

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/055/2007

16 May 2007

UA 115/07      Incommunicado detention/ fear of torture or ill-treatment/ prisoners of conscience

IRAN      Heis Amani (m)      ]  
Sedigh Karimi (m) ] trade unionists

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Amnesty International fears that trade unionists Heis Amani and Sedigh Karimi may be held incommunicado at an unknown location and are possibly at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Amnesty International believes that the two men are prisoners of conscience, held solely for the peaceful expression of their conscientiously held beliefs, and calls for their immediate release.

Heis Amani is the head of the Union of Unemployed and Dismissed Workers (*Ettahadiye Kargar-e Bikar va Ekhraji*), while Sedigh Karimi is a member of the union's governing body. The two men were among some 400 people who took part in a demonstration on 1 May in Sanandaj, the capital of Iran's Kordestan province, marking International Workers' Day. An unknown number of people were detained following the demonstration in Sanandaj. At least 12 people were held until 10 May and another was scheduled to be released on bail on 12 May. Heis Amani and Sedigh Karimi are now the only protesters still held by the authorities. Amnesty International has no news of their whereabouts, nor of any charges brought against them.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent months, members of Iran's organised labour movement have held numerous demonstrations aimed at drawing attention to their working and living conditions. On 1 May, demonstrations were broken up by security forces, including in Sanandaj and Tehran, where up to 600 workers reportedly chanted slogans against the government and parliament.

In March and April, hundreds of teachers, mostly members of local Teachers' Associations or the National Council of Teachers' Associations, were detained in connection with demonstrations which began in March 2007 by teachers demanding higher pay and better working conditions. All those arrested in connection with the demonstrations were later released. Late in April, many more teachers were arrested, including, on 7 April, the entire board of the Hamedan Teachers' Association, who were held in connection with events organized by the Association's leadership. They have since been freed.

The harassment and arrest of labour leaders has been accompanied by arrests of students and women's rights activists as part of an apparent crackdown on the internationally recognized rights to free expression and free association by the Iranian authorities. For more information, please see: *Iran: Arrests of peaceful demonstrators and activists continue*, at: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130452007?open&of=ENG-IRN> and *Iran: Beating and arrest of workers is no way to commemorate May Day*, at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130492007?open&of=ENG-IRN>.

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

- calling on the authorities immediately to reveal the whereabouts of trade unionists Heis Amani and Sedigh Karimi, who have reportedly been detained incommunicado in Sanandaj since 1 May;
- urging the authorities to release Heis Amani and Sedigh Karimi immediately and unconditionally, if they are held solely for their peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression or association in support of workers' rights;

- calling on the authorities to ensure that while Heis Amani and Sedigh Karimi are in custody they have unconditional access to their families and lawyers of their choice;
- asking for a detailed account of the reasons for their arrest, including any charges brought against them;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that Heis Amani and Sedigh Karimi are not tortured or ill-treated, and to allow them immediate access to any medical treatment they may require.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

##### Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** **info@leader.ir**

**istiftaa@wilayah.org**

**Fax:** **+98 251 7774 2228 (mark FAO Office of His Excellency Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei)**

**Salutation:** **Your Excellency**

##### Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

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

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

**Salutation:** **Your Excellency**

##### Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Salutation:** **Your Excellency**

#### **COPIES TO:**

##### Governor of Kurdistan

Esmail Najjar

**Email:** If sending emails in English, French or your own language, please use the feedback form on the English part of the website: <http://en.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59>  
If sending emails in Persian and Kurdish, please send emails via the feedback form on the Persian part of the website: [http://www.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?tabId=150&cv=4@0\\_1](http://www.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?tabId=150&cv=4@0_1)

**Salutation:** **Dear Governor**

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 27 June 2007.