

# URGENT ACTION

## IRANIAN SCHOLAR DETAINED

**Dr Mohammad Maleki, a 76-year old male Iranian scholar and former Chancellor of Tehran University has been detained. An independent commentator, he has for many years criticized the policies of successive governments. He is believed to be held for criticizing the conduct of the recent presidential election and therefore to be a prisoner of conscience.**

Dr Mohammad Maleki was arrested at his home on 22 August by five Ministry of Intelligence officials. They searched his house and confiscated personal effects including a computer, a mobile phone, notebooks and up to 80 books. The officials filmed the search and upon completion Dr Mohammad Maleki was detained. It has been reported that he was taken to section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, which is under the control of the Ministry of Intelligence.

Dr Mohammad Maleki was in poor health at the time of his arrest, reportedly recovering from a serious illness and unable to walk unaided due to severe pain in his legs. He also suffers from prostate cancer, an abnormal heartbeat and diabetes. He was permitted to take medicines with him when arrested, but there are concerns that he may not be able to obtain adequate medical care in prison. The Iranian authorities frequently deny or delay medical care, including medication, to detainees as a form of pressure on them. Concerned about his weak state of health, Dr Mohammad Maleki's wife, Ghodsi Mir Moez, has urged him to co-operate fully with security officials and to take part in a televised "conversation" if Ministry of Intelligence officials want him to do so. "Confessions" obtained in this way have repeatedly been aired following recent mass arrests.

Dr Mohammad Maleki is not affiliated to any political party and is said to have not voted in the disputed 12 June presidential election in Iran. He criticized the conduct of the elections but did not publicly express a view about any one of the four candidates that stood for election.

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

- Expressing concern that Dr Mohammad Maleki has been detained for criticizing the conduct of the recent presidential election and calling, if this is the case, for his immediate and unconditional release;
- calling for him to be protected from torture and other ill-treatment while in detention;
- urging the authorities to grant him immediate access to his lawyer, family and any medical treatment he may need.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 OCTOBER 2009 TO:

#### Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Islamic Republic Street – End of  
Shahid Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran,  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email: via website: <http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter> (English)**  
**<http://www.leader.ir/langs/fa/index.php?p=letter> (Persian)**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### 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/81/Default.aspx>**  
**First starred box: your given name;**  
**second starred box: your family name;**  
**third: your email address**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

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

Speaker of Parliament  
His Excellency Ali Larijani  
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami  
Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic  
Republic of Iran  
**Fax: +98 21 3355 6408**

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

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dr Mohammad Maleki was the first Chancellor of the University of Tehran following the 1979 revolution and has previously been detained on several occasions for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression. He was imprisoned before the revolution for speaking out against the last Shah of Iran, then between 1982 and 1987, after which he was forbidden to leave Iran for at least several years, and most recently in 2001.

In the days following the 13 June 2009 announcement that incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had won the presidential election, hundreds of thousands of Iranians took part in mass and generally peaceful demonstrations throughout the country, disputing the election results. The authorities quickly imposed sweeping restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly and telecommunication and internet systems were severely disrupted. Iranian publications were banned from publishing information about the nationwide unrest and foreign journalists were banned from the streets, their visas not renewed and others arrested or expelled from the country.

In response to the mass protests, security forces, notably the paramilitary Basij, were widely deployed. At least 4,000 arrested in the three to four weeks following the 12 June 2009 election, including prominent political figures close to either presidential candidates Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, or former President Khatami, who supported Mir Hossein Mousavi's campaign. Some human rights defenders and journalists were also detained. They have been denied access to legal representation, but have generally been able to meet family members.

Security forces used excessive and lethal force against demonstrators, killing dozens of protestors and injuring hundreds more. Some died later of their injuries. Others have been injured and died as a result of torture while in custody.

Mass trial sessions of hundreds starting on 1 August 2009 were grossly unfair, including the latest of which was held on 25 August. Detainees "confessed" to vaguely worded charges, which are often not recognizably criminal offences. These "confessions", apparently obtained under duress, were accepted by the court. Some of those on trial were filmed making similar "confessions", which were aired on TV before their trials took place. Some of those on trial could face the death penalty.

Iranian officials have confirmed that at least some of those detained after the post-election protests have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated, and that abuses took place in at least one detention centre, Kahrizak, a centre outside of Tehran. On 29 July, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordered its closure and the head of a detention facility and three guards, thought to have worked at the Kahrizak detention centre, were reportedly dismissed and possibly detained. On 15 August, Parviz Sorouri, the Head of the Special Parliamentary Committee to review post-election arrests, told the Islamic Labour News Agency that 12 police officials and a judge who had been involved in transferring detainees to Kahrizak would be arrested and tried for their role, "as the detention centre was intended for drug dealers".

Amnesty International has received reports consistent with a statement made by Mehdi Karroubi that both women and male detainees have been subjected to torture, including by rape, by security officials. His allegations were initially denied by Farhad Tajari, a member of the Special Parliamentary Committee, but, on 26 August 2009, another of the Committee's members told the website Parleman News on condition of anonymity, "It has definitely become evident to us that some of the post-election detainees have been raped with batons and bottles."

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