

STATEMENT

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USADI Calls for Urgent Medical Treatment for Imprisoned Iranian Student Activists, Manuchehr and Akbar Mohammadi, Demands Immediate Release of All Political Prisoners in Iran

WASHINGTON - The US Alliance for Democratic Iran is calling for urgent inquiry about the health condition of two political prisoners in Iran who are in immediate need of medical treatment. According to reports received from Iranian and international human rights organizations, Manuchehr Mohammadi and his brother Akbar Mohammadi, who were among student activists arrested following the July 1999 massive student protests, are suffering from deteriorating health conditions inside prison in Tehran.

As reported by the Amnesty International, Manuchehr Mohammadi's seven year prison sentence was extended by two years for talking to foreign media and issuing political statements while in prison. As a result of being subjected to torture and ill-treatment, Manuchehr is reportedly suffering from kidney disease and extensive gum infection, requiring immediate surgery. Denied from proper medical treatment inside the prison, his family's request for a temporary leave for required treatment has been repeatedly rejected by the Judiciary and prison officials.

Akbar Mohammadi was initially sentenced to death, later reduced on appeal to 15 years imprisonment. Subjected to torture, he is reported to be suffering from kidney disease and loss of hearing for which he has been denied medical treatment. He was once rushed to a Tehran hospital and was operated on. Despite his doctor's recommendation for him to stay in hospital for a month, he was transferred back to Evin prison after six days. His health has worsened since then. He is now reported to be extremely ill, and has not received any medical treatment. His family's repeated requests for him to be granted leave to go to hospital have been denied.

The year 2003 State Department Human Rights report states that in Iran "The Government's poor human rights record worsened, and it continued to commit numerous, serious abuses... Continuing serious abuses included: summary executions; disappearances; torture and other degrading treatment, reportedly including severe punishments such as beheading and flogging; poor prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention... Citizens often did not receive due process or fair trials."

Last week, U.S. Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS) criticized the UN Human Rights Commission for failing to censure Iran for its grave human rights records. "Safeguarding the human rights of Iranians is a critical element of any policy to support Iran's democracy movement. We must not let the tyrannical mullahs of Iran get off the hook so easily," he said. Senator Brownback deplored the decision by the Western block of nations led by the European Union not to table a resolution censuring Iran.

The US Alliance for Democratic Iran urgently calls upon the United States, the United Nations Human Rights Commission, international human rights organizations, and Iran's Nobel peace laureate Shirin Ebadi to immediately inquire with the Iranian government about the worsening health condition of Manuchehr Mohammadi and Akbar Mohammadi to ensure that they would be provided the required medical treatment immediately.

The USADI calls for safety and protection of human rights of Iranian dissidents and political activists regardless of their political affiliation and demands the immediate release of all political prisoners and student activists in Iran.

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