

# URGENT ACTION

**JAILED BRITISH-IRANIAN WOMAN ON HUNGER STRIKE**  
**British-Iranian woman Ghoncheh Ghavami has been on hunger strike since 1 October in protest at her prolonged detention and her lack of access to her lawyer. Ghoncheh Ghavami is a prisoner of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally.**

**Ghoncheh Ghavami**, a 25 year-old British-Iranian national, started a “wet” hunger strike (consuming liquid but not food) on 1 October 2014 in protest at her continued arbitrary detention in Section 2A of Evin Prison, in Tehran, without access to her lawyer or the opportunity to post bail. Her mother said that she appeared distressed and visibly thinner during a family visit to prison on 4 October, the first time they were allowed to visit since 16 September. Ghoncheh Ghavami reported that a man unknown to her entered her cell on 1 October, introduced himself as a lawyer and asked her to dismiss her current lawyer and retain him in his place. Ghoncheh Ghavami said that after she rejected his request, the man, believed to be affiliated with the Iranian intelligence bodies, threatened that new security-related charges will be levelled against her. In her earlier interrogations, Ghoncheh Ghavami had said that she had been accused of trying to “tarnish” the state’s “reputation” by organizing a protest outside Tehran’s Azadi sport stadium on 20 June against the ban imposed on women’s presence in sport stadiums.

Ghoncheh Ghavami’s family were informed on 20 September that the Office of the Prosecutor in Tehran referred the case to the Revolutionary Court in Tehran for “spreading propaganda against the system”. Amnesty International believes that the charge against Ghoncheh Ghavami does not amount to an internationally recognizable criminal offence and that she is jailed solely for her peaceful activities to end discrimination against women.

**Please write immediately in Persian, English, Spanish or your own language:**

- Calling on the Iranian authorities to drop the charges against Ghoncheh Ghavami and to release her immediately and unconditionally, as she has been held solely for the peaceful exercise of her rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- Urging them to allow her regular visits from her family and her lawyer;
- Urging them to ensure that she is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and receives any medical care she may require.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 NOVEMBER 2014 TO:**

Leader of the Islamic Republic  
 Ayatollah Sayed ‘Ali Khamenei  
 The Office of the Supreme Leader  
 Islamic Republic Street - End of Shahid  
 Keshvar Doust Street  
 Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
 Email: [info\\_leader@leader.ir](mailto:info_leader@leader.ir)  
 Twitter: @khamenei\_ir  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary  
 Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani  
 c/o Public Relations Office  
 Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection  
 Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**And copies to:**

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
 Hassan Rouhani  
 The Presidency  
 Pasteur Street, Pasteur Square  
 Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
 Twitter: @HassanRouhani (English) and  
 @Rouhani\_ir (Persian)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 227/14. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/048/2014/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Iran has imposed a ban on women watching football games in stadiums since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. In 2012, the Security Department (*Herasat*) of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs extended this ban to volleyball matches. Iranian officials have frequently stated that the mixing of women and men in sport stadiums is not in the public interest and the discriminatory ban on Iranian women is for their own benefit, who need protection from the lewd behaviour of male fans.

Since her arrest on 30 June, Ghoncheh Ghavami's lawyer has not been allowed to meet her in prison or even access her court case file. The authorities also informed her family on 16 September that they could no longer pay her regular weekly visits, possibly in reprisal for their interviews with foreign media outlets. The family was finally able to visit Ghoncheh Ghavami on 4 October after they obtained a letter from the judge in charge of her case at the Revolutionary Court, permitting her a visit from her family.

Ghoncheh Ghavami was arrested on 30 June 2014 when she went to Tehran's Vozara Detention Center to collect her mobile phone, which had been taken from her earlier on 20 June when she was arrested at a protest against the ban on women being present in sport stadiums and detained in Vozara Detention Centre for several hours. On 30 June, plainclothes agents went with her to her house to confiscate her laptop and books and then took her to Section 2A of Evin Prison, where she was kept in solitary confinement, without access to her family or lawyer for 41 days. She was subsequently transferred to a cell shared with another inmate. Ghoncheh Ghavami has said that during her prolonged solitary confinement, the interrogators put her under psychological pressure, threatening to move her to Gharchak Prison in the county of Varamin, Tehran Province, where prisoners convicted of serious criminal offences are held in dismal conditions, and telling her that she "would not walk out of prison alive".

Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a party, provides that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. Detention is considered arbitrary when a person is deprived of their liberty because they have exercised the rights and freedoms guaranteed in the ICCPR. Detention may also become arbitrary as a result of violation of the detainee's fair trial rights, including the rights to access legal counsel before trial, to be brought promptly before a judge, to challenge the lawfulness of detention and to have adequate time and facilities to prepare a defence. There is a presumption of release pending trial and detainees are entitled to compensation if they are held unlawfully.

Under Article 48 of Iran's amended Code of Criminal Procedures, which became law in April 2014, "an accused [person] can request the presence of a lawyer at the onset of detention". However, according to the Note to the Article, if the accused has been detained on suspicion of committing certain offences including organized crime, crimes against national security, theft and drug-related offences, he or she will not be allowed access to a lawyer until up to a week after the arrest.

Name: Ghoncheh Ghavami  
Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 227/14 Index: MDE 13/056/2014 Issue Date: 8 October 2014