

URGENT ACTION

JASON REZAIAN RELEASED

Iranian-American journalist Jason Rezaian was released from Tehran's Evin Prison on 16 January, after being detained for 18 months on national security-related charges. He was a prisoner of conscience.

Jason Rezaian, the Tehran correspondent for the US newspaper Washington Post, was released from Tehran's Evin Prison on 16 January, as part of a prisoner exchange between Iran and the USA.

Jason Rezaian's trial on charges including espionage began on 26 May 2015 before Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran. The trial ended on 10 August after four sessions. On 31 August, Jason Rezaian's lawyer announced that the verdict had been issued but had not yet been officially communicated to them. In October, Judiciary spokesperson Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Eje'l confirmed in a press conference that the verdict had been issued but said that he was not aware of its details and whether it had been officially communicated to Jason Rezaian and his lawyer.

Jason Rezaian had been in Evin prison since 22 July 2014, when he was arrested. He was held in solitary confinement for more than six months with little access to his family and no access to a lawyer. He was later transferred to a cell with another detainee.

Jason Rezaian's trial, which was held behind closed doors, was seriously flawed. According to his lawyer in a media interview, no evidence had been presented to the court to substantiate any of the charges. She also said that during Jason Rezaian's final court hearing, she was not given any time to present her defence after the prosecution's statement, and had to submit a written response instead. Jason Rezaian was not allowed access to a lawyer during the first nine months after his arrest even though he was repeatedly interrogated during this period.

Journalists in Iran are harassed, intimidated, arrested and imprisoned for their legitimate journalistic activities. Other media workers, such as film producers, have also been tried on vaguely worded national security charges or been banned from carrying out their work. Iran came 173rd out of 180 countries in the 2015 World Press Freedom Index produced by the NGO Reporters Without Borders. A number of journalists are now in prison in Iran.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 307/14. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1522/2015/en/>
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE13/0065/2015/en/>

Name: Jason Rezaian

Gender m/f: m

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