

## IRAN: WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS FACE IMPRISONMENT



Amir Yaghub-Ali (left), an active member of the men's committee of the Campaign for Equality, was arrested on 11 July 2007 in Tehran. He had been collecting signatures in support of the Campaign, which aims to collect one million signatures from Iranians in support of an end to legalised discrimination against women. He was sentenced to one year's imprisonment in May 2008. He appealed, and in August 2008 his sentence was suspended for four years, during which he must report every four months to Ministry of Intelligence officials. If he is convicted of a similar "offence" during this period, he will have to serve the suspended sentence.

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On 3 September four members of the Campaign for Equality – Parvin Ardalan, Jelveh Javaheri, Maryam Hosseinkhah and Nahid Kesharvarz – were sentenced to six months' imprisonment for "acting against national security by spreading propaganda against the state". They were sentenced because they had written articles for both the Campaign for Equality website <http://www.we4change.info/english/> and the Zanestan website. The latter covered women's issues and was banned by the authorities in November 2007. All have appealed against their sentences, and are free at present.

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Parvin Ardalan (left) received the 2008 Olof Palme Human Rights Award, but was banned from travelling to accept it. She is appealing against two other sentences, imposed in April 2007 and May 2008, for her work defending women's rights in Iran. She was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, 30 months of which were suspended for five years, for her part in organizing a peaceful demonstration calling for greater rights for women in June 2006 and to two years' imprisonment, suspended for three years, in connection with a peaceful gathering in March 2007 outside the courtroom where she and four others were on trial for the June 2006 demonstration.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO



Maryam Hossienkhah  
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Jelveh Javaheri  
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Nahid Keshavarz  
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### Write to the Head of the Judiciary

Start your message "Your Excellency"

Head of the Judiciary  
Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
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@dadqostary-tehran.ir](mailto:info@dadqostary-tehran.ir) (In subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

### In your message ask Ayatollah Shahroudi to:

- ensure that **Parvin Ardalan, Jelveh Javaheri, Maryam Hosseinkhah and Nahid Kesharvarz's** appeals are heard promptly and impartially;
- review their convictions and sentences if their appeals are unsuccessful with a view to overturning them. Stating that if they were imprisoned, Amnesty International would consider them to be prisoners of conscience;
- review the suspended sentence imposed on **Amir Yaghub-Ali** with a view to overturning it; as he was arrested for peacefully collecting signatures for a petition against legislation which discriminates against women in Iran. Adding that if he is imprisoned, he would be a prisoner of conscience;
- review the requirement that **Amir Yaghub-Ali** report regularly to government officials as it appears to be intended to restrict his activities promoting greater rights for women in Iran;
- uphold the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, which protects human rights defenders from violence or threats as a result of their work.