



# “JUSTICE IS AN ALIEN WORD”

ILL-TREATMENT OF POLITICAL  
PRISONERS IN EVIN PRISON

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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**AMNESTY  
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# CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	5
2. The 17 April incident .....	7
3. Inadequate official response .....	12
4. Arrests and harassment of prisoners' families.....	14
5. Law and standards .....	15
6. Recommendations .....	17



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## “What I witnessed revived the memories of the past five years; beatings of people in the streets, arrests, solitary confinement, attacks on the university dormitories, and what took place in Kahrizak Detention Centre”

Hossein Ronaghi Maleki, prisoner of conscience, describing his account of the events in an open letter.

This briefing concerns an incident that occurred on 17 April 2014 in Evin Prison in Tehran when Iranian security officials are reported to have subjected inmates of the Prison’s Section 350, which is used to hold political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, to sustained brutality and assaults while ostensibly conducting a search of their cells. According to information from prisoners’ open letters and from family members who subsequently gained access to the prisoners, a large group of security officials, including some in plain clothes and wearing masks, assaulted prisoners over a period of several hours after entering Section 350 early on the morning of 17 April. As a result of the assaults, many prisoners are reported to have sustained injuries, such as fractures, cuts and bruises, some of which were still visible when their relatives gained access to them days later. Those carrying out the assaults are said to have included Ministry of Intelligence officials and members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) who, between them, control some sections of Evin Prison.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after news of the 17 April events broke out, the authorities denied that officials had used violence against prisoners. However, a growing body of evidence to the contrary continued to emerge in the following days, particularly after some prisoners’ families gained access to them during brief prison visits on 21 April that they described as “shocking” and “painful”. Several members of parliament (MPs) called for a parliamentary-led investigation and the Office of the President also announced an inquiry. Yet, the judicial authorities, who have the primary legal responsibility for supervising prisons and penal institutes and conducting an investigation into violations committed by the officials of these bodies, do not appear to have thus far taken any steps to investigate these serious allegations.

At the time of writing, it remains unclear whether other bodies, including the parliament and the committee formed by the Office of the President, have taken any steps to investigate and establish the full facts of what occurred in Section 350 of Evin Prison on 17 April, and specifically the allegations that security officials carried out serious, sustained physical

assaults on a number of prisoners. Nor is it clear whether those prisoners who sustained injuries have received appropriate medical treatment for their injuries, heightening concern for their safety in detention. Several prisoners' relatives have faced arrest or harassment apparently because they have spoken out on behalf of the prisoners and demanded" an investigation and justice.

Amnesty International is calling on the Iranian authorities to carry out a prompt, thorough, impartial, and independent investigation into the allegations of beatings and other ill-treatment of prisoners at Evin Prison on 17 April 2014, to publish in full the findings of the investigation, and to ensure that officials responsible for beating or otherwise ill-treating prisoners are brought to justice. The authorities should publicly disclose which security and/or custodial forces participated in the events in Section 350 of Evin Prison on 17 April, and at what level of seniority the search operation was planned and authorised.

Amnesty International is also calling on the Iranian authorities to ensure that all prisoners who suffered physical or other injuries during the events of 17 April are provided with all necessary medical treatment and care, and to cease their harassment of prisoners' families and others who speak out to demand justice.

Amnesty International wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance it received from a number of prisoners' families when compiling this briefing, some of whose names are withheld here in order to protect their security.

## 2. THE 17 APRIL INCIDENT

According to information received by Amnesty International, a large force of security officials, including uniformed prison guards and men in plain clothes, believed to be Ministry of Intelligence officials and members of the IRGC entered Section 350 of Evin Prison in the early hours of 17 April. Some reportedly wore masks and sunglasses apparently to conceal their identity, and some carried cameras or other recording equipment. Their aim, it appears was to conduct a search of Section 350. However, since previous searches of the prison section had reportedly resulted in the seizure of or damage to prisoners’ legitimate possessions, the prisoners demanded that they be allowed to remain present while the search operation was conducted. They made this demand peacefully, according to the information available to Amnesty International, but they were met with unwarranted use of force by the security officials, who beat them using batons.

