



Iran

29 March 2011

Sentencing of two human rights defenders - IRN 002 / 0311 / OBS 052

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 continuing acts of harassment against human rights defenders in Iran.

On March 16, 2011, the lawyer of Mr. **Kaveh Ghassemi Kermanshahi**, Iranian journalist member of the Central Council of the Human Rights Organisation of Kurdistan, also signatory of the "One Million Signatures Campaign" and a member of the student alumni group ADVAR, was notified that his client had been sentenced in appeal to four years in prison by the Revolutionary Court in Kermanshah for allegedly "acting against national security" and "propaganda against the regime" by giving interviews to the media and publishing news and reports about families of political prisoners and victims. The latter has been harassed over the past years [1], and had been sentenced on January 30, 2011 to five years imprisonment in first instance [2].

In addition, on March 17, 2011, Mr. **Abdolreza Tajik**, journalist and human rights activist, was sentenced by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court to a total of six years in prison, i.e. five years for "membership in an illegal group" [3]; and one year for "propaganda against the regime". Furthermore, Mr. Tajik remains accused of "publishing false reports in order to disrupt public opinion", and the court has not yet issued a sentence for that charge. He remains free on bail, and intends to appeal this sentencing.

The Observatory condemns these sentences against Mr. Kaveh Ghassemi Kermanshahi and Mr. Abdolreza Tajik which clearly aims at sanctioning their human rights activities. The Observatory therefore urges the Iranian authorities to drop all proceedings against them as well as the additional charges brought against Mr. Tajik.

Actions requested:

Please write to the Iranian authorities and ask them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Kaveh Ghassemi

Kermanshahi and Mr. Abdolreza Tajik as well as all human rights defenders in Iran;

ii. Put an end to acts of harassment - including at the judicial level - against them as well as against all human rights defenders in Iran;

iii. 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.
- 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 / bia.judi@yahoo.com
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: +98-21-66743149, 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] See Observatory Urgent Appeal IRN 002 / 0210 / OBS 015.

[2] See Observatory Press Release of February 8, 2011.

[3] Reportedly for his alleged membership in the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC), even though this organisation has not been outlawed, and even though Mr. Tjik is not a member and only cooperated in the preparation of reports.

<http://www.fidh.org/Sentencing-of-two-human-rights-defenders-IRN-002>