

# URGENT ACTION

## TWO WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS ARRESTED IN IRAN

**Two women, Mehrnoush Etemadi and Hayedeh Tabesh, both members of the Campaign for Equality (also known as the One Million Signatures Campaign) have been arrested in Esfahan, central Iran, in relation with their peaceful activities for the Campaign. Mehrnoush Etemadi is held in Dastgerd Prison, Esfahan, but Hayedeh Tabesh's whereabouts are unknown.**

Amnesty International believes both women to be prisoners of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful expression of their right to freedom of expression and association.

Mehnoush Etemadi was arrested at home on 23 November by security officials from the local Ministry of Intelligence office, who had warrants for her arrest and to search her home. They confiscated her computer and some of her writings. Two days later, Mehrnoush Etemadi told her mother by phone that a bail order had been issued, but the judge in charge of the case has so far refused to accept the bail amount and release her. According to the Campaign for Equality, she has been accused of "membership of the One Million Signatures Campaign".

Hayedeh Tabesh was arrested on 5 December by security officials at a language class. They took her to her home, searched the premises, confiscating some of her personal possessions and two computers belonging to her sons. Hayedeh Tabesh learned in July 2009 that she was banned from travel abroad when she tried to renew her passport; she later discovered this was because she had previously been invited to a training event in South Africa, even though she did not participate in the event.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- √ Urging the authorities to reveal the whereabouts of Hayedeh Tabesh;
- √ Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Mehrnoush Etemadi and Hayedeh Tabesh as Amnesty International considers that they are held solely for their peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression and association;
- √ Urging that, in the meantime, they are granted immediate and regular access to their families and lawyers of their choice;
- √ Calling for an end to the harassment of members of the Campaign for Equality;

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 JANUARY 2010 TO:

#### Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani  
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh  
(Office of the Head of the Judiciary)  
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of  
Serah-e Jomhuri  
Tehran 1316814737  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email: Via website:**  
<http://www.dadiran.ir/tabid/75/Default.aspx>

#### spX

**First starred box: your given name;**  
**second starred box: your family name;**  
**third: your email address**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Head of Esfahan Judiciary

Dr Gholam Reza Ansari  
Chahar Bagh Bala Street  
Shahid Nikkbakht Street  
Esfahan  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: reiasat@dadgostary-es.ir  
**Salutation: Dear Sir**

#### **And copies to:**

Director, Human Rights Headquarters  
of Iran  
Mohammad Javad Larijani  
Howzeh Riassat-e Ghoveh Ghazaiyeh  
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave., south of  
Serah-e Jomhuri  
Tehran 1316814737  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Fax: +98 21 3390 4986**  
**Email: bia.judi@yahoo.com (In the  
subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad  
Larijani)**

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Campaign for Equality, also known as the One Million Signatures Campaign, is a grassroots women's rights initiative, aimed at ending discrimination against women in Iranian law. It was launched in August 2006 with the aim of collecting a million signatures of Iranians calling for the reform of legislation which discriminates against women. Over 50 Campaign members have been detained for their activities on behalf of the Campaign. Alieh Eghdam-Doust is currently serving a three-year prison sentence for her peaceful participation in a 2006 demonstration demanding equal rights for women. *Change for Equality*, the website of the Campaign, has been filtered by the Iranian authorities at least 21 times.

In August, in the first of a series of mass "show trials" of people arrested following the disputed presidential election, the women's rights movement was named by the prosecution as being part of an alleged "velvet revolution" aimed at overthrowing the government in Iran. Noushin Ahmadi Khorassani and Parvin Ardalan, both prominent members of the Campaign, as well as Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shirin Ebadi, were all mentioned as leaders of sections of the women's movement, although they were not on trial.

Amnesty International fears that the recent arrests and other harassment of women's rights activists may be the start of a renewed crackdown on their peaceful activities.

For further information concerning repression of the Campaign's activists please see: Iran: Women's Rights Defenders defy repression, February 2008, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/018/2008/63dd8933-e16d-11dc-9135-058f98b1fb80/mde130182008eng.pdf> and Iran: Renewed wave of intimidation and harassment of women's rights activists must end, 5 November 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/117/2009/en>.

UA: 333/09 Index: MDE 13/127/2009 Issue Date: 09 December 2009

