

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 13/11/91
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To: Medical professionals
From: Medical Office / Research Department - Middle East
Date: 22 September 1991

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

@Ali Ardalan

**Further information on a prisoner of conscience
arrested in June 1990 in Iran**

[See MDE 13/24/90 (1 November 1990) and
MDE 13/04/91 (25 January 1991)]

Keywords

Theme: POC/ill-health

Summary

Ali Ardalan, aged 75, is one of 20 people arrested in June 1990 for signing an open letter to President Rafsanjani critical of government policies. Ali Ardalan is one of nine who remain imprisoned and is in very poor health, suffering from heart disease, kidney failure and general weakness. He is serving a three year sentence and was sentenced also to 20 lashes. He and the other eight are prisoners of conscience.

Recommended Actions

Letters from medical professionals, preferably written in English or French, otherwise your own language, should be sent to the addresses below:

- expressing deep concern about the state of health of Ali Ardalan who is in his mid-70s
- urging that in view of the fact that he is a prisoner of conscience he be released immediately and unconditionally
- asking that as a matter of urgency, he be provided with whatever medical treatment he requires

Addresses

H.E. Hojatoleslam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani
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MEDICAL CONCERN**Further information on Ali Ardalan, prisoner of conscience
IRAN**See MDE 13/24/90 (1 November 1990) and
MDE 13/04/91 (25 January 1991)

Ali Ardalan was one of more than 20 people arrested in June 1990 in Iran for signing an open letter to the head of state, President Rafsanjani, criticising Iranian government policies. Many were subsequently released but Ali Ardalan and eight others were brought to trial recently. Ali Ardalan has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment (dating from the time of sentencing rather than arrest) and 20 lashes, though it is not known if the latter punishment has been carried out. He is aged 75 and in serious ill-health.

Ali Ardalan is currently believed to be held in the Joint Committee building in the custody of the Ministry of Intelligence in Tughkhaneh Square, central Tehran, in isolation and in poor conditions. He is known to have been receiving treatment for ischaemic heart disease for more than 20 years. He is now reported to be suffering from fainting spells, continuing heart disease and hypotension and it has been recommended that he undergo surgery for installation of a pacemaker. He is also reported to be suffering from failure of one of his kidneys.

Background

Several of those arrested with Ali Ardalan were members of ADFSI, the Association for the Defence of Freedom and Sovereignty of the Iranian Nation. It was led by Mehdi Bazargan, the first Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ADFSI had applied for registration under the Political Parties Act, but had received no reply. The first arrests took place in mid-June 1990 and two days later an order for the dissolution of ADFSI was issued.

Ali Ardalan had been head of ADFSI's Executive Committee. He is a former government minister, having been appointed Finance Minister in 1979 under Mehdi Bazargan's government. He has been imprisoned on two previous occasions, on the first occasion between 1981 and 1985 and again in 1988 when he was arrested in connection with an open letter sent by Mehdi Bazargan to Ayatollah Khomeini calling for an end to the war with Iraq.

There is now considerable concern for Ali Ardalan given his age and the state of his health.

Earlier in his detention he is said to have been without medication, the authorities having refused to accept medication brought to the prison for him. Amnesty International is seeking urgent assurances from the Iranian authorities that he will receive all the treatment indicated without delay.

He and the others recently sentenced are all adopted as prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International and the organization continues to seek their release.