

URGENT ACTION

IMPRISONED JOURNALIST ON “DRY” HUNGER STRIKE

Journalist Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand started a “dry” hunger strike, refusing water in addition to food, on the evening of 14 July in Tehran’s Evin Prison in protest at the Iranian authorities denial of his repeated requests to visit his gravely-ill son. Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand is a prisoner of conscience, serving a 10 and a half year prison term for his journalism and human rights work. He is in poor health.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand first started a “wet” hunger strike – where he took only liquids – on 26 May. His son Pejman has been ill since January 2012 with an undiagnosed condition and Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand has been allowed to visit him on only 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.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand’s already poor health has deteriorated as a result of his hunger strike. The prison medical officials and doctors have recommended he be transferred to a hospital for appropriate care; Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand refused to be transferred, as he was to be handcuffed, and was concerned that he would be forcibly fed, intravenously or otherwise, in hospital.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand’s wife, Parinaz Baghbani Hassani, said that her husband complained of dizziness and headaches during a prison visit on 16 July, and was having difficulty speaking. Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand has agreed to requests from family and friends to begin drinking water at some point during the week commencing 16 July, and has said that he would continue his “wet” hunger strike, refusing food until allowed to visit his son.

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 which would leave him free to be with his son;
- Calling on them to ensure that Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand receives all necessary medical attention, including treatment at a medical facility outside the prison, as recommended by the doctors of Evin Prison;

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 AUGUST 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 Tehran Judiciary

Mr Ali Reza Avaie
No. 152, corner of 17th, Before Shahid
Motahhary Ave, Sanaei Ave, Karmkhan
Zand Ave. Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir
(Subject line: FAO Mr. Ali Reza Avaie)
Fax: +9821 883 26700

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 Jomhour
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 first update of UA 204/12. Further information:
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/046/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In an open letter dated 27 May 2012, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand wrote “the Prosecutor and the security apparatuses continue to deny me [prison] leave because of their enmity, grudge and malice towards me as a human rights activist; this despite my having served half of my illegal and unjust prison sentence and my son’s incurable diseases and acute emergency situation . . . therefore, to protest the illegal and inhumane behaviour of these judicial and security officials, I once again have launched an indefinite hunger strike as of 9 PM, Saturday 26 May 2012”.

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 he was blindfolded and his hands and feet were bound. 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. According to his wife, Parinaz Baghbani Hassani, during a prison visit on or about 30 December 2011, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand said he had been feeling dizzy. She told Amnesty International that he had phoned her on 10 January to say that he had been taken to hospital for medical tests the previous day. These included a prostate examination, blood tests and cardiovascular tests. Based on the results of the medical examinations, doctors had recommended admitting Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand to the hospital and performing surgery on his prostate gland. Instead he was taken back to Evin Prison. It is not clear whether he received the medical care he needed.

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. However, 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 “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.

He was previously the subject of UA 171/07 (MDE 13/081/2007, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/046/2012/en>) and follow-ups.

Name: Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 204/12 Index: MDE 13/047/2012 Issue Date: 17 July 2012