

# URGENT ACTION

## IRANIAN ECO-ACTIVIST DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGE

**Environmental activist and interpreter Mahfarid Mansourian has been held in Evin Prison, in the Iranian capital Tehran, since 8 February. She is not known to have been charged and Amnesty International believes she is a prisoner of conscience.**

**Mahfarid Mansourian**, aged about 46, was arrested from her home in Tehran in the middle of the night between 7 and 8 February 2010 by plain-clothes officials who did not identify themselves. Mahfarid Mansourian's husband, Ghassem Maleki, has said the officials showed her a general arrest warrant which did not specify Mahfarid Mansourian's name, but which allowed them to arrest anyone "suspicious". Her whereabouts were unknown for two days, when she telephoned her family and told them she was held in Evin Prison in Tehran. She has not been allowed any family visits nor access to a lawyer.

Mahfarid Mansourian, who holds degrees in Civil Engineering and Environmental Design, is an environmental activist who has previously worked for the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, an independent governmental agency that co-ordinates official development assistance for the government of Japan. She has also worked as an interpreter for foreign journalists visiting Iran. She is among scores, if not hundreds, of journalists, students, members of political parties, human rights defenders and members of Iran's minority Baha'i community who have been arrested in recent weeks by the Iranian authorities. There was a particular crackdown in the run-up to the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Iran on 11 February when mass protests against the authorities were expected.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Mahfarid Mansourian, who Amnesty International believes is being held solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression and association, including with foreign journalists and organizations;
- Urging that, in the meantime, she be protected from torture and other ill-treatment and be granted immediate access to her family and a lawyer of her choice;
- Expressing concern at the ongoing repression of peaceful protests by the Iranian authorities, reminding them that, as a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Iran is obliged to uphold the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 MARCH 2010 TO:

Head of the Provincial Judiciary in Tehran  
 Ali Reza Avaei  
 Karimkhan Zand Avenue  
 Sana'i Avenue, Corner of Alley 17, No. 152  
 Tehran  
 Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email:** [avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir](mailto:avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir)  
**Salutation:** Dear Mr Avaei

Head of the Judiciary  
 Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani  
 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: Via website:**  
<http://www.dadiran.ir/tabid/75/Default.aspx>  
 (First starred box: your given name;  
 second starred box: your family name;  
 third: your email address)  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**And copies to:**  
Director, Human Rights Headquarters of Iran  
 His Excellency Mohammad Javad Larijani  
 Bureau of International Affairs, 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 5 537 8827 (please keep trying)**  
**Email:** [bia.judi@yahoo.com](mailto:bia.judi@yahoo.com)  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Demonstrations in Iran in June and July against the disputed presidential election result of June 2009 were violently repressed, by police and the paramilitary Basij militia, who used excessive force. Since then, demonstrations have continued, on days of national importance when public demonstrations are permitted, such as Qods Day (18 September), the anniversary of the seizure of the American Embassy in 1979 (4 November), National Student Day (7 December) and around the religious festival of Ashoura (27 December). Thousands have been arrested during these protests, although many have since been released.

Many of those arrested since the election have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated. At least three died as a result of torture in the Kahrizak detention centre near Tehran. On 19 December, a military court in Tehran announced that 12 people had been charged in connection with abuses, three of whom had been charged with murder.

Scores – possibly hundreds – of people have faced unfair trial, including some in mass show trials, with over 100 sentenced to prison terms, and up to 12 sentenced to death, although at least three have had their sentences commuted to a prison term. Two of these were executed on 28 January. According to Iranian media reports, Deputy Judiciary Head Ebrahim Raisi said on 1 February that, after the execution of two men last week, nine others would be executed “soon”, although on 3 February Tehran Prosecutor Abbas Ja’fari Dowlatabadi clarified that their sentences were still subject to appeal. Those sentenced have not been given a fair trial; they were denied access to a lawyer in the initial stages of their detention, and some or all appear to have been coerced into giving confessions (see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/shocking-execution-iran-protesters-condemned-20100128> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/nine-risk-execution-over-iran-protests-20100202>).

The security forces’ response to the protests on or following Ashoura in December was the most violent since July. The opposition Persian-language news website Jaras estimates that at least 1,300 were arrested across Iran, including 600 in Esfahan and 200 in Najafabad. The authorities have acknowledged over 1,000 arrests, although it is not clear whether this is just in Tehran, or across the country. The Iranian authorities have made statements suggesting that protestors who “riot” or commit violent acts such as arson will be charged with *moharebeh* (enmity against God), which can carry the death penalty. On 29 January, five people were reported to have been sentenced to death for *moharebeh* in connection with the demonstrations on Ashoura.

Since the Ashoura protests on 27 December, hundreds more journalists, human rights activists, and members of political parties linked to unsuccessful presidential election candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi and former President Khatami are reported to have been detained. They include Emadeddin Baghi, recipient of the 2009 Martin Ennals Award, a human rights prize. See UA 05/10 (Index: MDE 13/003/2010). In addition, over 20 Baha’is have been arrested since January, including relatives of seven leaders of the community currently on trial, on politically motivated charges, apparently because of their identity as Baha’is. See UA 128/08 (Index: MDE 13/068/2008) and follow-ups. The authorities have alleged that “monarchists”, member of the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran, members of a “communist grouplet” and members of the unrecognized Bah’ai religious minority were behind the December unrest. The Baha’i community strenuously denies any involvement in the unrest.

The mass protests expected on 11 February were largely repressed by the security forces, who prevented anti-government supporters from gathering, including Mir Hossein Mousavi, and beat and tear-gassed some protestors. Another unsuccessful presidential candidate, Mehdi Karroubi, was attacked by plain-clothes officials with pepper spray, injuring his eyes and face. One of his sons, Ali Karroubi, was briefly detained and harshly beaten in the Amir al-Mo’menin mosque in Tehran. Pictures of his bruised arms and back have been posted on Sahamnews, the official website of Mehdi Karroubi’s National Trust Party, along with an open letter to the Supreme Leader from his mother, asking for action to be taken against those responsible. She claimed he was not only beaten but threatened with rape. On 15 February the Tehran Prosecutor, Abbas Ja’fari Dowlatabadi, denied that Ali Karroubi had been arrested.

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