

EXTERNAL

All Index: MDE 13/28/90

Distrib : PG/SC

Date: 4 December 1990

## *MEDICAL CONCERN*

**Dr Fatemeh Izadi**  
**IRAN**

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr Fatemeh Izadi, a female doctor arrested in 1983 and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment following a summary trial. In August 1990 she was among some 50 women prisoners who accepted offers of unconditional temporary release from the authorities at Evin Prison, Tehran, where they are held. However, most of the women temporarily released, including Dr Izadi, were returned to Evin Prison by October 1990.

Dr Izadi was a supporter of the Organization of Iranian People's Fedayan (Majority) [OIPF], a left-wing political party which was legal at the time of her arrest. She was arrested in February 1983, at the same time as her husband, Fariborz Salghi, for activities in support of the OIPF. Her husband was one of thousands of political prisoners who were executed in Iran in late 1988. Dr Izadi had previously been a political prisoner under the Shah. She is now aged approximately 40 and is reported to have developed tuberculosis while in prison. During her brief temporary release earlier this year she was required to report periodically to the authorities at Evin prison and was returned to the prison on 20 October 1990.

### **Background**

Following the 1979 revolution in Iran the religious leadership, made up primarily of mullahs (Islamic clergymen), assumed the dominant position in Iranian politics. In 1981 the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran took up arms against the government and thousands of its supporters were imprisoned, tortured and executed in 1981 and 1982, together with supporters of many other opposition groups. In these early years, the government continued to have the support of the Organization of Iranian People's Fedayan (Majority) in alliance with the Tudeh (Communist) party, but official policy turned against these left-wing parties in 1983 and by mid-1983 their leadership and hundreds of supporters were imprisoned. Many were sentenced to death, or to long prison terms after being tried by a single Islamic judge in court hearings lasting only a matter of minutes, with no legal representation and no right of appeal.

In late 1988 mass executions of political prisoners took place in all parts of Iran, during which thousands were executed. They included many who were nearing the end of their sentences, and even some whose prison terms had elapsed. At times it was reported that Fatemeh Izadi and fellow women prisoners were at imminent risk of execution. Indeed, some female prisoners of conscience were executed during this period.

The motives for the temporary releases in August 1990 are unclear. Those women who were allowed out of prison were apparently kept under close surveillance, and repeatedly asked by the authorities to sign prepared statements. The authorities may have believed that family pressure could be brought to bear on the women in order to force them to sign prepared statements discrediting their political activities. Some female prisoners have been ordered to denounce their husbands who were among those executed in 1988. At least 50 female political prisoners are reported to have completed their sentences, but to remain in prison because they will not sign the statements prepared for them.