



Iran

29 November 2010

Ongoing judicial harassment against Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh - IRN 006 / 0910 / OBS 108.2

The Observatory has been informed by the Iranian League for the Defense of Human Rights of the trial held before the Tehran Revolutionary Tribunal, against Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh, prominent human rights lawyer, known for defending juveniles facing death penalty, prisoners of conscience, human rights activists and children victims of abuse.

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to the information received, on November 28, 2010, Ms. **Nasrin Sotoudeh** appeared before the Tehran Revolutionary Tribunal, on charges of "propaganda against the State" and "collusion and gathering with the aim of acting against national security" through her interviews to international media (see background information [\[1\]](#)) as well as for belonging to the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC). At the hearing, her lawyers requested her release on bail. The Tribunal is expected to issue a decision on this request.

Ms. Sotoudeh has been in detention at Tehran's Evin prison since September 4, 2010 (see background information).

The Observatory expresses its deep concern about the judicial harassment against her and denounces her ongoing arbitrary detention, which seems to merely aim at sanctioning her human rights activities.

The Observatory more generally points out that this case is part of a wave of arrests and harassment against a number of Iranian human rights lawyers, some of whom remain detained, such as Mr. Mohammad Oliaifar, but also Ms. Sara (Hajar) Sabaghian and Ms. Maryam Kianersi, detained since their arrest on November 13, or Mr. Mohamad Hossein Nayeri, another lawyer, arrested on the same day "in relation with the three women" [\[2\]](#).

The Observatory therefore demands the immediate and unconditional release of all human rights lawyers and defenders currently detained in Iran in relation to their human rights activities.

Background information:

On August, 28, 2010, Ms. Sotoudeh's office and home were searched by members of the services of intelligence and her assets frozen.

On September 4, 2010, Ms. Soutoudeh went to Evin prison court, where she had been summoned by the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office on charges of "propaganda against the State" and "collusion and gathering with the aim of acting against national security". After her questioning by a magistrate, Ms. Sotoudeh was arrested. Her lawyer was not permitted to be present during the questioning.

A few days before her arrest, she had reported to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran how the authorities were using tax harassment against human rights lawyers in order to limit their working conditions. She gave the example of Ms. Shirin Ebadi who was subjected to the payment of a tax bill of hundreds of thousands of dollars on the money she had been granted for her Nobel Peace Prize.

On November 4, her two young children of three and eleven years old, as well as her mother and sister, managed to visit her for the first time and found her in a seriously bad state of health. She has reportedly lost a lot of weight, her skin has darkened and she was too weak to hug her children. Her husband was not allowed to visit her. Her health status has reportedly improved recently.

Actions requested:

Please write to the Iranian authorities and ask them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh as well as all human rights defenders in Iran;
- ii. Release her immediately and unconditionally, since her detention is arbitrary as it only aims at sanctioning their human rights activities;
- iii. In the meantime, provide her with all the medical treatment she would require during her detention;
- iv. Put an end to acts of harassment - including at the judicial level - against her as well as against all human rights defenders in Iran;
- v. Conform in any circumstances with the provisions of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted on December 9, 1998 by the United Nations General Assembly, in particular:
 - article 1, which states that "everyone has the right, individually or in association with others, to promote the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels",
 - article 5(c), which reads that "everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels, [...] to communicate with non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations",
 - article 9 which notably states that "everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, inter alia [...] to offer and provide professionally qualified legal assistance or other relevant advice and assistance in defending human rights and fundamental freedoms,
 - and article 12.2 which provides that "the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration";

vi. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights instruments ratified by Iran.

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 Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: + 98 21 649 5880. Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir
- Head of the Judiciary, His Excellency Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani, Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: +98 21 879 6671 / +98 21 3 311 6567, Email: lrjpr@iranjudiciary.com
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Manouchehr Mottaki, 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
- Embassy of Iran in Brussels, 15 a avenue Franklin Roosevelt, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium, Fax: + 32 2 762 39 15. Email: iran-embassy@yahoo.com

Please also write to diplomatic representations of the Islamic Republic of Iran in your respective countries.

[1])All these interviews have reportedly been attached to the case file.

[2] Mr. Javid Houtan Kian, lawyer of Ms. Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani - a woman sentenced to death by lapidation - has been detained for his part since October 10.

<http://www.fidh.org/Ongoing-judicial-harassment-against-Ms-Nasrin>