

URGENT ACTION

FEMALE FRENCH STUDENT HELD IN IRAN

On 1 July, 24-year-old French national Clotilde Reiss was detained at Tehran airport in Iran, on her way home to France. She is accused of espionage in connection with photographs she took during a demonstration in June, which she emailed to a friend. Clotilde Reiss is believed to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising her right to receive and impart information and ideas.

Clotilde Reiss, a graduate politics student from the city of Lille in France, travelled to Iran after receiving a scholarship for her studies on Iran. She was about to return home via Lebanon, after five months working as an assistant teacher in Esfahan University in central Iran. Clotilde Reiss is held in Evin Prison in Tehran. She was allowed to phone a French diplomat and said that she was being interrogated daily, though she was not being ill-treated. Clotilde Reiss does not yet have a lawyer.

Last month, she took photographs of a demonstration in which she participated, against the announcement of the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, which many Iranians have disputed. She emailed the photographs to a friend in Tehran.

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

- calling on the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Clotilde Reiss, as she is believed to be a prisoner of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising her right to receive and impart information and ideas;
- urging the Iranian authorities to allow Clotilde Reiss immediate access to consular assistance, a lawyer of her choice and to any medical treatment she may require, and that she be protected from all forms of torture or ill-treatment;
- urging the authorities to stop unlawfully restricting exercise of the rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression, including the right to receive and impart information and ideas.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 AUGUST 2009 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

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 Qoveh 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
(In the subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Intelligence

His Excellency Gholam Hossein Mohseni
Ejeie
Ministry of Information
Second Negarestan Street
Pasdaran Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

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

In the days following the announcement on 13 June 2009 that President Ahmadinejad had won the previous day's presidential election, which hundreds of thousands of Iranians dispute, the Iranian authorities imposed draconian restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly. Security forces, including the paramilitary Basij, have been widely deployed in the streets; communications have been significantly disrupted. Iranian publications have been banned from publishing information about the nationwide unrest since the result was declared. Foreign journalists have been banned from the streets, their visas not renewed and some foreign reporters have been arrested or expelled from the country.

According to statements by officials recorded by Amnesty International, over 2,000 people have been arrested since 12 June by the police and Basij forces across the country during demonstrations or their aftermath. These include prominent political figures close to either presidential candidates Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, or former President Khatami, who supported Mir Hossein Mousavi's campaign. Some human rights defenders, as well as journalists have also been detained. On 16 June lawyer and human rights defender Abdolfattah Soltani, was also arrested and detained (see UA 160/09, MDE 13/059/2009, 19 June 2009: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/059/2009/en>). Journalist Issa Saharkhiz was arrested on 4 July and taken away to an undisclosed location (please see UA 181/09, MDE 13/067/2009, 6 July 2009: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/067/2009/en>)

On 24 June, 70 academics met Mir Hossein Mousavi, and were arrested as they left his office. All but four were later released. Those still detained include the head of Mir Hossein Mousavi's election campaign Dr Ghorban Behzadian, and Ardeshir Amir Arjomand, who is a professor of law at Shahid Beheshti University. Hundreds of others have been arrested during demonstrations against the outcome of the election which have been met with excessive use of force. Officials acknowledge at least 21 killed although the true number is likely to be higher.

Following the 2005 presidential election, Iranian intelligence agencies have increased pressure on journalists, academics, human rights defenders and others perceived as having links with foreign countries or having been involved in initiatives to build Iran's civil society. Those with links to the USA have been particularly targeted as the Iranian authorities have frequently accused the US of attempting to foment a "soft overthrow" of the Iranian government. On 19 January 2009, an Intelligence Ministry official, commenting on the case of two detained doctors (see UA 216/08, MDE 13/108/2008, 6 August 2008, and follow ups: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/108/2008/en>), said that Iran had discovered and dismantled a "soft overthrow" project against the government. And on 31 January 2009, Roxana Saberi, a journalist was arrested and held in Evin Prison. She was released on 11 May (see UA 77/09, MDE 13/022/2009, 16 March 2009 and follow ups: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/022/2009/en>).

Iran is a state party to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and as such must uphold Article 19 which guarantees the right to freedom of expression and includes the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print.

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