

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/026/2009

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Further Information on UA 86/09 (MDE 13/024/2009, 27 March 2009) Arbitrary arrest/Prisoner of conscience

IRAN	Khadijeh Moghaddam (f)]	
	Mahboubeh Karami (f)]	
Released:	Leila Nazari (f)]	
	Delaram Ali (f)]	
	Farkhondeh Ehtesabian (f)]	members of the One Million Signatures
	Baharah Behravan (f)]	Campaign
	Ali Abdi (m)]	
	Amir Rashidi (m)]	
	Mohammad Shourab (m)]	
	Arash Nasiri Eghbali (m)]	
	Soraya Yousefi (f), member of Mothers for Peace		
	Shahla Forouzanfar (f), member of Mothers for Peace		

Ten of the 12 people arrested on 26 March 2009 have been released on third-party bail guarantees. Khadijeh Moghaddam and Mahboubeh Karami remain detained in Evin Prison in the capital Tehran. They are prisoners of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of assembly.

Khadijeh Moghaddam's lawyer informed the Campaign for Equality that her client had been told by telephone that she was accused of "gathering with intent to create unease in the public mind" and "disrupting public order". As formal charges should be read to a defendant in person, the lawyer asked the Assistant Prosecutor in charge of the case what the accusations were. The lawyer was then told that Khadijeh Moghaddam was accused of "gathering with intent to harm national security". The Assistant Prosecutor also said that Khadijeh Moghaddam was being kept in detention as she had a previous criminal record. The lawyer disputed this assertion, as according to the law, a criminal record should consist of a final verdict, which Khadijeh Moghaddam has not yet received (see UA 93/08, MDE 13/053/2008, 10 April 2008 and follow ups). The Assistant Prosecutor insisted that Khadijeh Moghaddam had a "pivotal role" and therefore he would not release her. Khadijeh Moghaddam also told her husband by telephone on 31 March that she had lodged a complaint against the police for their "illegal, inhuman and un-Islamic treatment".

Mahboubeh Karami's brother, who had gone to court to post bail for his sister, was told by the Assistant Prosecutor that she was not released because she had a criminal record. This, however, was incorrect as Mahboubeh Karami was acquitted in a previous case (see UA 169/08, MDE 13/084/2008, 17 June 2008 and follow ups). Her lawyer also said that she had committed no crime, as paying New Year visits to other families is a custom in Iran.

The 12 were arrested in the street while preparing to make Iranian New Year visits to the families of detained activists, including students and trade unionists. Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shirin Ebadi said, following the arrests, that "visiting the families of political prisoners and victims of human rights abuse in Iran does not constitute a criminal act, rather it is an admirable act which is customary among mindful Iranians". The 10

released must appear in court on 5 April 2009 for questioning. They are also believed to be accused of “creating unease in the public mind” and “disrupting public order”.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Campaign for Equality, also known as the One Million Signatures Campaign, launched in 2006, is a grassroots initiative composed of a network of people committed to ending discrimination against women in Iranian law. The Campaign gives basic legal training to volunteers, who travel around the country promoting the Campaign. They talk with women in their homes, as well as in public places, telling them about their rights and the need for legal reform. The volunteers are also aiming at collecting one million signatures of Iranian nationals for a petition demanding an end to legal discrimination against women in Iran. Dozens of the Campaign's activists have been arrested or harassed for their activities for the Campaign for Equality, some while collecting signatures for the petition.

Mothers for Peace was launched in 2007 by a group of Iranian women to campaign against possible military intervention in Iran over its nuclear programme, and to seek “viable solutions” to the region's Instability.

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

- welcoming the release of ten of those arrested on 26 March;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Khadijeh Moghaddam and Mahboubeh Karami who are prisoners of conscience;
- in the meantime, calling for the two women to have immediate access to their families and lawyers of their choice and to any necessary medical treatment;
- calling for an immediate and impartial investigation into Khadijeh Moghaddam's complaint of ill-treatment and for anyone found responsible for abuses to be brought to justice promptly and fairly;
- urging that all charges against all 12 be dropped, as if imprisoned in connection with their peaceful exercise of their right to assembly, they would be prisoners of conscience.

APPEALS TO:

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh / Office of the Head of the Judiciary

Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhuri, Tehran 1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@dadiran.ir, shahroudi@dadgostary-tehran.ir

(In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei

The Office of the Supreme Leader

End of Shahid Keshvar Doust Street

Islamic Republic Street

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: via website: <http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter> (English)

<http://www.leader.ir/langs/fa/index.php?p=letter> (Persian)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Director, Human Rights Headquarters of Iran

Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh (Office of the Head of the Judiciary)

Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhuri

Tehran 1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

Email: info@dadiran.ir (In the subject line: FAO Director, Human Rights Headquarters)

Salutation: Dear Sir

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 14 May 2009.