

URGENT ACTION

16-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR NARGES MOHAMMADI
Iranian human rights defender and prisoner of conscience Narges Mohammadi was sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment after her trial on 20 April. She suffers from serious illnesses and needs ongoing specialized medical care, which she cannot receive in prison. She continues to be denied the right to have access to her nine-year-old twins.

Prominent human rights defender **Narges Mohammadi** has received a 16-year prison sentence on several national security related offences in connection with her human rights work. Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran sentenced Narges Mohammadi to 10 years' imprisonment on the charge of "founding an illegal group" for her involvement with an anti-death penalty campaign. She also received a five-year sentence for "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security", and one year for "spreading propaganda against the system". The court used as "evidence" against her interviews she gave to international media, as well as her March 2014 meeting with the European Union's then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton. Her trial was held on 20 April and the verdict was communicated to her lawyer on 17 May. If her conviction and sentence are upheld, Narges Mohammadi will have to serve at least 10 further years in prison on the most serious charge of "founding an illegal group". This is under provisions in Iran's 2013 Penal Code, which stipulates that those convicted of multiple charges should only serve the lengthiest single sentence.

Narges Mohammadi also faces a charge of "insulting officers while being transferred to a hospital" in a separate case. This charge was brought against her after she filed a complaint with regards to the degrading and inhumane treatment she received by prison guards when she was transferred out of prison to hospital for examinations, including their refusal to allow her a confidential consultation with her doctors.

Narges Mohammadi is critically ill. She suffers from a pulmonary embolism (a blockage in the blood vessel that carries blood from the heart to the lungs) and a neurological disorder that has resulted in seizures and temporary partial paralysis. She requires ongoing specialized medical care, which she cannot receive in prison.

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

- Calling on the Iranian authorities to quash Narges Mohammadi's conviction and sentence and release her immediately and unconditionally, as she is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of her rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly;
- Urging them to ensure that Narges Mohammadi is immediately granted ongoing access to adequate specialized medical care outside prison and that she is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, which the denial of medical care can amount to;
- Urging them to allow her regular contact with a lawyer of her choosing and visits and phone calls from her family, including her children.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 JULY 2016 TO:

Supreme Leader

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

President

Hassan Rouhani

Please send your appeals to the care of diplomatic representatives accredited to your country, listed below. If there is no Iranian embassy in your country, please mail the letter to the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, 622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA.

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 fifth update of UA 105/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE13/3767/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Narges Mohammadi, a distinguished human rights defender, is already in jail serving a six-year prison sentence for “gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security” and “spreading propaganda against the system” through her human rights activism. She is a supporter of the anti-death penalty campaign Legam (Step by Step to Abolish the Death Penalty) and vice president of the Centre for Human Rights Defenders in Iran. She has earned various prizes in several countries for her human rights work and has faced years of harassment and intimidation from the Iranian authorities as a result. Narges Mohammadi began serving the six-year prison sentence from a previous conviction in April 2012, but was released three months later after being granted leave from prison to obtain medical treatment for her neurological disorder, which had been exacerbated by her imprisonment. She was re-arrested at her home on 5 May 2015 and subsequently taken to Tehran’s Evin Prison.

The authorities have denied Narges Mohammadi the right to have access to her children. Her nine-year-old twins had to move abroad to live with their father, as there was nobody to look after them in Iran. She has only been allowed to have one phone call with her children in the past year. In February 2016, she wrote an open letter to the Head of the Judiciary expressing concerns that the authorities were using her children in order to exert pressure on her. She said, “The issue is very simple; I am a mother and I have a right to hear my children’s voice even if [this] mother has been found guilty in your opinion and that of the institution under your supervision.”

In October 2015, she suffered several seizures which eventually prompted the authorities to allow her to be hospitalized. Her treatment was, however, disrupted as she was returned to prison against her doctor’s advice after 17 days. The authorities handcuffed her to the hospital bed for the first few days in hospital. They also had officers inside the room and at the door the entire time she was there, which is believed to have interfered with doctors undertaking examinations. From Evin Prison, Narges Mohammadi wrote a letter to the Prosecutor General of Tehran in October 2015, in which she explained how inhumanely she was treated by the prison guards when she was transferred to the hospital for examinations and how her request to have a confidential consultation with her doctor was refused by the prison director. She wrote about her experience during the hospitalization, after she had suffered several seizures: “After five days, I was finally hospitalized. Since being transferred from Evin Prison to the hospital, I was handcuffed, even when the doctor had to take my blood pressure. As we entered the room, they immediately bound me to the bed. As a result, I was not able to lie down or sit comfortably. My health got worse and worse. No one cared about protests and appeals. From 11 October until 18 [October], I was denied any conversations, even with my parents. I was forbidden from going out of my room. The door of the room was closed and so were the curtains.”

Failing to provide adequate medical care to prisoners is a violation of Iran’s international human rights obligations. The denial of medical treatment may amount to a violation of the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment under Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which Iran is also a state party, specifically recognizes the right of every person to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules) also state that prisons must provide adequate medical care to prisoners without discrimination (Rules 24-35). Rule 27(1) of the Mandela Rules provides that “prisoners who require specialized treatment or surgery shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals.” Under Rule 58 of the Nelson Mandela Rules, prisoners also have the right to communicate with and receive visits from family; the denial of such visits may amount to inhuman treatment.

Name: Narges Mohammadi

Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 105/15 Index: MDE 13/4171/2016 Issue Date: 2 June 2016