

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/020/2003

11 July 2003

Further Information on UA 173/03 (MDE 13/014/2003, 18 June 2003) Prisoner of conscience/ Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture or ill-treatment New concern: Medical Concern

IRAN **Mohsen Sazegara (m), aged 48, journalist**
Released: Vahid Sazegara (m), his son, student

Vahid Sazegara was released from Evin Prison in the capital Tehran on 9 July. He had been detained without charge since 15 June. He is reported to be in good health.

Journalist Mohsen Sazegara is detained incommunicado at Evin prison. It is not known if he has been charged with any offence. Amnesty International is concerned that he may not be receiving the regular medication he needs for his severe heart condition. He reportedly carried out a 10-day hunger strike following his arrest on 15 June.

Mohsen Sazegara has had two heart operations in the last few years and needs regular medication for his condition. Neither his wife Dr Soheila Hamidnia nor his lawyer, Dr Sho'leh Sa'adi has been allowed to see him since his arrest.

Mohsen Sazegara, an outspoken critic of the Iranian authorities, was arrested after publishing an article on his website, in which he called for "a profound change of the constitution". Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested solely for the peaceful expression of his conscientiously held beliefs.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has for many years documented a catalogue of arbitrary arrests, prolonged and often incommunicado detention, followed in many cases by unfair trials. Vague laws relating to security and defamation have often been used in cases against those who may have expressed dissatisfaction with the government, or those who are known to have political affiliations considered unacceptable by the authorities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian, English, French or your own language:

- welcoming the release of Vahid Sazegara on 9 July;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Mohsen Sazegara as prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful expression of his conscientiously held beliefs;
- seeking assurances that he will be humanely treated in detention, including being given immediate access to the regular medication he needs;
- calling for Mohsen Sazegara to be granted immediate access to his lawyer, family and any necessary medical treatment;
- reminding the authorities that confessions extracted under duress are prohibited by Iranian law and a violation of Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party. It states that "No one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment";
- calling for all those found to be responsible for the torture of prisoners to be brought to justice in fair trials.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed >Ali Khamenei,

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegram: His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed >Ali Khamenei, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Tehran
E-mail: webmaster@wilayah.org (address may be unreliable; please try to resend if returned; on the subject line write: For the attention of the office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei, Qom)
Salutation: Your Excellency

President

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegram: His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: khatami@president.ir (please resend your message if it does not get through the first time)
Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegram: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: + 98 21 879 6671 (please keep trying; please mark "care of Director of International Affairs, Judiciary")
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs.

His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: + 98 21 390 1999 (please keep trying; please mark "care of the Human Rights Department, Foreign Ministry")

and 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 22 August 2003.