According to the prisoners’ accounts given to their families, which are consistent with this version of events, most of the prisoners were subjected to body searches and then forced into the prison yard, but others – those accommodated in rooms one and three of Section 350 – were kept indoors but outside these rooms while they were searched. Once room three had been searched, the prisoners who had been accommodated there sought to return to it but encountered security officials swearing and verbally abusing the inmates of room one, and then starting to beat them while making them run the gauntlet of baton-wielding prison guards. When inmates of room three protested against the beatings of other prisoners, the security officials started to beat them.

**Hossein Ronaghi Maleki**, a prisoner of conscience currently serving a 15-year sentence,<sup>2</sup> was among the prisoners present in the prison yard. He described what he and other prisoners witnessed in an open letter:



Hossein Ronaghi Maleki, blogger and prisoner of conscience serving a 15-year prison sentence. ©Private

*“We heard the loud moans of our friends and when we looked into the ward from the windows [of the yard], the grim reality shocked us. The guards while using insults and vulgar language were ripping prisoners’ clothing, viciously dragging them on the ground and beating them. When we witnessed this scene from outside we all went to the door and chanted slogans in protest. The door broke and many entered the ward. There we saw how the guards had formed a tunnel of batons and with no care viciously beat inmates as they dragged them through.”<sup>3</sup>*



Kurdish journalist, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand (Kaboudvand), is serving an 11-year prison term.  
©Private

**Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand (Kaboudvand)**, a Kurdish journalist and prisoner of conscience currently serving an 11-year prison term for his peaceful journalistic activities, told his wife what he had seen when she managed to gain access to him in prison a few days later:

*"Mr. Kabudvand was in room three. His room was searched and the officials searching left saying "thank you". He was back in his own room when he heard a commotion coming out of room one. He came out of his room to see what was happening; the moment he stepped outside of his room, he was confronted with a baton that hit him. He was then taken through "the tunnel" where he was beaten with batons as he was going through it."*

According to information available to Amnesty International, prison guards blindfolded and handcuffed many prisoners before forcing them to run the gauntlet of the "baton tunnel", where they were repeatedly struck on their backs, heads and faces. Some were then taken by minibus to another section of Evin Prison, Section 240, which is used to hold prisoners in solitary confinement. They did not receive medical attention, despite their injuries, but rather were subjected to forcible shaving of their heads and facial hair and then placed in solitary confinement. They launched a hunger strike in protest, which was joined by tens of prisoners who remained in Section 350 and spread to Raja'i Shahr Prison in north-west Tehran, where at least seven prisoners went on hunger strike to express their solidarity with the Evin Prison inmates.

Those taken into solitary confinement in Section 240 included **Abdolfattah Soltani**, a prominent human rights lawyer and prisoner of conscience who is currently serving a 13-year prison term.<sup>4</sup> He told his wife, when she was able to visit him a few days later, that he had been among those in the prison yard when the assaults began, and that he was one of those taken afterwards to solitary confinement in Section 240. His daughter, Maede Soltani, told Amnesty International:<sup>5</sup>

*"My father was handcuffed from behind and taken to solitary confinement. There, they first shaved his head with grade six [shaver], then one of the officials said that that it was not short enough and they shaved his head once more with grade four. It was meant to humiliate him."*



Abdolfattah Soltani, a human rights lawyer and prisoner of conscience, is currently serving a 13-year prison term. ©Private



When Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand protested against the forcible shaving of his and other prisoners' heads, guards reportedly kicked, punched and beat him with batons, pushed his face into the floor and stood on his back. He later told his wife that he lost consciousness under this assault and awoke to find that he was in a bed in the prison clinic with electric shock paddles above him, suggesting that he might have suffered a cardiac arrest requiring resuscitation with a defibrillator. He said he was unable to speak and had not been able to respond when a prison technician had asked him whether he had a heart ailment. He found that his hair had been shaved off while he was unconscious. When his wife was allowed to see him briefly three days later, his injuries were still fresh and visible. She told Amnesty International<sup>6</sup>:

