

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/166/2008

12 November 2008

Further Information on UA 169/08 (MDE 13/084/2008, 17 June 2008) and follow-up (MDE 13/119/2008, 19 August 2008 and MDE 13/128/2008, 29 August 2008) - Arbitrary arrest/fear of torture or other ill-treatment/prisoner of conscience

IRAN Mahboubeh Karami, (f) aged 40, journalist and women's rights defender

Mahboubeh Karami was acquitted by Branch 15 of the revolutionary Court in Tehran on 11 November. The court found that there was insufficient evidence against her in relation to the charges of “acting against state security” and “disturbing public order”.

The journalist and women's rights defender was arrested on 13 June 2008 by plain clothed security forces while travelling on a bus which went past Mellat Park, Tehran shortly after a demonstration had taken place. Following her arrest, Mahboubeh Karami was taken to Evin Prison, Tehran where she was held until her release on bail on 25 August 2008. Whilst in detention, she was regularly interrogated about her activities with the Campaign for Equality, a network of activists that advocates for an end to laws and policies which discriminate against women in Iran.

Mahboubeh Karami was summoned to court for a trial session on 1 November, after which she told the Campaign for Equality: “In this session, the court gave me the opportunity to present my final defence and I confirmed the same details which I had stated on several occasions during my interrogation. That day, personal reasons took me near to Mellat Park at the same time that a demonstration was taking place. Plain clothes forces boarded the bus in order to arrest someone and suddenly they hit a young man. My protest to this treatment was the cause of my own arrest.”

Following her release on bail, Mahboubeh Karami thanked Amnesty International for its support.

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