

**PUBLIC**  
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**AI Index: MDE**  
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**Further Information on 214/08 (MDE 13/107/2008, 1 August 2008) and follow-up (MDE 13/116/2008, 15 August 2008) - Fear of torture or other ill treatment/Prisoner of conscience**

**IRAN** **Zeynab Bayzeydi (f), women's rights activist**

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On 23 August, Kurdish women's rights activist Zeynab Bayzeydi had her four year sentence of imprisonment and internal exile upheld by an appeal court in West Azerbaijan, according to the Human Rights Activists in Iran website. She was charged with being a member of unauthorised human rights associations and for her activities in support of women's rights. Amnesty International considers her to be a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of her rights to freedom of expression and association.

Zeynab Bayzeydi was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and internal exile to the Turkish-speaking city of Zanjan, 246 km from her home, by Mahabad Revolutionary Court in August 2008. On 10 August Zeynab Bayzeydi went on hunger strike to demand her release. Prison officials promised her that she would be released on bail during her appeal to convince her to stop the hunger strike. On these assurances, she ended the hunger strike on 22 August after twelve days. However, the Mahabad Revolutionary Court failed to grant her bail.

Zeynab Bayzeydi is a member of the Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan (HROK) and the Campaign for Equality that advocates for an end to laws and policies which discriminate against women. She has denied all of her charges except the one related to her work with the Campaign for Equality.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Campaign for Equality is a network of individuals working to end legal discrimination against women. The campaign informs women of their rights, and is aiming to collect one million signatures from the Iranian public to a petition against discriminatory laws. On 27 August, the second anniversary of the Campaign for Equality, Amnesty International renewed its demand that the Iranian authorities cease harassing and imprisoning women's rights defenders and allow them to freely continue their campaigning for the repeal of laws and policies which discriminate against women in Iran.

For further information please see *Iran: End pressure on women's rights defenders*, published on 27 August 2008; <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/iran-end-pressure-women-s-rights-defenders-20080827>

Iran's Kurdish population live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in Kordestan and neighbouring provinces, bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. They have long suffered extensive discrimination. Kurdish human rights defenders, including community activists and journalists, risk arbitrary arrest and torture.

For more information on human rights violations against the Kurdish minority in Iran, see: *Iran: Human rights abuses against the Kurdish minority*, at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/088/2008/en/d140767b-5e45-11dd-a592-c739f9b70de8/mde130882008eng.pdf>

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:**

- calling on the authorities to quash Zeynab Bayzeydi's four-year sentence of imprisonment and internal exile and release her immediately and unconditionally, as she is a prisoner of conscience.

**APPEALS TO:**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
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:** info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Governor of West Azerbaijan

His Excellency Dr. Rahim Ghorbani  
PO Box: 775  
Oromiyeh 57135  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:**

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad  
The Presidency  
Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Fax:** + 98 21 6 649 5880  
**Email:** dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir  
via website: <http://www.president.ir/email/>

and to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 October 2008.