*“He pulled the back of his shirt up and his entire back was all black. He has three broken ribs on his left side, a broken toe, and his arms were black and blue.”*

Some of the 32 or more prisoners who were transferred to Section 240 and placed in solitary confinement in what is known as the “exile corridor” were reportedly forced to strip naked before being locked in their cells. The “exile corridor” is so-called by inmates and former inmates of Evin Prison, apparently because conditions in these cells are believed to be worse than in other parts of the prison; the cells are said to have bare floors, and the drinking water available to prisoners is of very poor quality. Those forced to strip naked are reported to have included **Soheil Babadi**, who has been held since May 2012 on charges including “corruption on earth” and “insulting the Prophet”, apparently for a post that he published on the Facebook social networking site. He is also reported to have been beaten by guards.

The first news of the violence used against prisoners in Section 350 emerged within hours of the events, causing consternation and anxiety among prisoners' families. However, the authorities refused to provide any information to family members about individual prisoners, and any injuries they had sustained, and it was not until the night of 20 April that some families received phone calls from prisoners assuring them that they were in good health. For other families, their first opportunity to find out about their imprisoned relatives came on 21 April, when they were able to use the regular Monday visiting slot for Section 350 inmates to gain brief access to them.



Sa'id Metinpour, Iranian Azerbaijani minority rights activist. ©Private

Atiyeh Taheri, the wife of **Sa'id Metinpour**, a member of Iran's Azerbaijani minority imprisoned for his minority rights activism, told Amnesty International<sup>7</sup> that she learnt from her husband that he had been “*handcuffed from behind and, along with a number of other prisoners, put in a line facing the wall. He was hit on his back with batons.*”

Sa'id Metinpour was then taken with other prisoners to solitary confinement in Section 240. He told his wife that officials there forced him to strip off his clothes and then gave him other dirty

garments to wear before locking him in a cell.

His wife told Amnesty International:

*"I had no news of him until Monday when they let me see him only for five minutes, after hours of waiting and insisting. He was very pale, his lips were dry because of the hunger strike and his head had been shaved."*

Other family members who were able to visit their imprisoned relatives on 21 April also observed injuries that pointed to their having been subjected to serious assaults. For example, the father of **Akbar Amini**, a prisoner currently serving a five-year prison term<sup>8</sup>, was reported to have told Kaleme, a Persian-language news website close to detained opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, that he found his son wearing a cervical collar and with a cut on his head that had not been stitched. Akbar Amini reportedly told his family that he had received a blow to his head and neck and had lost hearing in his right ear.<sup>9</sup> He had reportedly been taken briefly to a hospital outside the prison on 19 April as he was dizzy, nauseous and suffering from headaches and blurred vision, but was returned to the prison only a couple of hours later. Akbar Amini was arrested in April 2011 after he climbed a crane in Tehran with green ribbons and pictures of people killed during the post 2009 election protests. He is serving a five-year prison term.

Several other prisoners are also reported to have been taken to hospitals outside Evin Prison but in all cases they appear to have been returned to prison without receiving adequate medical treatment. Some prisoners are said to have been given pain killers only, even in cases where they sustained fractures.

The assaults, particularly blows to the head and abdominal area, may have exacerbated pre-existing medical problems of some prisoners. For example, the health condition of **Hootan Dolati**, a prisoner of conscience and political activist, who is suffering from a chronic heart condition and knee and back injuries, is believed to have deteriorated further as a result of the beatings. Prior to the 17 April incident, he had been complaining of gradual loss of vision, which he believes happened after he received blows to his head during interrogations following his initial arrest in March 2013. On 17 April Hootan Dolati was reportedly forced to strip naked and was given a torn garment to wear before being locked in solitary confinement in Section 240. He was held in a cell with broken windows where the bare floor was wet as a result of rainfall.



Hootan Dolati is a prisoner of conscience and political activist. ©Private

**Hossein Ronaghi Maleki**, another prisoner of conscience currently serving a 15-year prison term, is reported to have received blows to his head, back and abdomen on 17 April; he suffers from a chronic kidney condition which has necessitated surgery on several occasions.

