

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST ON HUNGER STRIKE IN IRAN

Human rights activist Latif Hasani, a member of Iran's Azerbaijani minority who is serving a nine-year prison sentence, has been on hunger strike since 18 May in protest at the treatment of political prisoners in Iran. He is a prisoner of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally.

On 18 May 2014, **Latif Hasani**, started a "wet" hunger strike (taking water but not food) in protest at the treatment of political prisoners in Iran and the denial of his request to be transferred from Tabriz Central Prison, northwest Iran, to a prison closer to his family home in Karaj, northwest of Tehran. On 28 June, Latif Hasani was transferred to Tehran's Evin Prison and shortly after to Raja'i Shahr Prison in Karaj, where he is currently held in a section with violent offenders. He has said he will continue his hunger strike until he is transferred to the political prisoners section of Raja'i Shahr Prison. His health has weakened as a result of his hunger strike, possibly exacerbating his pre-existing health conditions, including an irregular heartbeat for which he takes medication, severe low blood pressure and stomach pains.

Latif Hasani as well as four other men were arrested between January and March 2013. **Mahmoud Fazli, Behboud Gholizadeh, Shahram Radmehr, Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou** and Latif Hasani, all Azerbaijani and members of Yeni Gamoh's Central Council, an Iran-based Azerbaijani (Turkic) cultural and political rights advocacy organization, were sentenced to nine-year prison terms in April 2013. After their arrest, the five men were detained incommunicado, then moved to Tabriz Central Prison. They were not permitted access to lawyers until one week before their trial. A family member of one of the five said that they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated while detained by the Ministry of Intelligence.

Please write immediately in Persian, Spanish, English, or your own language:

- Urging the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Latif Hasani as he is a prisoner of conscience held for his peaceful advocacy for the rights of Iran's Azerbaijani minority;
- Calling on them to release Mahmoud Fazli, Behboud Gholizadeh, Shahram Radmehr and Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou if they are being solely held for their peaceful advocacy of Azerbaijani minority rights, and ensure that they are all granted any medical attention they may require;
- Reminding them that the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners require that the different categories of prisoners be kept in separate institutions or parts of institutions.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 AUGUST 2014 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
Twitter: @khamenei_ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
c/o Public Relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street Intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@dadiran.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Hassan Rouhani
The Presidency
Pasteur Street, Pasteur Square
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: media@rouhani.ir
Twitter: @HassanRouhani (English) and
@Rouhani_Ir (Persian)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Latif Hasani, Mahmoud Fazli, Behboud Gholizadeh, Shahram Radmehr and Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou were sentenced by Branch Three of the Revolutionary Court of Tabriz on 29 April 2013 to eight years imprisonment for “forming an illegal group [Yeni Gamoh] with the intent to harm national security” and one-year imprisonment for “spreading propaganda against the system”, bringing their total sentences to nine years each.

Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou was also previously on hunger strike from 15 April to 21 May 2014 in protest at the treatment of political prisoners, including the refusal to grant prison leave and the harassment of political prisoners’ families. Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou ended his hunger strike after the prison authorities agreed to transfer him from Tabriz Central Prison to a prison closer to his home in Sofian, north of Tabriz, northwest Iran. Shahram Radmehr is suffering from stomach pains, kidney stones and knee pain, which has made it difficult for him to sit or walk.

All five men went on hunger strike on 12 July 2013 in protest at their nine-year prison sentences, which the Appeal Court had confirmed the previous month, on 13 June 2013. The prison authorities transferred all five to Raja’i Shahr Prison on 25 July 2013, possibly in retribution for their hunger strikes. Shortly after, the prison authorities transferred Shahram Radmehr and Mahmoud Fazli to Raja’i Shahr Prison’s clinic on 28 July 2013 after their health deteriorated as a result of their hunger strike. Latif Hasani, Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou and Shahram Radmehr were transferred back to Tabriz Central Prison after three months in or around October 2013.

Latif Hasani, Shahram Radmehr and Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou were previously arrested in May 2010 and taken to the Tabriz Central Prison. Latif Hasani and Shahram Radmehr spent seven months in solitary confinement where they say they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Shahram Radmehr, during one of what is understood to have been many interrogations by the Ministry of Intelligence, lost consciousness and spent at least three days in a hospital outside of the prison administered by the Revolutionary Guards.

Iranian Azerbaijanis, the largest minority group in Iran, speak a Turkic language and are mainly Shi’a Muslims. They live mainly in the north and north-west of the country and in Tehran. Although generally well-integrated into Iranian society, in recent years members of their community have increasingly called for greater cultural and linguistic rights, including the right to education in Azerbaijani Turkic, which is not recognized as an official language in Iran. Those who seek to promote Azerbaijani cultural identity and linguistic rights are viewed with suspicion by the Iranian authorities.

Name: Latif Hasani, Mahmoud Fazli, Ayat Mehr-Ali Beyglou, Shahram Radmehr and Behboud Gholizadeh
Gender m/f: All male

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