

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/043/2009

18 May 2009

Further Information on UA 114/09, (MDE 13/039/2009, 29 April 2009) Prisoner of conscience

IRAN

Maryam Malek (f) aged 26

Maryam Malek was released on 29 April 2009 after five days in detention. Her bail had been set at 200 million rials (about US\$20,000), but her family could not afford this amount. She was released instead with a third party guaranteeing her bail.

Maryam Malek is likely to face trial in the future, as she has been charged under vaguely-worded provisions, including Article 499 (“propaganda against the system”) and Article 500 (“membership of an organization aimed at harming national security”) of the Penal Code. Such charges fall short of internationally recognisable criminal offences but were made in connection with her membership of and activities for the Campaign for Equality, which is also known as the One Million Signatures campaign.

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. The day before her release, she was transferred to Section 209 of Evin Prison, which is controlled by the Ministry of Intelligence, and interrogated again.

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 their work. 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 seek to collect 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:

- welcoming the release of Maryam Malek;

- urging the authorities to drop all charges against her, as if she were to be imprisoned, Amnesty International would consider her to be a prisoner of conscience solely detained for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression and association;
- reminding the authorities that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iran is a state party guarantees the rights to freedom of expression and association.

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/en/president/email/index.php>

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@dadiran (In the subject line write: **FAO Mohammad 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 29 June 2009.