He went on hunger strike with other 11 prisoners on 21 April to express support for those in solitary confinement. He was taken to the prison clinic twice on 23 and 24 April as his already poor health deteriorated further as a result of the hunger strike.

Other prisoners reported to have sustained injuries on 17 April as a result of assaults by security officials and prison guards include: **Kamyar Sabet San'at, Omid Behrouzi, Esma'il Barzegari, Alireza Raja'i, Amin Chalaki, Mas'oud Arab Choubdar, Farshid Fathi, Majid Mohammadi Mo'in, Asghar Ghattan, Emad Bahavar, Peyman Kasan Nejad, Behzad Arab Gol, Yashar Darolshafa, Saeed Haeri, Davar Hosseini, Soroush Sabet, Semkou Khelghati, Mehrdad Ahankhah, Majid Asadi, Mostafa Rismanbaf, Amir Dourbin Ghaziani, Asadollah Asadi, Mostafa Abdi, Asadollah Hadi, Abolghasem Fouladvand, Reza Akbari Monfared, Ghorban Behzadian-Nejad, Javad Fouladvand, Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, Gholamreza Khosravi Savadjani, and Mehdi Khoda'i.**

During the days following the incident, the authorities gradually transferred back most of those held in solitary confinement to Section 350. At the end of April 2014, 12 prisoners were still on hunger strike in Section 240 in protests against their ill-treatment and continuing solitary confinement. On 1 May they were transferred to Section 350 and subsequently ended their hunger strike.

Amnesty International understands that prisoners held in solitary confinement were subjected to further beatings during their first few days of detention in Section 240. Some of them, who had been forced to strip naked, were not given any clothes to wear for up to a week. Some of the prisoners in solitary confinement were allowed to visit their families on 21 April but the authorities did not permit them to receive visits on 28 April.

### 3. INADEQUATE OFFICIAL RESPONSE

The first official comments in response to the reports of the assaults emerging from Evin Prison were made by Gholamhossein Esma'ili in his capacity as Head of Iran's Prisons Organization. On the same day, he dismissed the reports, telling the media “we should not take note of the news of the anti-revolutionaries.”<sup>10</sup> Three days later, Mostafa Pourmohammadi, Iran's Minister of Justice, told a press conference that the “inspection” that security officials had carried out in Section 350 of Evin Prison had been “aimed at finding sharp objects and illegal devices such as mobile phones and SIM-cards. A number of prohibited items were discovered in Section 350.” He added that, “in two rooms, prisoners resisted but no serious confrontation happened. One or two prisoners sustained minor bruises or injuries who were treated.”<sup>11</sup>

On 21 April, Iranian state television's Channel Two broadcast what it described as a “documentary” in its “20:30” programme containing video footage apparently filmed during the course of the search of Section 350 on 17 April. In the programme, interviewed by a State-TV journalist, Gholamhossein Esma'ili denied that the officials conducting the search had used force and that anyone had been injured, while claiming that “the search was conducted in order to discover the secret channels of communications between prisoners and foreign media such as BBC and Voice of America.”<sup>12</sup>

On 20 April, a number of prisoners' families gathered outside the Iranian parliament in Tehran to express concern for the safety of their relatives in Evin Prison and to protest against the lack of information from the authorities concerning the events three days earlier. Despite the early promises of an investigation made to the families by Tehran MP Ali Motahari, the reaction of the parliamentarians has thus far been divided. On 22 April, nine MPs used an open parliamentary session to issue a formal notice reprimanding the Minister of Justice over the alleged beatings of prisoners in Section 350 of Evin Prison. The same nine MPs urged the Parliament delegate an investigative committee to visit Evin Prison and examine the allegations. At the time of writing, however, it remains unclear whether the Parliament has acted on this recommendation or taken any other steps to investigate the alleged assaults at Evin Prison.

