

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

IRN 003 / 0511 / OBS 077

Arbitrary detention / Judicial harassment

Iran

May 17, 2011

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

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources of the arbitrary detention of Ms. **Maryam Bahreman**, a civil society activist involved in the defence of women rights, notably as a member of One Million Signatures Campaign¹ in Shiraz, and of Ms. **Mahbubeh Karami**, another member of the One Million Signatures Campaign.

According to the information received, on May 11, 2011, at 7.30 a.m., officers of the security forces from the Intelligence Ministry came to the house of Ms. Maryam Bahreman with a detention order. They reportedly arrested her on the charge of "action against national security", and searched her house for three hours, confiscating some personal items including her cell phone, her laptop and some books.

At the time of writing, her whereabouts remain unknown.

Ms. Bahreman has been very active for women's rights in Shiraz for many years. In particular, she was the General Secretary of Pars Women's Association (*Anjoman e Zanan Pars*), which was closed in 2007.

The Observatory was also informed that on May 11, 2011, Ms. Mahbubeh Karami, who was sentenced to three years imprisonment by Branch 54 of the Appeal Court of Teheran in February 2011 on charges of "membership to human rights activists collective", "propaganda against the system" and "assembly and collusion with intent to commit crimes against the national security"², received a summons to present herself within three days at Evin prison to start serving her sentence. On May 15, 2011, she went to Evin prison, where she was immediately arrested and where she remains detained. She is suffering from acute depression and under high-dosage medication.

The Observatory expresses its deepest concern about Ms. Maryam Bahreman and Ms. Mahbubeh Karami's arbitrary detentions, which seem to merely aim at sanctioning their human rights activities amid the current general crackdown on the Iranian civil society, and calls upon the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release them, as well as all human rights defenders presently detained in the country.

Actions requested:

Please write to the Iranian authorities and ask them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Maryam Bahreman and Ms. Mahbubeh Karami as well as all human rights defenders in Iran;

¹ This Campaign aims primarily at demanding for discriminatory laws against women to be abolished.

² See Observatory Press Release, February 8, 2011.

- ii. Disclose the whereabouts of Ms. Bahreman, and release Ms. Bahreman and Ms. Karami immediately and unconditionally since their detention is arbitrary as it only aims at sanctioning their human rights activities;
- iii. Drop all charges and put an end to any kind of harassment - including at the judicial level - against Ms. Maryam Bahreman and Ms. Mahbubeh Karami;
- iv. Put an end to acts of harassment - including at the judicial level - against Ms. Maryam Bahreman and Ms. Mahbubeh Karami as well as against all human rights defenders in Iran;
- v. Conform in any circumstances with the provisions of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted on December 9, 1998 by the United Nations General Assembly, in particular:
 - its article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually or in association with others, to promote the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”;
 - its article 5.b, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels, (...) to form, join and participate in non-governmental organizations, associations or groups”;
 - its article 6.b, which states 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”;
 - its 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”;
- vi. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international 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, + 98 21 649 / 21 774 2228, Email: info@leader.ir / istiftaa@wilayah.org / webmaster@wilayah.org / info_leader@leader.ir
- President Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: + 98 21 649 5880.
- Head of the Judiciary, His Excellency Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani, Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: +98 21 879 6671 / +98 21 3 311 6567, Email: lrjpr@iranjudiciary.com / bia.judi@yahoo.com / info@dadgostary-tehran.ir
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Fax: +98-21-66743149, 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
- Embassy of Iran in Brussels, 15 a avenue Franklin Roosevelt, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium, Fax: + 32 2 762 39 15. Email: iran-embassy@yahoo.com

Please also write to the diplomatic representations of Iran in your respective countries.

Geneva-Paris, May 17, 2011

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



The Observatory, an OMCT and FIDH venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

- E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org
- Tel and fax OMCT + 41 (0) 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29
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