

## PRESS RELEASE - THE OBSERVATORY

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### **IRAN: The cruel & inhuman treatment of Ms. Nargess Mohammadi must stop**

**Paris-Geneva, October 19, 2015. *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), strongly denounces the cruel and inhuman treatment of the arbitrarily imprisoned human rights defender Ms. Nargess Mohammadi in Iran.***

Ms. **Nargess Mohammadi**, the Spokesperson and Vice-President of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC) who has been arbitrarily imprisoned since May 2015<sup>1</sup>, has been chained hand and foot to her bed since her transfer to hospital on October 11, 2015. Ever since her hospitalisation, she has suffered convulsions at least three times. A female security officer is sitting by her bed round the clock and two guards are on watch outside her room and prevent her friends from visiting her, but some family members have been granted restricted visits.

Ms. Mohammadi, who suffers from muscular paralysis and lung complications, had a nervous attack on October 6, 2015, that led to partial numbness of her body. She was taken to specialists in a hospital outside of prison on the same day, where neurologists instructed her immediate hospitalisation. The officials did not heed this instruction and she was returned to Evin prison. Finally, prison officials decided to dispatch her to hospital on October 11, at which point they forcefully handcuffed her before leaving the prison and caused her to have a panic attack.

Ms. Mohammadi was arbitrarily arrested on May 5, 2015, allegedly in order to serve the remainder of a 6-year prison sentence she had commenced serving between April 21 and July 31, 2012, when she was released on bail for medical reasons, as she was suffering from the same conditions that have now caused her hospitalisation. Since her arrest she has been subjected to increasing judicial harassment and violations of her rights<sup>2</sup>.

The authorities have twice scheduled judicial proceedings against her on July 6 and October 6, but both were postponed without any explanation.

**“The inhuman chaining of Ms. Mohammadi to her bed and the ongoing judicial harassment and violations of human rights against her appear to be aimed at punishing her and her family for her activities promoting human rights”**, said Karim Lahidji, FIDH President.

**“The Iranian authorities must end the cruel and degrading treatment of Ms. Mohammadi. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which has received an official complaint regarding Ms. Mohammadi’s case, must also urgently issue an Opinion on this case”**, said Gerald Staberock, OMCT Secretary General.

Ms. Mohammadi has been facing continuous judicial harassment related to her human rights work, including repeated summons, interrogations and trials for several years now<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, the Observatory urges the Iranian authorities to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Mohammadi, and to release her immediately and unconditionally. The Observatory more generally urges the Iranian authorities to put an end to all harassment - including at the judicial level - against all human rights defenders in Iran.

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<sup>1</sup> See Observatory Press Release of May 5, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> See Observatory Press Release of July 10, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> See Observatory Press Release of July 10, 2015.



The Observatory  
for the Protection  
of Human Rights Defenders

*The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (OBS) was created in 1997 by FIDH and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT). The objective of this programme is to intervene to prevent or remedy situations of repression against human rights defenders.*

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