

URGENT ACTION

JAILED IRAQI WOMAN ON HUNGER STRIKE IN IRAN

An Iraqi woman, Basima Al-Jibouri, imprisoned in Iran since 2011, is critically ill: she has been on hunger strike since 8 April. She has served four years of a five-year sentence for “espionage”, apparently imposed for associating with an Iranian diplomat in Iraq.

Basima Al-Jibouri, an Iraqi woman held in Gharchak Prison in the city of Varamin, Iran, started a hunger strike over 60 days ago protesting her lack of access to family visitation, urgent medical care and consular assistance and demanding that she be either released or allowed to serve the remainder of her sentence in Iraq. She was taken to the prison medical clinic on 8 June after she lost consciousness. She was put on intravenous fluids but denied medicine for her heart palpitations and low blood pressure. Amnesty International understands that she has blurred vision and is very weak and lost the ability to stand.

Basima Al-Jibouri had been arrested by intelligence officers in August 2011, when she travelled to Iran, apparently at the invitation of an Iranian diplomat, Mohammad Reza Ghorbani, whom she had befriended in Iraq several years earlier. She spent eight months in solitary confinement in Tehran’s Evin Prison, without access to a lawyer. The interrogators apparently questioned her motives for befriending Mohammad Reza Ghorbani and accused her of being a spy for the United States.

Basima Al-Jibouri was later sentenced to five years’ imprisonment for “espionage” by Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court. The trial, which lasted only two hours, was grossly unfair: it was conducted in Persian, a language she did not understand; she was provided with an translator who Basima Al-Jibouri said insulted her and did not relay her answers to the Court, and an incompetent court-appointed lawyer, who asked her to bribe the judge in return for her release, which she could not afford.

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

- Calling on the Iranian and Iraqi authorities to ensure that Basima Al-Jibouri has access to qualified health professionals acting in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy, and informed consent;
- Ensuring that she can have regular contact with her family, including visits;
- Expressing concern that Revolutionary Court hearings in Iran are seriously flawed.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 JULY 2015 TO:

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Hassan Rouhani

The Presidency

Pasteur Street, Pasteur Square

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Twitter: @HassanRouhani (English) and

@Rouhani_ir (Persian)

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani

c/o Public Relations Office

Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iraq

His Excellency Dr Ibrahim Al-Jaafari

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Baghdad

Iraq

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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

When transferred to the prison medical clinic on 8 June, the nurse apparently told Basima Al-Jibouri that she did not need to act like a victim and that she should have been hanged. The nurse left her unattended until the next morning when she was briefly seen by a doctor. She was then transferred back to Gharchak Prison, where female prisoners are held in conditions of severe overcrowding, extreme cold and hot temperatures, inedible food, insect-infested cells and insufficient sanitary and sleeping facilities. Amnesty International understands that she has stayed away from the clinic since then, to avoid insults.

Amnesty International understands that the Iranian authorities had briefly detained Mohammad Reza Ghorbani and questioned him about his relationship with Basima Al-Jibouri, before they arrested her. Mohammad Reza Ghorbani had later invited Basima Al-Jibouri to visit Iran, apparently on the pretext of helping her find a specialist doctor for her son. He greeted her at Tehran Imam Khomeini International Airport but then walked her through an exit to where four intelligence officers were waiting to arrest her. They pushed her into a car, blindfolded her and drove her to Tehran's Evin prison, where she was interrogated for weeks about her relationship with Mohammad Reza Ghorbani and faced accusations of being a spy for the United States government. The interrogators pressured her to "confess" and sneered at her that "you were pretty enough to work for the US". They also repeatedly asked her why she had studied political science.

During her trial, the interpreter wrote a statement and asked her to sign it, saying this would incriminate Mohammad Reza Ghorbani, not her, but she refused to sign it.

Basima Al-Jibouri has never been allowed a visit from her sons, who reside in Iraq. She was not even allowed to phone them until she had been in prison for more than two years. She was not allowed to seek consular assistance until she had been sentenced and imprisoned. She has since contacted the Iraqi embassy for help but was told they were powerless to intervene. The Director of Iraq's Human Rights Committee has told her sons in Iraq that they cannot help because she is a "political prisoner".

According to the Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq, transfer requests may be denied when they are deemed contrary to security, public order or the constitution or when the prisoner has been sentenced for a political or military offence.

Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a party, entitles everyone charged with a criminal offence to several minimum fair trial guarantees, including the right to competent and effective defence counsel at all stages of criminal proceedings, including the preliminary investigation, and the right to the assistance of a competent interpreter, free of charge, if the accused does not understand or speak the language used in court.

Under international human rights law, every person who has been the victim of human rights violations, including violations of fair trial rights, has an enforceable right to reparation, including compensation. In cases of unlawful detention, reparation includes release.

Name: Basima Al-Jibouri
Gender m/f: f