



Association des Chercheurs Iraniens

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Mr Ban Ki-moon
The Secretary-General
United Nations Headquarters
First Avenue at 46th Street
New York,
NY 10017

Dear Secretary General,

A New Wave of Persecution Against the Women's Movement In Iran

In your position as the Secretary General of the United Nations you have the arduous task and "Responsibility to Protect" human rights anywhere in the world. We at ACI would like to alert you to a new wave of repression against the women's rights activists sweeping through Iran. On Thursday 29 January 2009 the arrest of "Alieh Eghdam-Doost" for the implementation of her unjust three year prison sentence has marked the beginning of this new wave. Sir, in view of your report to the General Assembly on the worsening situation of human rights in Iran you should be aware that:

- The Islamic Republic under international pressure for its nuclear intentions is increasing its oppression daily;
- The Islamic Republic nearing its tenth presidential elections is taking repression, violence and persecution to new heights;
- The Islamic Republic has chosen the persecution of the women's rights activist as its first choice. It has violated their rights with impunity and has used violence and force in an attempt to silence them. Yet, despite these treatments and the use of violence against them the equal rights defenders have been steadfast in their demands and have not buckled under persecution.

Alieh Eghdam-Doost was one of the participants at the peaceful gathering in Tehran on 12 June 2006. Charged with threatening national security many who attended this gathering have been sentenced to custodial terms, cash fines and even floggings. Others are still awaiting the outcome of their hearings. Some of those at imminent risk of arrest for implementation of their sentence are (in alphabetical order):

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Maryam Hosseinkhah;
Jelveh Javaheri;
Nahid Keshavarz;
Rezvan Moghadam;
Marzieh Mortazi-Langerudi;
Nasim Sarabandi;
Sousan Tahmasebi;
Amir Yaghoub-Ali

Furthermore, ACI would like to stress that in view of this trend and with the nearing of 8 March, International Women's Day, many of the equal rights defenders in Iran are facing a genuine danger of judicial and extra-judicial arrests, detentions, torture and imprisonments. The threat to their physical safety and liberty is very real and must be taken seriously.

Sir, Passing unjust even illegal sentences according to Islamic Republic's own internal laws is in violation of Islamic Republic's international obligations; coupled with increasing persecution, we respectfully request that you appoint and send a special envoy for investigation and assessment of this deteriorating situation.

If "the good name of the United Nations is one of its most valuable assets" and you mean to "translate the concept of the Responsibility to Protect from words to deeds to ensure timely action", then the UN and you Sir as its Secretary General cannot remain silent and inactive in the face of blatant persecution and oppression.

In anticipation of your immediate attention I remain,

Respectfully yours



Dr Hossein Ladjevardi
Head of Association des Chercheurs Iraniens (ACI).

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