

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 292/97 (MDE 13/38/97, 4 September 1997) and follow-up (MDE 13/40/97, 19 September 1997). See also UA 269/96 (MDE 13/36/96, 20 November 1996) and follow ups - Medical concern / Legal concern / Fear of death penalty

IRAN Faraj Sarkouhi, editor

Faraj Sarkouhi was released on 27 January 1998 and has recently been reunited with his wife and children who reside in Germany.

Faraj Sarkouhi was arrested in February 1997 and charged, on 23 June 1997, with, among other things, "spying for a foreign country and attempting to illegally leave the country". He was tried by the Revolutionary Court in Tehran and on 17 September sentenced to one year's imprisonment for "propaganda against the Islamic Republic or Iran". Amnesty International believed Faraj Sarkouhi to be a prisoner of conscience, however, detained solely as a result of his non-violent political activities.

Faraj Sarkouhi had his passport returned to him by the authorities in April 1998 after letters were sent, by more than 50 journalists and writers from Germany and Iran, to President Mohammad Khatami requesting that he be allowed to leave the country.

This update was delayed due to the difficulties being experienced by Faraj Sarkouhi in obtaining travel papers.

On his arrival in Germany earlier this month, Faraj Sarkouhi was invited by the International Writers' Parliament to spend a year in Frankfurt as part of the "Cities of Asylum" project initiated by them.

Thanks once again to all those who sent appeals on behalf of Faraj Sarkouhi.