

**PUBLIC**

**AI Index: MDE 13/039/2009  
29 April 2009**

**UA 114/09      Prisoner of Conscience**

**IRAN            Maryam Malek, (f), aged 26**

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Maryam Malek was arrested on 25 April by security officials in the Iranian capital, Tehran. She has been charged with “propaganda against the system” in connection with her membership of the Campaign for Equality, that is also known as the One Million Signatures campaign. She is currently detained in Evin Prison in Tehran. The bail for her release has been set at 200 million rials (about US\$20,000) but she has to remain in detention as Maryam Malek and her family are unable to afford this amount. Amnesty International considers her to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression, association and assembly. She should be released immediately and without condition.

Maryam Malek is a student and journalist who reports on cases that are heard in the family courts. Her house was searched on 22 April 2009 by three security officials who confiscated books, papers, CDs, her computer and materials relating to the Campaign for Equality. On 23 April, she was issued with a summons to report to the Security Police station. Maryam Malek reported to Branch 14 of the Security Police on 25 April and was interrogated for several hours, and then arrested with a temporary arrest warrant. She was held overnight in the Vozara detention centre in Tehran. The following day she was interrogated again by the Security Police, before being transferred to Branch 2 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran, where she was charged under Articles 499 and 500 of the Penal Code. As the amount set for her bail could not be raised she was taken to Evin prison where she remains.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Campaign for Equality, also known as the One Million Signatures Campaign, launched in 2006, is a grassroots initiative composed of a network of people committed to ending discrimination against women in Iranian law. The Campaign gives basic legal training to volunteers, who travel around the country promoting the Campaign. They talk with women in their homes, as well as in public places, telling them about their rights and the need for legal reform. The volunteers are also aiming at collecting one million signatures of Iranian nationals for a petition demanding an end to legal discrimination against women in Iran. Dozens of the Campaign’s activists have been arrested or harassed for their activities for the Campaign for Equality, some while collecting signatures for the petition.

Most recently, Parastou Alahyari was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment on 25 April 2009 for “propaganda against the system” in connection with her peaceful activities for the Campaign for Equality. She is awaiting the outcome of her appeal to find out if she will have to serve her sentence.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian, Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Maryam Malek, as she is being held solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- urge the authorities to give Maryam Malek immediate access to her family and lawyer of her choice and to any medical treatment she may require;
- calling on the authorities to end the harassment of members of the Campaign for Equality;

- reminding the authorities that as a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Iran has undertaken to ensure that no one is discriminated against on account of their gender, and to uphold the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.

**APPEALS TO:**

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
c/o Director, Judiciary Public Relations and Information Office  
Ardeshir Sadiq  
Judiciary Public Relations and Information Office  
No. 57, Pasteur St., corner of Khosh Zaban Avenue  
Tehran, Iran

**Email:** info@dadiran.ir (In the subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
End of Shahid Keshvar Doust Street  
Islamic Republic Street  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** 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

**COPIES TO:**

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad  
The Presidency  
Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** + 98 21 6 649 5880

**Email:** via website: <http://www.president.ir/email/>

Director, Human Rights Headquarters of Iran

Mohammad Javad Larijani  
Office of the Head of the Judiciary  
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhuri  
Tehran 1316814737, Iran

**Fax:** +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

**Email:** info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: **FAO Javad Larijani**)

**Salutation:** Dear Mr Larijani

and to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 June.