



Iran

23 February 2011

Continuing arbitrary detention and harassment against human rights defenders and their relatives - IRN 001 / 0211 / OBS 024

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 Iran.

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources of the continuing arbitrary detention and harassment against human rights defenders and their relatives in Iran, including journalists and trade-unionists.

On February 20, 2011, Ms. **Narges Mohammadi**, spokesperson of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC), was summoned to the Islamic Revolution Court. She appeared on February 22, 2011 before Branch 26 of this court, on charges of "membership of the Supreme Council of the DHRC", "founding the National Council of Peace" [1], "assembly and collusion to commit offences" and "propaganda against the system". The Observatory recalls that Ms. Mohammadi was imprisoned on June 10, 2010 in relation to her human rights activities [2], before being released on bail on July 1, 2010.

On February 9, 2011, her husband Mr. **Taghi Rahmani** [3], a scholar, writer, journalist and human rights defender had been arrested by four plain-clothed individuals, ahead of the demonstrations planned for February 14. These individuals entered his family's apartment, without showing identification cards or an arrest warrant. The residence was subsequently searched and his documents were confiscated. No information could be obtained to date as to his place of detention.

The Observatory has also been informed that the health condition of Mr. **Mansour Osaloo** (a.k.a Osanloo), President of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed) and currently detained, has been deteriorating over the past two weeks. One of the arteries of his heart is said to be blocked. He has reportedly suffered several heart attacks and was transferred to hospital on several occasions, but the Ministry of Intelligence interrogators have systematically intervened to stop his treatment and to return him to prison. Most recently, he was transferred to Rajaie Hospital in Karaj on February 12, 2011, where he was handcuffed and foot-shackled to the bed. His family was prevented from meeting him at the hospital. He is currently deprived of phone calls to his family.

Mr. Osaloo had spent eight months in detention from January to August 2006, following a protest by the members of his Union against the non-payment of wages, poor working conditions and the company's refusal to recognise the Union, established in May 2005. He was then re-arrested in July 10, 2007 and has remained arbitrarily detained

since then [4] in the remote top-security Rajaeishahr prison, where he is serving a five-year imprisonment under extremely harsh conditions, for "propaganda" and "activities against the State".

From 1 to 8 January, 2011, Mr. Osaloo spent one week in solitary confinement for speaking at a funeral that other prisoners of conscience had held inside the prison in memory of a political prisoner, Mr. Ali Saremi, following his execution. His pregnant daughter-in-law, Ms. Zoya Samadi, had suffered a miscarriage on June 23, 2010, after being attacked by Intelligence Ministry agents on the street [5], with the apparent aim to punish the human rights activities of her father-in-law.

In addition, Mr. **Gholamreza Gholamhosseini**, another member of Sherkat-e Vahed, arrested on November 3, 2010, remains in detention in Rajaeishahr prison, without charges. Further, from December 5 to 19, 2010, Mr. **Reza Shahabi**, the Treasurer of Sherkat-e Vahed, detained upon order of the Ministry of Intelligence in Evin Prison since June 12, 2010 without charges, went on a two-week hunger strike, and spent a week in hospital after his health deteriorated. Mr. **Ebrahim Maddadi**, Deputy Head of Sherkat-e Vahed, is also still being detained on the basis of a 3,5-year imprisonment sentence issued against him on December 27, 2008.

The Observatory is deeply concerned by the constant harassment against these human rights defenders and their relatives and urges the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Messrs. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, Reza Shahabi, Ebrahim Maddadi, Mansour Osaloo, and Taghi Rahmani. The Observatory calls upon the authorities to release all human rights defenders presently detained in the country, to put an end to any kind of harassment against them and to guarantee in all circumstances their physical and psychological integrity, in conformity with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights instruments ratified by Iran.

Actions requested:

Please write to the Iranian authorities and ask them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Narges Mohammadi, Ms. Zoya Samadi, Messrs. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, Reza Shahabi, Ebrahim Maddadi, Mansour Osaloo, and Taghi Rahmani as well as all human rights defenders in Iran;
- ii. immediately and unconditionally release Messrs. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, Reza Shahabi, Ebrahim Maddadi, Mansour Osaloo, and Taghi Rahmani since their detention is arbitrary;
- 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 its:
 - 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 (b) which provides that "for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels to form, join and participate in non-governmental organizations, associations or groups";

- Article 6 (b) and (c) which states that "Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, as provided for in human rights and other applicable international instruments, freely to publish, impart or disseminate to others views, information and knowledge on all human rights and fundamental freedoms; to study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and, through these and other appropriate means, to draw public attention to those matters",
- 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";

iv. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international 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, + 98 21 649 / 21 774 2228, Email: info@leader.ir / istiftaa@wilayah.org / webmaster@wilayah.org / info_leader@leader.ir
- 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 / bia.judi@yahoo.com
- Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, 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 the diplomatic representations of Iran in your respective countries.

[1] A broad coalition against war and for the promotion of human rights.

[2] See Observatory Press Release of July 2, 2010 and the Observatory Annual Report 2010.

[3] Mr. Rahmani has worked closely with DHRC and was due to be awarded the DHRC prize for the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR) in 2008, when DHRC was closed down. He is also a member of the National Religious Alliance.

[4] See Observatory Annual Reports 2007 and 2009.

[5] See Observatory Urgent Appeal IRN 004 / 0710 / OBS 084.

<http://www.fidh.org/Continuing-arbitrary-detention-and-harassment>