Prisoners' families also staged a protest outside the office of President Hassan Rouhani. On 22 April, presidential officials invited five representatives of these families into the Office of the President and, the next day, government spokesperson Mohammad Bagher Nobakht told a press conference that “a team has been formed by the government to investigate the recent incidents in Evin Prison. We will publish a report after the course of investigations is over.”<sup>13</sup> To date, however, the authorities have provided no further information, such as details of the composition and powers of the investigation team, or when it is expected to complete its inquiries.

Evin Prison, like all of Iran's prisons, essentially falls under the authority of the Head of the Judiciary, Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani, whose portfolio of responsibilities includes supervision

over the Prisons Organization. On 23 April, he removed Gholamhossein Esma'ili as head of the Prisons Organization and appointed him as the Head of Tehran's Judiciary and of Branch One of the Appeal Court of Tehran, although the Judiciary spokesperson insisted that this was a promotion and that “changes in the Judiciary have not been related to recent incidents.”<sup>14</sup>

## CALLS FOR A JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION

Under the Executive Regulations for the Prisons Organization, the Prisons Organization, which functions under the direct authority of the Head of the Judiciary, is responsible for the management of all prison affairs. The Code of Criminal Procedures, asserts that the Prosecutor has responsibility for overseeing the conduct of law enforcement officials in prisons, including the heads of prisons, their deputies and other prison personnel.

On 19 April 2014, 74 prisoners held in Section 350 addressed a letter to the Prosecutor of Tehran in which they described what had occurred at Evin Prison on 17 April and listed alleged breaches of Prison Regulations committed by security officials and prison guards, including beatings of prisoners resulting in injuries that had been documented by prison medics. They asked the Prosecutor to initiate a prompt judicial investigation. On 23 April, the prisoners sent the Prosecutor an Addendum to their initial letter urging him to act immediately in order to prevent the loss of forensic evidence with the passage of time.

Under Iranian law, these letters of complaint could provide the legal ground for judicial officials to open official investigations into allegations made by prisoners; however, it remains unclear to Amnesty International whether the Tehran Prosecutor and his office have taken any steps in response to the Evin prisoners' complaint and to investigate their allegations.

More worrying still, Sadegh Larijani, the Head of the Judiciary, the body primarily responsible for investigating these allegations, is already on record as having made comments which put in question the Judiciary's impartiality and its willingness to conduct an independent investigation. On 23 April, the day after a number of prisoners' families submitted a formal complaint against the Minister of Justice, the Tehran Prosecutor, the head of Evin Prison and the erstwhile Head of the Prisons Organization, Gholamhossein Esma'ili, to the Office of the Head of the Judiciary, Sadegh Larijani commented the Head of the Prisons Organization had reported that no violations had occurred during the 17 April search at Evin Prison and issued a warning to those “spreading lies.”

In the past, the Iranian authorities have frequently failed to conduct independent investigations into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and other serious abuses by officials, and to bring those responsible to justice, in breach of Iran's obligations under international law. This has contributed to a pervasive culture of impunity which fuels continuing serious human rights violations.

## 4. ARRESTS AND HARASSMENT OF PRISONERS’ FAMILIES

Since 17 April, family members of some of the Section 350 prisoners have been arrested, harassed or subjected to intimidation by the security authorities apparently to deter or prevent them from continuing to speak out on behalf of their imprisoned relatives and to call for an independent investigation into the abuses allegedly committed against them by officials and guards at Evin Prison.

Ministry of Intelligence officials arrested **Kaveh Darolshafa** on 26 April, apparently because of his activism on behalf of his brother, **Yashar Darolshafa**, a former student activist who was jailed for five and a half years in August 2010 after a Revolutionary Court convicted him on charges including “gathering and colluding against national security”. After members of Yashar Darolshafa’s family, including his mother, saw him in prison on 21 April, some of them gave media interviews in which they disclosed that Yashar Darolshafa had been beaten so badly on 17 April that he could not walk unaided.

Ministry of Intelligence officials also told **Masoumeh Dehghan**, the wife of Abdolfattah Soltani, that she should not attend a planned gathering of prisoners’ families due to take place outside the Tehran Prosecutor’s Office on 26 April.

