

URGENT ACTION

IRANIAN JOURNALIST ENDS HUNGER STRIKE

Iranian journalist Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand ended his 59-day long hunger strike on 24 July after officials in Tehran's Evin Prison promised to grant him prison leave. Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand remains in poor health and requires medical treatment for his chronic medical conditions, including a kidney infection.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, a prisoner of conscience who is serving a 10 and a half year prison sentence imposed for his journalism and human rights work, ended his nearly two-month long hunger strike on 24 July 2012. He has told his wife that the prison authorities have promised to allow him leave from prison. In an open letter, published in *Kalame*, an opposition website, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand wrote that he ended his hunger strike following requests from family and friends and "those who respect humans' lives and values".

On 16 July Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand ended his "dry" hunger strike (refusing water in addition to food) which he had started on 14 July. He then continued with a "wet" hunger strike (taking water but not food), which he started on 26 May in protest at the prison authorities' refusal to grant him permission to visit his son Pejman, who has been ill since January 2012 with an undiagnosed condition.

On 20 July, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand was transferred to the prison clinic of Evin Prison and then to Tehran's Modarres Hospital due to severe kidney pain. He was released the same day and taken back to prison. His existing health conditions have been exacerbated due to his prolonged hunger strike and his health has deteriorated. Recent medical examinations conducted in the prison clinic of Evin Prison reportedly indicate that he continues to suffer from a kidney infection, as well as physical weakness, very low blood sugar levels, and weight loss.

Please write immediately in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Iranian authorities to release Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association in his journalism and human rights work;
- Calling on them to ensure that Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand receives all necessary medical attention, including treatment at a medical facility outside the prison if required.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 SEPTEMBER 2012 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid
Keshvar Doust Street,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info_leader@leader.ir
Twitter: @khamenei_ir
#Iran must release #Kabudvand now

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
[care of] Public relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street
Vali Asr Ave., above Pasteur Street
intersection, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Secretary General High Council for
Human Rights
Mohammed Javad Larijani
c/o Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave
South of Serah-e Jomhuri
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@humanrights-iran.ir
(Subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad
Larijani)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 204/12. Further information:
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/046/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand has been allowed to visit his son on a few occasions, most recently in late April/early May 2012, when prison authorities took Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand to his son's bedside for a visit lasting approximately 30 minutes. He began his hunger strike on 26 May 2012 in protest at the Iranian authorities' refusal to grant him further leave. In an open letter, published on 25 July 2012 in *Kalame*, an opposition website, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand wrote that he ended his hunger strike following requests from family and friends and "those who respect humans' lives and values".

Following his arrest on 1 July 2007, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand was initially held in Section 209 of Evin Prison, believed to be under the control of the Ministry of Intelligence. He spent 40 days in solitary confinement, and has said that he was interrogated while his hands and feet were bound and he was blindfolded. He went on an eight-day hunger strike in protest at the conditions under which he was held and interrogated, during which time prison authorities told him that if he needed to use the toilet, he had to seek formal permission in writing. This exacerbated an existing kidney complaint.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand passed out for about 30 minutes on 19 May 2008. He was given first aid by another prisoner who is a doctor. His fellow prisoners called for help and asked guards to take him to the prison clinic, but they left him in his cell. The following day, he was forced to attend a scheduled trial session. Though the session was cancelled when a representative from the Prosecutor's Office failed to appear, the trial judge ordered that Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand should receive appropriate medical care in a hospital outside Evin Prison. Despite this, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand was not allowed to seek treatment in a hospital but instead received medical attention at the prison's medical facility.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand was transferred to hospital outside Evin Prison on 9 January 2012 for medical tests. These included a prostate examination, blood tests and cardiovascular tests. Based on the results of the medical examinations, doctors recommended admitting Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand to the hospital and performing surgery on his prostate gland. Instead he was taken back to prison. It is not clear whether he has yet received the medical care he needs.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, a member of Iran's Kurdish minority, is the founder and Chair of the Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan (HROK, sometimes known as RMMK from its Kurdish name). Until 2004, he was also the editor of a weekly newspaper, *Payam-e Mardom-e Kordestan*, which carried articles promoting the cultural, social and political rights of Iran's Kurdish minority. *Payam-e Mardom-e Kordestan* was issued with a three-year ban by Iran's judiciary on 27 June 2004 for "disseminating separatist ideas and publishing false reports". On appeal to the Supreme Court, this ban was lifted, though the newspaper has not reopened.

He was arrested on 1 July 2007 and has mostly been held in Evin Prison. He is currently serving a 10-year sentence for establishing HROK, stemming from his 2007 arrest; and a six month sentence from a 2005 case on charges of "publishing lies with intent to cause public anxiety" and "creating discord between and among social walks of life by raising ethnic and racial issues". He was transferred to Mahabad prison, in West Azerbaijan Province, north-west Iran on 16 July 2009. Three days later, he appeared before Branch One of the Revolutionary Court in the north-eastern city of Mahabad, charged with "spreading propaganda against the system" for the publication and distribution of pamphlets about Kurdish women. Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand reportedly told the court that "the materials printed in the pamphlet referred to in the indictment have no resemblance to the literature published by HROK. The materials brought out by HROK have the logo and the address of the organization and we can only be responsible for the materials published on the website of the organization." No verdict is known to have been issued in this trial. He was transferred back to Evin Prison in April 2010.

Name: Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 204/12 Index: MDE 13/055/2012 Issue Date: 09 August 2012