

PUBLIC

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**Further Information on UA 128/08 (MDE 13/068/2008, 15 May 2008) Arbitrary arrests/ Prisoners of conscience**

<b>IRAN</b>	<b>Fariba Kamalabadi Taefi (f)</b>	]	
	<b>Jamaloddin Khanjani (m)</b>	]	
	<b>Afif Naeimi (m)</b>	]	
	<b>Saeid Rezaei (m)</b>	]	<b>members of the Baha'i community</b>
	<b>Behrouz Tavakkoli (m)</b>	]	
	<b>Vahid Tizfahm (m)</b>	]	
	<b>Mahvash Sabet (f)</b>	]	

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The seven people named above, all members of the Baha'i religious minority, have been charged with vaguely worded charges relating to national security. According to press reports, Tehran's deputy prosecutor claimed that they had "confessed" to setting up an illegal organisation in Iran that took orders from Israel and other states to undermine the 'Islamic system'. Amnesty International considers the charges politically motivated and that those held are prisoners of conscience, detained solely because of their conscientiously held beliefs or their peaceful activities on behalf of the Baha'i community.

A spokesperson for the Baha'i International Community to the United Nations, rebutted claims made by the authorities, stating that "suggestions of collusion with the state of Israel are categorically false and misleading".

Six leaders of a group responsible for the Baha'i community's religious and administrative affairs in Iran (Fariba Kamalabadi Taefi, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, Saeid Rezaie, Behrouz Tavakkoli and Vahid Tizfahm), were arrested following raids on their homes by officers from the Ministry of Intelligence in the early hours of 14 May. A seventh person, acting as a secretary for the group, Mahvash Sabet, has been in custody since 5 March.

The seven are in solitary confinement in Section 209 of Tehran's Evin Prison, which is run by the Ministry of Intelligence. None has been granted access to legal representatives.

Fariba Kamalabadi Taefi, Behrouz Tavakkoli and Jamaloddin Khanjani had previously been arrested for their activities on behalf of the Baha'i community.

Three other Baha'is are also currently detained in the city of Shiraz, southern Iran. The reason for their arrest is still not known. They may be prisoners of conscience (See UA 25/08; MDE 13/017/2008, 25 January 2008).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Baha'i faith was founded about 150 years ago in Iran and has since spread around the world. Since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the Baha'i community has been systematically harassed and persecuted. There are over 300,000 Baha'is currently in Iran, but their religion is not recognized under the Iranian Constitution, which only recognizes Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism. Baha'is in Iran are subject to discriminatory laws and regulations which violate their right to practise their religion freely, as set out in Article 18(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party. The Iranian authorities also deny Baha'is equal rights to education, work

and to a decent standard of living by restricting their access to employment and benefits such as pensions. They are not permitted to meet, to hold religious ceremonies or to practice their religion communally. Since President Ahmadinejad was elected in 2005, dozens of Baha'is have been arrested because of their faith.

Members of the Baha'i community in Iran profess their allegiance to the state and deny that they are involved in any subversive acts against the government, which they state would be against their religion.

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

- expressing concern at the charges relating to national security brought against Fariba Kamalabadi Taefi, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, Saeid Rezaie, Behrouz Tavakkoli, Vahid Tizfahm and Mahvash Sabet;
- stating that Amnesty International believes these charges to be politically motivated;
- calling for their release as they are prisoners of conscience, held for their conscientiously held beliefs;
- calling on the authorities not to torture or ill-treat them;
- urging the authorities to ensure that they are given regular access to their relatives and lawyers of their choice and any medical treatment that they may require.

**APPEALS TO:**

Leader of the Islamic Republic  
His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader, Islamic Republic Street - Shahid Keshvar Doust Street  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email:** info@leader.ir  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence  
Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie  
Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary  
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 subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)  
**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:** 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 17 September 2008.