Other prisoners’ relatives, as well as activists campaigning for an official investigation, have reported receiving text messages sent to their phones from an unknown ID caller, believed to be the security authorities, which warns: “attending any unpermitted gatherings is illegal. Offenders will face consequences.” On 22 April, three students, **Neda Sabouri**, **Sohrab Salehi**, and **Milad Pour-Isa** were reported to have been arrested by plain-clothes men during the gathering of prisoners’ families outside the Office of the President.

On 28 April, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje’i, the official Judiciary Spokesperson, warned at a press conference that those “outside or inside the prisons who had said untruthful things” would face prosecution.

## 5. LAW AND STANDARDS

As a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), whose Article 7 prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment absolutely, Iran is obligated under international law to ensure that all allegations of torture or other ill-treatment are investigated. Furthermore, any person whose rights or freedoms under the Covenant have been violated must have access to an effective remedy notwithstanding the official status of the perpetrator.

International law and standards place strict limits on the use of force by law enforcement officials, including officials in prisons. Force may be used only when strictly necessary, and then only to the extent required for the achievement of a legitimate law enforcement objective. According to Article 3 of the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, the use of force should be exceptional, and the level and extent of any force used should not exceed what is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances. Force may be used against detainees only when it is strictly necessary for the maintenance of security and order within the institution, in cases of attempted escape, when there is resistance to a lawful order, or when personal safety is threatened. Even in such event, force may be used only as a last resort, if non-violent means have proved ineffective, and the degree of force used must be the minimum necessary.<sup>15</sup> If physical force is used against a detainee when it is not genuinely justified by the conduct of the detainee, it may amount to torture or other ill-treatment.<sup>16</sup> A prisoner against whom any means of force has been used should have the right to an immediate medical examination and, if necessary, prompt treatment by a medical doctor

Under international standards relating to the treatment of prisoners, any prisoners who are accused of committing disciplinary offences within a prison may face punishment for these offences only in accordance with rules and procedures that have been established by law. In such circumstances, the accused prisoner must be informed of the alleged offence, the competent authorities must conduct a thorough examination, and the prisoner must be given an opportunity to present a defence.<sup>17</sup> According to the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners “[c]orporal punishment, punishment by placing in a dark cell, and all cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments shall be completely prohibited as punishments for disciplinary offences.”

### IRANIAN PRISON REGULATIONS

Iran’s Prison Regulations require that any disciplinary measures permitted under the Regulations, such as periods of solitary confinement, may be imposed only after the relevant authorities have followed procedures that have established a prisoner’s guilt. Under Article 174 of the Regulations, alleged offences by prisoners must be investigated by a Disciplinary Council composed of judicial and prison officials. If the Disciplinary Council finds the accused prisoner guilty but only by majority vote, it may only impose one of the punishments listed under Article 175, such as “deprivation of visits up to three occasions, deprivation of prison leave up to three months, exclusion of being considered for release on probation up to 20 days, and detention in solitary confinement for a maximum of 20 days.” Note to Article 175 stipulates that the Disciplinary Council can only impose up to one third of either of the prescribed penalties. Imposition of more than one third of the penalties requires the

confirmation of the prison's supervisory judge. Article 169 of the Regulations specifically prohibits "Imprecation, swearing, using indecent language, corporal punishment of the accused or convicts, and imposing violent, excruciating or humiliating punishments, in all penal institutes and prisons" in Iran.



## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International urges the Iranian authorities to take the following measures without delay:

- Immediately conduct an independent, impartial, and thorough investigation into allegations that security and/or other officials used excessive and unnecessary force against prisoners held at Evin Prison on 17 April 2014, and make the full findings public at the earliest opportunity;
- Bring to justice, under the criminal law, all officials found to have assaulted or committed other serious abuses against prisoners, or to have ordered or assisted in the commission of such violations of prisoners’ rights;
- Ensure that all prisoners have access to medical care and that all those injured during or in relation to the events of 17 April 2014 receive all medical care and rehabilitation that they need, including specialized treatment outside prison where their medical needs require;
- Ensure that no prisoners are subjected to prolonged solitary confinement, which could amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, and ensure that effective safeguards are in place to protect all prisoners against torture or other ill-treatment, including when they are undergoing solitary confinement or subject to other disciplinary measures;
- Ensure that all prisoners, including detainees held for questioning or pending trial, have regular access to their families, to lawyers of their own choosing, and to all appropriate health care;
- Ensure that all victims of human rights violations receive full and effective reparation – including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition. In particular, victims should be able to seek reparation before national courts;
- Cease the harassment of prisoners’ families, friends and others seeking to represent their interests, including by speaking out and exercising their right to freedom of expression and through public campaigning.

