

**PUBLIC**

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**30 July 2007**

**UA 195/07**      **Prisoner of conscience/Fear of torture**

**IRAN**              **Amir Yaghoub-Ali (m), aged 20, student and advocate of equal rights for women**

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Amir Yaghoub-Ali, an active member of the men's committee of the Campaign for Equality, was arrested on 11 July in Tehran. He had been collecting signatures in support of the Campaign, which aims to collect one million signatures from Iranians in support of an end to legalised discrimination against women. Amnesty International considers him a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression. Since his arrest he has been permitted to telephone his relatives once.

Amir Yaghoub-Ali is a student at Tehran's Allameh Tabataba'i University, but was suspended from his studies at the time of his arrest, because of his student activism.

On 12 July, his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, a Revolutionary Court judge issued a 48-hour detention order. He should have been released on 14 July, but remained in custody; on 15 July he was transferred to Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, which is run by the Ministry of Intelligence.

The Campaign website (<http://www.wechange.info/english/spip.php?article110>) quoted Ali's mother as saying, "Mr Sobhani, the judge, informed us that there are 11 charges against Ali, and that he would have to remain in Evin prison until these charges are investigated. I asked the judge what exactly these charges were. My daughter asked what illegal activity has he engaged in? Is collection of signatures illegal?"

The judge reportedly replied, "We are not concerned with its legal or illegal nature. We have to see what the 'leaning' and intent of his activities were. Amir is a man, why has he concerned himself with the activities of women? He should go and focus on his studies."

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Campaign for Equality was launched in August 2006. So far, 13 of its members have been arrested while collecting signatures, an activity which is not forbidden under Iranian law.

Several students who have recently been released from Section 209 of Evin Prison have alleged that they were tortured or ill-treated there. This included severe beatings, solitary confinement in confined spaces, food and sleep deprivation, and being forced to stand or do strenuous exercise for long periods.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian etc or your own language:**

- expressing concern that Amir Yaghoub-Ali has been detained simply for collecting signatures in support of the Campaign for Equality;
- urging the authorities to release Amir Yaghoub-Ali immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- asking the authorities to ensure that, while he remains in custody, he is protected from torture and ill-treatment.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Salutation:** Your Excellency  
**Email:** [info@dadgostary-tehran.ir](mailto:info@dadgostary-tehran.ir) (In the subject line: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)  
**Fax:** +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying, if the called is answered, you should say 'fax please')

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie  
Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Islamic Republic Street - Shahid Keshvar Doust Street  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [info@leader.ir](mailto:info@leader.ir)  
[istiftaa@wilayah.org](mailto:istiftaa@wilayah.org)

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 September 2007.