



Iran

19 November 2010

Arbitrary arrest of five human rights lawyers

The Observatory has been informed by the Iranian League for the Defense of Human Rights of the arbitrary arrest of five human rights lawyers.

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.

Description of the situation:

According to the information received, Ms. Sara (Hajar) Sabaghian, Ms. Maryam Karbasi and Ms. Maryam Kianersi, three women lawyers active in the defense of journalists, bloggers, young people and in the defense of women sentenced to death, were arrested on November 13 at Tehran airport as they were coming back from a trip to Turkey.

Their arrest for "activities against State security" was confirmed by the Tehran Revolutionary Prosecutor, who added that two other lawyers had also been arrested "in relation with the three women", without giving further details. Their names were later revealed (Ms. Rosa Gharatchorlou and Mr. Mohamad Hossein Hayeri).

On November 18, Ms. Rosa Gharatchorlou and Ms. Maryam Karbasi were released and no information could be obtained as to whether charges were pending against them. The three others reportedly remained detained in Evin prison as of issuing this urgent appeal.

The Observatory denounces these arrests and arbitrary detentions, which are representative of the increasing wave of harassment against a number of Iranian human rights lawyers, including against Mr. Mohammad Oliaifar, member of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC) detained since May 2010[1], and 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, in detention since September 4 on accusations of "propaganda against the State" and "collusion and gathering with the aim of acting against national security"[2].

Actions requested:

Please write to the Iranian authorities and ask them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Sara (Hajar) Sabaghian,

Ms. Maryam Karbasi, Ms. Maryam Kianersi, Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh, Mr. Mohammad Oliaifar, Ms. Rosa Gharatchorlou
Mr. Mohamad Hossein Hayeri as well as all human rights defenders in Iran;

- ii. Release Ms. Sara (Hajar) Sabaghian, Ms. Maryam Kianersi, Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh, Mr. Mohammad Oliaifar, and Mr. Mohamad Hossein Hayeri immediately and unconditionally, since their detention is arbitrary as it only aims at sanctioning their human rights activities;
- iii. Put an end to acts of harassment - including at the judicial level - against them as well as against all human rights defenders in Iran;
- iv. 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 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";
- v. 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: Irjpr@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.

Paris-Geneva, November 19, 2010

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

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

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[1] See Osbervatory urgent appeal IRN 006 / 0910 / OBS 108.1.

[2] See Observatory urgent appeal IRN 006 / 0910 / OBS 108.

<http://www.fidh.org/Arbitrary-arrest-of-five-human-rights-lawyers>