

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

IRN 009 / 1007 / OBS 129

Search / Arrest /
Incommunicado detention

Iran

October 12, 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), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in **Iran**:

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources about the arrest and subsequent incommunicado detention of Ms. **Ronak Safazadeh**, a women's rights activist and a member of the "One Million Signatures" campaign¹.

According to the information received, on October 9, 2007, nine agents of the security forces entered the home of Ms. Safazadeh, and seized some of her personal belongings, such as her computer, copies of the petition of the Campaign and the booklet of the Campaign explaining laws. Following the seizure, Ms. Safazadeh was arrested and transferred to the detention centre of the local Office of Information and Security Ministry in Sanandaj, Kurdistan. Since then, her whereabouts have remained unknown as all attempts undertaken by members of her family to contact her and to obtain more information about the charges against her have failed.

These events follow the participation of Ms. Safazadeh in a event held on October 8, 2007 in commemoration of the International Day of the Child, during which she engaged in discussions with participants about the campaign and collected signatures in support of its petition.

The Observatory expresses its deep concern about the increasing repression of the Iranian authorities against human rights defenders, in particular pro-reform students, intellectuals and women's rights activists. In particular, the Observatory strongly condemns the increasing use of violence by the Iranian authorities over the past months in order to repress peaceful gatherings and to arrest defenders.

The Observatory further wishes to insist on the fact that Iran committed to "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights"² by presenting its candidacy to the Human Rights Council 2006 election and had 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"³. In order to ensure the continuation of these efforts, the Observatory urges the Islamic Republic of Iran to conform in all circumstances with these pledges and with international human rights standards.

1 The "One Million Signatures" petition campaign seeks to put pressure on the Iranian legislators in order to withdraw provisions that have adverse effects on women's human rights. As of October 12, 2007, the Observatory has reported that 44 women's rights activists were - or are still - prosecuted for their involvement in the campaign.

2 In accordance with GA resolution A/RES/60/251 establishing the Human Rights Council.

3 See the pledges made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on <http://www.un.org/ga/60/elect/hrc/iran.pdf>.

Actions requested:

Please write to the authorities in Iran urging them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Ronak Safazadeh and of all the members of the “One Million Signatures” campaign;
- ii. Take prompt action in order to locate Ms. Safazadeh, make her whereabouts public, and ensure her immediate release since her detention is arbitrary as it merely aims at sanctioning her human rights activities;
- iii. Put an end to all acts of harassment against all Iranian human rights defenders;
- iv. Conform with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1998, 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”, Article 6.b, which provides that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others [...] freely to publish, impart or disseminate to others views, information and knowledge on all human rights and fundamental freedoms”, 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;
- 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.

Geneva-Paris, October 12, 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:

E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org

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Tel and fax OMCT + 41 (0) 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29

The logo for FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) consists of the lowercase letters 'fidh' in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter 'i' has a vertical line through its center, and the letter 'd' has a vertical line through its stem.

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