi;
- ii. Guarantee Mr. Shahrokh Taef immediate and unconditional access to a legal representation of his choice, his family and any medical treatment he may require;
- iii. Order his immediate release and end all judicial proceedings against all the above mentioned individuals in the absence of valid legal charges that are consistent with international law and standards, and if such charges exist, to ensure that they are given a prompt and fair trial, in which their procedural rights are guaranteed at all times;
- iv. Carry out a prompt, effective, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into these events, the result of which must be made public, in order to bring those responsible before

¹ See for example OMCT Urgent Appeal diffused on 171208.

- a competent, independent and impartial tribunal and apply penal, civil and/or administrative sanctions as provided by law;
- v. Guarantee that adequate reparation is awarded to the victims;
- i. Guarantee the respect of human rights and the fundamental freedoms throughout the country in accordance with international human rights standards.

Addresses:

- Leader of the Islamic Republic, His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader, Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran, Faxes: + 98.21.649.5880 / 21.774.2228, Email: info@leader.ir / istiftaa@wilayah.org / webmaster@wilayah.org;
- President, His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: + 98.21.649.5880, E-mail: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir;
- Head of the Judiciary, His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi, Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: +98.21.879.6671 / +98 21 3 311 6567, Email: Irjpr@iranjudiciary.com;
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Manuchehr Motaki, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: + 98.21.390.1999, Email: matbuat@mfa.gov;
- Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland, Fax: +41 22 7330203, Email: mission.iran@ties.itu.int.

Please also write to the diplomatic mission or embassy of Iran in your respective country.

Geneva, 17 March 2009

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.