

## Arrest of Ms. Jinus Sobhani, a member of the Defenders of Human Rights Center

*Paris-Geneva, January 15, 2009. The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), firmly denounces the arrest of Ms. Jinus Sobhani, administrative assistant of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC) and the Centre for the Mine Cleanup Project (CMCP), two organisations founded by Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi and both arbitrarily closed down at the end of December 2008.*

In the morning of January 14, 2009, Ms. **Jinus Sobhani** was arrested at her residence, following a home search and the seizure of her personal belongings and those of her husband, by security officers. No arrest or search warrant was presented to Ms. Sobhani.

At the time of issuing this press release, no information could be obtained regarding her whereabouts and place of detention.

The Observatory strongly condemns this arbitrary arrest which is another evidence of the determination of the Iranian authorities to intensify their crackdown on independent civil society, of which the DHRC and Ms. Ebadi are prominent symbols.

To that extent, the Observatory recalls that Ms. Ebadi has been subjected to a campaign of defamation, and more recently to legal harassment, which might be followed by the opening of judicial proceedings against her in an attempt to silence her legitimate work for the defence of human rights in Iran.

Accordingly, the Observatory calls upon the Iranian authorities:

- to guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Sobhani;
- to take prompt action in order to locate Ms. Sobhani, make public her whereabouts, and ensure her immediate release, since her detention is arbitrary as it only aims to sanction her human rights activities;
- to stop any kind of harassment against her and all DHRC members, and more generally against all human rights defenders in Iran;
- to reopen the DHRC and the CMCP as they were subjected to an arbitrary closure, in violation of international human rights standards on freedom of association;
- more generally, to conform with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as international human rights instruments ratified by Iran.

For further information, please contact:

**FIDH: Gaël Grilhot / Karine Appy, + 33 6 48 05 91 57 / + 33 1 43 55 14 12**

**OMCT: Delphine Reculeau, + 41 22 809 52 42**

L'OMCT a son siège à Genève, en Suisse. Elle coordonne le réseau SOS-Torture composé de 282 organisations régionales et internationales dans 93 pays sur cinq continents.

Contact : [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)