

PUBLIC

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IRAN

Arbitrary arrest/Fear of torture/prisoners of conscience

Mohammad Ali Abtahi (m), 51, all political leaders  
Mohsen Aminzadeh (m)  
Said Hajjarian (m), 55  
Behzad Nabavi (m), 68  
Abdollah Ramazanzadeh (m)  
Mostafa Tajzadeh (m), 53  
Mohammad Tavassoli (m)  
Ebrahim Yazdi, 76

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Eight political leaders have been arrested in Tehran in connection with their perceived views on Iran's disputed presidential election, which was held on 12 June or their links with former president, Mohammad Khatami. On 17 June 2009, Ebrahim Yazdi was arrested and the other seven were arrested on 16 June. They are prisoners of conscience who should be released immediately and unconditionally. It is not known where they are held and Amnesty International fears for their safety.

Members of Mohammad Ali Abtahi's family told Amnesty International that he was arrested by three plain-clothed policemen who had come to his home on 16 June. Following a short conversation, he gathered a few personal possessions, told his family that he was being detained and was taken away. Mohammad Ali Abtahi, a cleric, was an advisor to former Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami, holding a Vice Presidential post in the President's second term. Mohsen Aminzadeh, who was Deputy Foreign Minister during the presidency of Mohammad Khatami, is a leading member of the Islamic Iran Participation Front (*Jebhe-ye Mosharekat-e Iran-e Eslami*).

Said Hajjarian is former Tehran city counsellor and advisor to former president Mohammad Khatami and investigative journalist. He was confined to a wheelchair following an attempted assassination in 2000 in which the perpetrators argued that he was a legitimate target, or *mahdour al-dam*, a provision of Iranian law referring to those 'whose blood may be legitimately spilled', for having revealed the state's role in a series of murders, mainly in the 1990s. His neurologist has stated that he is in need of constant nursing care and physical therapy; detention could put his life in danger.

Behzad Nabavi, a founding member of the *Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution Organization (Sazman-e Mojahedin-e Enghlab-e Eslami)*, a political body aligned with former President Mohammad Khatami, was a member of parliament between 2000-2004. In the 1980s he was a minister in governments headed by then Prime Minister Mir Hossein Mousavi. Dr Abdollah Ramazanzadeh was government spokesperson while Mostafa Tajzadeh was Deputy Minister of Interior in former President Mohammad Khatami's administration, 2001 to 2004. Abdollah Ramazanzadeh is the deputy leader of the Islamic Iran Participation Front.

Mohammad Tavassoli, is a senior member of the Iran Freedom Movement (*Nehzat-e Azadi*). The party's Secretary General, Ebrahim Yazdi, was a member of the 1979 government and member of parliament following the revolution, was arrested at the Pars Hospital, central Tehran on 17 June, where he was under observation. The previous day his house had been searched and personal belongings such as notebooks and his computer were confiscated. His current whereabouts are unknown. He is said to have criticised the conduct of the 12 June election. He was returned to Pars Hospital on 18 June, possibly as a result of the deterioration in his health, but he appears to remain in custody.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On 12 June, the Ministry of the Interior announced that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had won by what many consider to be an unexpectedly wide margin. The Guardian Council, a higher legislative and

administrative body announced that the results were subject to their ratification and that a limited recount of ballots would be initiated. The other three candidates are said to have submitted formal complaints to the Council of Guardians, which oversees elections and a ruling on their complaints is expected within around a week days.

In the days following the election, thousands of people in favour of the incumbent took part in a rally while many thousands have taken part in marches and demonstrations across Iran that have condemned both the process and outcome of the election. Most of the demonstrations have been non-violent but in some cases violence erupted, including stone throwing and acts of arson. The police and security forces have used excessive force, including beating and clubbing with truncheons, to control some of the demonstrations. While up to seven deaths have been confirmed by Iran's state radio, Amnesty International has recorded up to 15 killings, including of five students, whose death remains unconfirmed.

All of those arrested, who are amongst up to 2000 other people reportedly detained across the country, represent political groups that were widely seen as favouring candidates opposed to the incumbent, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

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

- calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release the political leaders and activists named above and all others arrested solely on account of their peaceful views, including about the outcome of the elections, as they are prisoners of conscience;
- urging that they be allowed immediate access to their family members, lawyers of their choice and to any medical treatment they may require, and that they be protected from all forms of torture or ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to allow peaceful demonstrations to take place of those who wish to express their opinions on the elections.

**APPEALS 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:** [info\\_leader@leader.ir](mailto:info_leader@leader.ir)

**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 Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Howzeh Riyasat-e Goveh Qazaiyeh (Office of the Head of the Judiciary)

Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhuri, Tehran 1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [shahroudi@dadgostary-tehran.ir](mailto:shahroudi@dadgostary-tehran.ir) (In the subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Minister of the Interior

Sadegh Mahsouli

Ministry of the Interior

Dr Fatemi Avenue

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** +98 21 8 896 203 +98 21 8 899 547 +98 21 6 650 203

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 30 July.