

URGENT ACTION

LAWYERS' WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN AFTER ARREST

Human rights lawyer Mohammad Ali Dadkhah was arrested on 8 July in the Iranian capital, Tehran, along with an unknown number of his colleagues. The reason for their arrest is not clear, but is likely to be related to their human rights activities and their peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression and association after the disputed presidential election. Amnesty International would consider them prisoners of conscience. They are at risk of torture.

Mohammad Ali Dadkhah and the other lawyers were arrested at his office. Their whereabouts remain unknown and they have in effect been subjected to enforced disappearance. Mohammad Ali Dadkhah is a founding member of the Iranian NGO, the Centre for Human Rights Defenders (CHRD).

The CHRD, founded by activists including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi in 2002, was forcibly closed in December 2008. The CHRD had been due to hold an event commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The CHRD, whose members continue to work under the name of the centre, has three stated roles: reporting violations of human rights in Iran; providing free legal representation to political prisoners; and supporting the families of political prisoners.

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

- calling on the Iranian authorities to release Mohammad Ali Dadkhah and his colleagues immediately and unconditionally as they would be prisoners of conscience if they have been arrested solely for their human rights activities and the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression and association;
- urging the authorities to allow them immediate access to their family, a lawyer of their choice and any medical treatment they may require, and ensure that they are protected from all forms of torture or other ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to allow peaceful demonstrations by those who wish to express their opinions on the elections.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 AUGUST 2009 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

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

Head of the Judiciary
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: shahroudi@dadgostary-tehran.ir

**(In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah
Shahroudi)**

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:
Iranian Bar Association
No. 3, Zagros St.,
Argentina Sq.,
Tehran,
Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: +98 21 8771340
or +98 21 888 6425/ 26
Email: tamas@iranbar.org
or mail@iranbar.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the days following the announcement on 13 June that President Ahmadinejad had won the previous day's presidential election, which hundreds of thousands of Iranians dispute, the Iranian authorities imposed draconian restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly. Security forces, including the paramilitary Basij, have been widely deployed in the streets; communications have been significantly disrupted. Iranian publications have been banned from publishing information about the nationwide unrest since the result was declared. Foreign journalists have been banned from the streets, their visas not renewed and some foreign reporters have been arrested or expelled from the country.

According to statements by officials recorded by Amnesty International, over 2,000 people have been arrested since 12 June by the police and Basij forces across the country during demonstrations or their aftermath. These include prominent political figures close to either presidential candidates Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, or former President Khatami, who supported Mir Hossein Mousavi's campaign. Some human rights defenders, as well as journalists have also been detained. On 16 June lawyer and human rights defender Abdolfattah Soltani, was also arrested and detained (see UA 160/09, MDE 13/059/2009, 19 June 2009: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/059/2009/en>). Journalist Issa Saharkhiz was arrested on 4 July and taken away to an undisclosed location (please see UA 181/09, MDE 13/067/2009, 6 July 2009: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/067/2009/en>)

On 24 June, 70 academics met Mir Hossein Mousavi, and were arrested as they left his office. All but four were later released. Those still detained include the head of Mir Hossein Mousavi's election campaign Dr Ghorban Behzadian, and Ardeshir Amir Arjomand, who is a professor of law at Shahid Beheshti University. Hundreds of others have been arrested during demonstrations against the outcome of the election which have been met with excessive use of force. Officials acknowledge at least 21 killed although the true number is likely to be higher.

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