

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION LEADERS ARBITRARILY HELD

Opposition leaders Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi, along with Mir Hossein Mousavi's wife Zahra Rahnavard, are still being held under house arrest without an arrest warrant, charge or trial. Mehdi Karroubi was moved to a small flat without his wife on around 31 July 2011. The three have limited access to family members and no legal representation.

In September 2011, **Mehdi Karroubi's** wife, Fatemeh Karroubi, wrote a letter that has been made public to the Head of the Judiciary detailing the illegality of the house arrest and expressing concern for her husband's health. She pointed out that during his house arrest, he had been deprived of access to books, newspapers, a telephone, regular family visits and exercise. She had also said earlier that Mehdi Karroubi, aged 74, had been moved to a small flat. Fatemeh Karroubi has also called for an independent physician to examine him.

Mir Hossein Mousavi's children have also said that their parents are completely "cut off" from the outside world and have no access to newspapers, radio or stationery for writing.

Mehdi Karroubi, Mir Hossein Mousavi and **Zahra Rahnavard** have not been seen in public since early February 2011 when Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi called for demonstrations in support of the people of Tunisia and Egypt to be held on 14 February. Their whereabouts were initially unknown, but it later became clear that they were being held under house arrest without any arrest warrant. Mehdi Karroubi's wife, Fatemeh Karroubi, was allowed to leave her home for medical treatment for a short period in April.. Amnesty International believes she has not been held under house arrest since Mehdi Karroubi's transfer to a small flat without her.

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

- Call on the Iranian authorities to release Mir Hossein Mousavi, Mehdi Karroubi and Zahra Rahnavard without delay as they are being arbitrarily deprived of their liberty;
- Call on the authorities to ensure in the meantime that they are granted immediate and regular access to their family, a lawyer of their choice and all necessary medical care;
- Urge the authorities to remove unlawful restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 NOVEMBER 2011 TO:

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
 Email: bia.judi@yahoo.com (In subject
 line: FAO Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani)
Salutation: Your Excellency

Speaker of Parliament
 His Excellency Ali Larijani
 Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami
 Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic
 Republic of Iran
 Fax: +98 21 3355 6408
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:
Secretary General, High Council for
Human Rights
 Mohammad Javad Larijani
 High Council for Human Rights
 [Care of] 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@humanrights-iran.ir
 (subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad
 Larijani)

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 49/11. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/023/2011/en>

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OPPOSITION LEADERS STILL ARBITRARILY HELD

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On or around 31 July 2011, Mehdi Karroubi was transferred to a small apartment controlled by the Ministry of Intelligence. In the letter published on Mehdi Karroubi's website *Sahamnews*, Fatemeh Karroubi states that her husband requested to be moved to reduce restrictions placed on other residents of the complex where he lived, but the alternative accommodation his family had found was rejected by the Intelligence Ministry. The family are trying to find alternative accommodation acceptable to the Ministry, which has imposed stringent conditions, including that the location will not be made public. Mehdi Karroubi's family, including his wife, son, daughter-in-law and grand-children, were allowed to visit him on the occasion of the Eid al-Fitr celebrations marking the end of the Islamic month of Ramadan which fell at the end of August.

Mir Hossein Mousavi and Zahra Rahnavard were reportedly allowed to visit their three daughters for the first time since their house arrest. The meeting took place in the house of one of the daughters.

Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi were both unsuccessful candidates in the June 2009 presidential and both protested at the announcement that incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had won the election. Until placed under house arrest, they continued to voice opposition to the government and to human rights violations by security forces. Zahra Rahnavard, a former Chancellor of Al-Zahra University in Tehran, and Fatemeh Karroubi, a former Deputy Minister of Social Affairs under former President Khatami, both campaigned on behalf of their husbands in 2009 and have spoken out against attacks on their families and others.

In the lead-up to the demonstrations called for by Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, authorities imposed severe restrictions on freedom of expression, including the right to receive and impart information, by blocking access to phone services, including SMS messages, foreign media and various internet and social media sites. The two leaders were also put under house arrest. On 10 February 2011, police officers surrounded Mehdi Karroubi's home and his sons said that they each tried to enter the house to see their father, but were stopped from doing so. One of his sons, Ali Karroubi, was arrested and released on bail in mid-March 2011. On 14 February, Mir Hossein Mousavi and his wife were stopped from leaving their home to join the demonstration in Tehran. Communication links to and from both homes were cut. The authorities arrested journalists and political activists ahead of the demonstration to prevent them from attending. See *Iran: Several Arrested Before Iran Protest* (Index: MDE 13/020/2011), 18 February 2011, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/020/2011/en>.

On 14 February, thousands took to the streets in several cities throughout Iran. The largely peaceful demonstrations were gradually forcibly dispersed and as many as 1500 arrests were reported, along with dozens injured and two demonstrators killed. On 15 February, over 220 parliamentarians signed a statement which was read out in Iran's parliament calling for Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi to be tried and for the "most severe penalty" to be imposed. At the same time, a group of parliamentarians shouted slogans such as "Death to Mousavi, Karroubi and [former President] Khatami" and "Mousavi and Karroubi should be executed". On 18 February, Ayatollah Jannati, the Friday Prayer Leader of Tehran called for the two men to be placed under house arrest, saying "The judiciary must cut off all contacts between the leaders of the sedition [Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi] and the people. Their houses' doors must be blocked, and their phones cut off. Their internet connections must also be cut off so that they will not be able to send or receive any messages. They must be jailed in their own homes." On 20 February 2011, hundreds, if not thousands, took to the streets in Tehran, Esfahan, Shiraz, Mashhad, Babol and other cities to commemorate the seventh day of mourning for the two demonstrators killed on 14 February 2011. Hamed Nour Mohammadi, a student, died after being thrown off a bridge in Shiraz. Others were arrested (see UA 31/11 and follow ups).

Name: Mir Hossein Mousavi, Mehdi Karroubi and Zahra Rahnavard

Gender m/f: Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi (both m)

Zahra Rahnavard (f)

Further information on UA: 49/11 Index: MDE 13/086/2011 Issue Date: 29 September 2011