<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Intelligence controls Section 209 of Evin Prison and uses it to hold detainees held under its authority; the IRGC controls and uses Section 2A to hold detainees under its authority.

<sup>2</sup> He was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 2010 by a Revolutionary Court in Tehran that convicted him on charges including "membership of the [illegal] internet group 'Iran Proxy'", "spreading propaganda against the system" and "insulting the Leader and the President", apparently in connection with his peaceful activities including writing his blog.

<sup>3</sup> The translation of the letter was taken from Kaleme website available at:  
<http://www.kaleme.com/1393/02/04/klm-182170/>

<sup>4</sup> He originally was sentenced to 18 years in prison in 2012 by a Revolutionary Court in Tehran that convicted him on charges including "spreading propaganda against the system", "gathering and colluding against the state", and "establishing an illegal group" – the Centre for Human Rights Defenders (CHRD), which he co-founded with Noble Peace laureate Shirin Ebadi. His sentence was reduced to 13 years on appeal.

<sup>5</sup> Phone interview conducted on 25 April 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Phone interview conducted on 25 April 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Skype interview conducted on 25 April 2014.

<sup>8</sup> He was sentenced by a Revolutionary Court in Tehran that convicted him on national security charges including. In April 2011, he had climbed a crane in Tehran and attached green ribbons and pictures to commemorate people killed during the mass protests that followed the June 2009 presidential election.

<sup>9</sup> Kaleme, *Akbar Amini's father: Akbar had lost hearing in his right ear/ they had not even stitched the cut on his head*, 21 April 2014, available at: <http://www.kaleme.com/1393/02/01/klm-181489/>

<sup>10</sup> Kaleme, *The first official reaction to the reports of beatings of political prisoners*, 17 April 2014, available at: <http://www.kaleme.com/1393/01/28/klm-180853/>

<sup>11</sup> Radio Farda, *Pourmohammadi: There were no confrontations in Evin prison incident*, 20 April 2014, available at:  
[http://www.radiofarda.com/content/f14\\_iran\\_justice\\_minister\\_no\\_clash\\_in\\_evin\\_prison/25355886.html](http://www.radiofarda.com/content/f14_iran_justice_minister_no_clash_in_evin_prison/25355886.html)

<sup>12</sup> The video footage could be accessed at:  
<http://www.mashreghnews.ir/fa/news/303366/%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D8%B1%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%AF-350-%D8%A7%D9%88%DB%8C%D9%86-%DA%86%D9%87-%DA%AF%D8%B0%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D9%81%DB%8C%D9%84%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF>

<sup>13</sup> ISNA, The Government's Spokesperson announced: A team formed to investigate the Evin incident, 23 April 2014, available at:

<http://www.isna.ir/fa/news/0000720784/%D8%AA%D8%B4%DA%A9%DB%8C%D9%84-%D8%AA%DB%8C%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%B1%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D9%88%D9%82%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%88%DB%8C%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%B4>

<sup>14</sup> ISNA, *Isma'ili's change of position was a promotion*, 23 April 2014, available at:

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<http://isna.ir/fa/news/93020302334/%D8%AA%D8%BA%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%DB%8C%D9%84%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%A8-%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF>

<sup>15</sup> Rule 54, Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, Principles 4 and 15 of the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.

<sup>16</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture E/CN.4/2004/56 (2003), para. 44.

<sup>17</sup> Principle 30 of the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, Rules 29–30 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

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Index: MDE 13/023/2014  
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