

**Public**

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To: Health professionals  
From: Medical office / Middle East Program  
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## **MEDICAL ACTION**

**Abdollah Nouri, prisoner of conscience  
Iran**

**Key words** prisoner of conscience / denial of medical care

### **Amnesty International's concerns**

Former Minister of the Interior, Hojjatoleslam Abdollah Nouri, aged 53, is in his third year of imprisonment in Evin Prison in Tehran. He is serving a five year prison sentence following his conviction after an unfair trial in November 1999. He was charged in relation to articles published in his newspaper *Khordad*. During temporary home leave from prison in April 2002, he received injuries to his shoulder in a traffic accident. According to press reports on 8 May, he was allowed to serve the following three months of his sentence at home. However, he was taken back to prison on or around 14 May; his treatment is continuing in the prison. Amnesty International regards Abdollah Nouri as a prisoner of conscience and is urging the Iranian authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally, and to ensure that he receives all necessary medical care in a prompt and effective manner.

### **Background information**

Abdollah Nouri's lawyer, Mohsen Rahami, told the Iranian Students News Agency on 2 June 2002 that Abdollah Nouri's mental condition was good, but that his physical condition was "not very good". He added that an examining doctor had recommended that he should rest at home during the course of his medical treatment, scheduled to finish on 7 July 2002, but that he had been returned to prison where he was now receiving the treatment. Abdollah Nouri's brother, parliamentarian Ali Reza Nouri, reportedly stated that his brother "has still not recovered and there is a danger of further complications if he is not properly treated."

Under Article 38 of the Islamic Penal Code, all those sentenced to prison for the first time can be conditionally released according to the criteria set out in the article. This article is not being interpreted in Abdollah Nouri's favour for what appear to be politically motivated reasons.

Abdollah Nouri, Minister of the Interior until 1998, and publisher of the now-banned daily newspaper *Khordad*, was tried by the Special Court for the Clergy in November 1999 on 20 charges, including insulting government officials. In his defence he reportedly upheld the constitutional rights of a variety of groups and theologians to present their views in his newspaper; he also claimed that the Special Court for the Clergy was "unlawful and incompetent" to try his case. The judge brought the proceedings to an end on 11 November 1999 when he prevented Abdollah Nouri from completing his defence and gave him 10 days to submit a written text of the defence. However, on 17 November the jury -- which had been selected by the judge, Mohammad Salimi -- found Abdollah Nouri guilty of 15 of the 20 charges against him. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, fined 15 million rials (about 8,000 euros), and disqualified from standing in the parliamentary elections in February 2000.

Abdollah Nouri did not appeal against the sentence, stating that he did not recognize the jurisdiction of the Special Court for the Clergy nor its verdict. He was taken to Evin prison following the trial; his newspaper, *Khordad*, remains banned for an indefinite period of time.

### **Recommended actions & addresses**

Please write letters in English, French or your own language to the authorities below, using professionally-headed paper if you use this in your profession:

- introducing yourself as a health professional concerned with human rights;
- stating that you are writing about the situation of Abdollah Nouri in Evin prison;
- noting that he was convicted for acts which are not regarded as crimes under international standards and saying that you regard him as a prisoner of conscience;
- seeking information on Abdollah Nouri's health: in particular, the diagnosis of his problems and the medical care he is receiving;
- urging that he be given whatever medical care he needs;
- urging the authorities to release Abdollah Nouri unconditionally.

### **Addresses**

*Leader of the Islamic Republic*  
Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Presidency  
Palestine Avenue  
Azerbaijan Intersection  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Fax: + 98 21 649 5880 (ask for fax to be forwarded to Ayatollah Khamenei)  
Salutation: Your Excellency

*Head of the Judiciary*

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi

Ministry of Justice

Park-e Shahr

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax 1: + 98 21 537 8827 (number may be unreliable. A recorded message, in English, will indicate when to send fax - please send before it gives you the tone to leave a voice message),

Fax 2: + 98 21 879 6671 (number may be unreliable; please mark "Care of Dr Mohammad Javad Shariatbagheri, Director of International Affairs, Judiciary")

Fax 3: + 98 21 311 6567 (ask fax to be forwarded to Ayatollah Shahrudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

**Copies**

Please send copies of your letters to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country and to:

Ms Peymaneh Haste'i

Head, Human Rights Office

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 390 1999

Mr Mohammad Hassan Zia'i-Far

Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Commission

PO Box 13165-137, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 204 0541

E-mail: [ihrc@Majlis.ir](mailto:ihrc@Majlis.ir)

If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of the dispatch of your letter, please send a follow up letter seeking a response, referring to your previous letter(s). Please check with the medical team if you are sending appeals after 31 August 2002, and send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat (att: medical team).

**Monitoring of action**

If you have access to e-mail you can help our attempt to monitor letter-writing actions. If you write one, two, three or more letters, please send us an e-mail and let us know. Please write in the subject line of your e-mail the index number of the action and the number of letters you write: e.g. MDE 13/010/2002 - 3 (if you write 3 letters)

Please send your message to [medical@amnesty.org](mailto:medical@amnesty.org) Thank you.