

THE OBSERVATORY

for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

L'OBSERVATOIRE

pour la Protection des défenseurs des droits
de l'Homme

EL OBSERVATORIO

para la Protección
de los Defensores de Derechos Humanos

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

New information

IRN 006 / 0807 / OBS 088.1

Sentencing / Arbitrary detention /
Risks of ill-treatment

Iran

October 15, 2007

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), has received new information and requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in **the Islamic Republic of Iran**.

New information:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources of the sentencing to one year in prison and subsequent detention of Mr. **Emadeddin Baghi**, a journalist involved in the defence of human rights.

According to the information received, on October 14, 2007, Mr. Baghi was condemned by a Security Court in Tehran to one year in prison. He was accused of disclosing through his association, the Society for Defending Prisoners' Rights, secret information obtained from prisoners detained in security prisons, for which he was recently heard three times by the judge.

According to the information received, a bail was firstly set for his release but the judge ordered that Mr. Baghi be conducted to Evin prison, as he had a one-year sentence to serve from a previous conviction in 2003¹.

The Observatory expresses its deepest concern over the constant repression of human rights defenders in Iran, and considers Mr. Baghi's detention as arbitrary as it merely aims at sanctioning his activities in favour of human rights in Iran. The Observatory further fears that he might be subjected to ill-treatment while in detention.

The Observatory further wishes to recall that Iran had committed to "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights" by presenting its candidacy to the Human Rights Council 2006 election and insisted in this regard on the fact that the country had "continuously put great efforts into safeguarding the status and inherent dignity of the human person as well as the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms"². In order to ensure the continuation of these efforts, the Observatory strongly urges the Islamic Republic of Iran to conform with international human rights standards.

Background information:

The Observatory recalls that Mr. Baghi has been subjected to repeated acts of harassment due to his human rights activities over the past years. In particular, Mr. Baghi was detained from 2000 to 2003 for "attacking national

¹ In December 2003, Mr. Baghi had been condemned to a one-year suspended prison sentence for "subversive activities against the Islamic Republic of Iran", following the publication of articles against the death penalty.

² See <http://www.un.org/ga/60/elect/hrc/iran.pdf>.

security” in relation to articles he had written on human rights and against the death penalty. Moreover, his passport was confiscated on October 4, 2004, on the eve of his travel to Montreal, where he had planned to participate in the 2nd World Congress Against Death Penalty which was held from October 6 to 9, 2004. He had been banned from leaving the country since then and was accordingly prevented from going to France in December 2005 in order to receive the Human Rights Prize which had been awarded to him by the French National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (*Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’Homme - CNCDH*)³.

On July 31, 2007, Mr. Baghi was condemned by the Tehran Revolutionary Court for articles he had written in the *Jomhouriat* newspaper, of which he had been the editor-in-chief until it was closed down by the authorities in September 2004. The articles called for the defence of persons who were sentenced to death in the southern Khozestan region. He was condemned for “activities against national security” and “publicity in favour of the regime’s opponents”.

On the same day, his wife and his daughter were given three-year suspended prison sentences and five years of probation for “meeting and colluding with the aim of disrupting national security”, after taking part in a series of human rights workshops in Dubai in 2004.

Mr. Baghi, his wife and his daughter have appealed their sentence.

Actions requested:

Please write to the authorities in Iran urging them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Emadeddin Baghi;
- ii. Ensure that Mr. Emadeddin Baghi be released immediately and unconditionally as his detention is arbitrary;
- iii. Put an end to any kind of harassment, including at the judicial level, against Mr. Baghi as well as against all human rights defenders in general;
- iv. Conform with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, especially its Article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels” and Article 12.2, which provides that “the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration”;
- v. More generally, ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international and regional human rights instruments ratified by Iran.

Addresses:

- Leader of the Islamic Republic, His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader, Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran, Faxes: + 98.21.649.5880 / 21.774.2228, Email: info@leader.ir / istiftaa@wilayah.org / webmaster@wilayah.org;
- President, His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: + 98.21.649.5880, E-mail: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir;
- Head of the Judiciary, His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: +98.21.879.6671 / +98 21 3 311 6567, Email: Irjpr@iranjudiciary.com;

³ See 2004 and 2005 Annual Reports of the Observatory.

- Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Manuchehr Motaki, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: + 98.21.390.1999, Email: matbuat@mfa.gov;
- Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland, Fax: +41 22 7330203, Email: mission.iran@ties.itu.int;
- Ambassador Mr. Ahani, Embassy of Iran in Brussels, avenue Franklin Roosevelt, 15 A. 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium, Fax: + 32 2 762 39 15. Email: iran-embassy@yahoo.com.

Please also write to the diplomatic mission or embassy of Iran in your respective country.

Paris - Geneva, October 15, 2007

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need. The Observatory was the winner of the 1998 Human Rights Prize of the French Republic.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

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The logo for FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) consists of the lowercase letters 'fidh' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are closely spaced, with the 'i' and 'd' having a unique, slightly irregular shape.

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