

URGENT ACTION

SUPPORTERS OF AYATOLLAH BOROUJERDI ARRESTED

Seven followers of dissident cleric Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi, detained since 2006, have been arrested, six of them on 8 November 2010 and the seventh on 6 December. Their whereabouts are unknown. They are believed to be prisoners of conscience, held only because of their religious beliefs.

Five women, **Tayebeh Hosseini**, **Narges Ghaffarzadeh**, **Forough Hematyar**, **Maryam Azimi**, **Roya Eraqi** and one man, **Mohammad Reza Sadeghi**, all followers of Ayatollah Boroujerdi, were arrested at their homes, believed to be in Tehran, on 8 November after members of the security forces raided their houses, searching them and confiscating personal belongings and documents, including computers and laptops. Since then, their families have not been informed of their whereabouts.

The seventh person, a man, **Mohammad Mehmannaavaz** was arrested on 6 December, reportedly responding to a summons to appear before the Special Court for the Clergy, a court for members of the Shi'a Muslim clergy. His whereabouts are unknown.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, English, or your own language:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Tayebeh Hosseini, Narges Ghaffarzadeh, Forough Hematyar, Maryam Azimi, Roya Eraqi, Mohammad Reza Sadeghi and Mohammad Mehmannaavaz, unless they are promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- Expressing concern that they have in effect been subjected to enforced disappearance and urging the authorities to disclose their whereabouts immediately;
- Calling for them to be protected from torture or other ill-treatment while in detention and to be granted immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers of their choice and to adequate medical treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 JANUARY 2010 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

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

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of
Serah-e Jomhuri,
Tehran, 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: Via website: <http://www.bia-judiciary.ir/tabid/62/Default.aspx>;
2nd box (starred)=first name, 3rd
box (starred)=family name, 5th box
(starred)=email address, last
box= substance of message
To send press grey box on left bottom
side

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Secretary General, High Council for
Human Rights
Mohammad Javad Larijani
High Council for Human Rights
[Care of] Office of the Head of the
Judiciary
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave., south of
Serah-e Jomhuri
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@humanrights-iran.ir (In
subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad
Larijani)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Married mother of one, Tayebeh Hosseini, aged 39, is a teacher and has a degree (BA) in English. Narges Ghaffarzadeh, aged 54, is a Bachelor of Business Administration. Forough Hematyar, aged 30, is a married English language student Married mother of two, Maryam Azimi, aged 52, holds a BA in Persian Literature. Doctor Roya Eraqi, aged 42, is a university professor and holds a doctorate (PhD) in Physical Chemistry. Former government employee, Mohammad Reza Sadeghi, aged 38, holds a master's degree (MSc) in Computer Science. Mohammad Mehmannaavaz, aged 39, graduated from Tehran technical college, and holds a BA in Construction Engineering; the Human Rights Activists in Iran NGO has reported that he was previously arrested on 27 November 2007 and detained in Section 209 of Evin Prison where he was tortured. He was released later on bail. Amnesty International has no further information about this incident.

Cleric Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi advocates the removal of religion from the political basis of the Iranian state. He was arrested at his home in Tehran on 8 October 2006 along with more than 300 of his followers. The prosecution initially sought the death penalty for him and 17 of his followers on vaguely-worded charges including "enmity against God", but this was later dropped. He was convicted and sentenced to 11 years in prison, banned from practicing his clerical duties and his house and all his belongings were confiscated.

On 27 September 2010, Ayatollah Boroujerdi wrote an open letter to the UN Human Rights Council calling on the United Nations "to investigate the abuses taking place in Iran and the Middle East as a consequence of intervention of religion into politics thus paving the way for the passage of a resolution supporting the separation of state from religion." Please see: <http://www.bamazadi.org/2010/09/boroujerdis-open-letter-to-un-human.html#more>.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi has been repeatedly denied medical care. In mid-October 2010 he was subjected to beatings for protesting about his prison conditions, including a lack medical attention and the denial of family visits.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi is a prisoner of conscience, held solely because of his peaceful religious beliefs. He is being denied the medical care he needs for a number of health problems, including Parkinson's disease.

The Special Court for the Clergy operates outside the framework of the judiciary and was established in 1987 by Ayatollah Khomeini to try members of the Shi'a religious establishment in Iran. Its procedures fall far short of international standards for fair trial; among other things, defendants can only be represented by clergymen nominated by the court, who are not required to be legally qualified. In some cases defendants have been unable to find any nominated cleric willing to undertake their defence and have then been tried without any legal representation. The court can hand down sentences including flogging and the death penalty.

Amnesty International has been campaigning for the release of Ayatollah Boroujerdi and his followers since 2006. Please see: UA262/06, Index: MDE 13/114/2006, 29 September 2006 and follow-up Index: MDE 13/120/2006, 13 October 2006; Index: MDE 134/2006, 11 December 2006; Index: MDE 13/140/2007, 30 March 2007; Index: MDE 074/2007, 15 June 2007; Index: MDE 13/103/2007, 10 August 2007; Index: MDE 13/135/2008, 11 September 2008 and Index: MDE 13/045/2009, 14 May 2009.

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