

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets]

[Personal information has been **redacted**.]

Dear Dr. Hafizi, Secretary of the Medical Council of Iran

Referring to letter number 4/3203 – 6 Tir 1361 [27 June 1982], and a photocopy of letter number 1/11705 – 29 Khordad 1361 [19 June 1982] from the Supreme Judiciary Council, I express my gratitude to you and Ayatollah Mousavi Ardebili for granting me the right to work privately as a Baha'i doctor. With respect, I would like to mention several points regarding myself and my wife, Dr. Sholeh Misaghi Dehaghani (Hakiman), so that appropriate action will be taken to enable us to work.

As you are aware, according to the directives of 24 Dey 1958 [24 December 1979], of the Islamic Revolutionary Council, and Khordad 1360 [May/June 1981] of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and our pledge to the Ministry of Health, we are forbidden to work in the private sector, and because of our religious beliefs, we are not allowed to work in the public sector, either.

Therefore, I would like to inform you that in letter number 50/1093 of 3 Khordad 1361 [11 May 1982] from the deputy director of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee of the Ministry of Health, which refers to letter 1062 of 29 Farvardin 1361 [5 April 1982], which was also sent to the prosecutor general, [it was] noted that in order to resolve this difficulty in the Ministry of Health, an amendment had been prepared for submission to the Cabinet.

According to letter 1797 – 27 Khordad 1361 [4 June 1982] from the director general of the Legal Office of the Ministry of Health, in Article 22 of this amendment, it is stated that those who are not following one of the official religions must pay back the amount of their university expenses, according to the decision of the Ministry of Education, and therefore will be exempted from service according to Article 2 (according to the director general of the Legal Office, Article 2 of this proposed amendment is the same as Article 1 of the Directive of 24 Azar 1358 [2 December 1979] of the Revolutionary Council).

I would like to state here that in the recent letter 1797, of 27 Khordad 1361 [4 June 1982] of the Legal Office, in pursuance of his previous letter—that is to say, report 2884 dated 16 Esfand 1360 [22 February 1982], in which, in addition to the issue of the pledge, the matter of my marriage according to the Baha'i laws has been raised—[the director general states] that because our marriage is not registered, my wife is not entitled to the rights of legally married women. Of course, this was not foreseen in the proposed amendment and the question remains valid. At the end of the same letter 1797 dated 27 Khordad 1361 [4 June 1982] from the Legal Office, it is stated that to expedite the resolution of this matter, they had requested a religious ruling from Imam [Khomeini's] Office, which had been approved by Dr. Latifi, the deputy director of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee of the Ministry of Health.

Considering that fairness, justice and the rule of law are [part] of the loftiest goals of Islam, and therefore of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and as this proposed amendment and the request for the relevant ruling are going through their initial stages, I would like to mention the following points in

the hope of a speedy resolution of the issues, avoiding further prolongation beyond my year and a half of struggle.

With regards to the proposed amendment, the following are noteworthy:

- a. The payment of all university costs is a retroactive decision.
- b. The number of years that we have received free education is fewer than the years we studied at university.
- c. According to the pledge we have made, in return for free education we are obliged to serve in Iran, and nothing else.
- d. After the adoption of the Directive of 24 Azar 1359 [2 December 1980] of the Revolutionary Council and the Khordad 1360 [June 1981] Resolution of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, my wife and I [Sina Hakiman] affirmed our obedience to the law and committed to fulfilling our obligation to serve anywhere in Iran. That we were banned from fulfilling our pledge due to our religious beliefs, and therefore could not be employed, and because we have not been prescribed any obligation apart from the pledge of medical service, naturally, no outstanding obligation remains for which compensatory payments need to be made.
- e. Within the proposed amendment it is not foreseen what kind of licence will be granted to us so as to give us the confidence that we will ultimately be able to practice our medical profession in the private sector.
- f. The amendment does not address the issue of my military service, which includes the years of my pledge (of course the director general of the Legal Office will note this and hopefully stipulate it in the amendment)
- g. The amendment does not pay due attention to the principles set forth in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, that greater accessibility and even the provision of free higher education is one of the goals of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran; the proposed amendment would be in clear violation of the Constitution.
- h. And finally, the issue of my wife's marital status has not been addressed, so that she could also enjoy the rights of a married woman and avoid the future uncertainties that might arise.

Certainly, the Ministry of Health and government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a position of power, do not intend to obtain an unfair ruling or be unjust towards a Baha'i who is a citizen of Iran, as this would indeed be contrary to the lofty moral teachings of the religion of Islam, and deviation from true Islam.

Considering the above-mentioned points about the proposed amendments, and the intention of the Ministry of Health to seek advice from the Office of Imam Khomeini, I humbly request that arrangements be made for this issue to be properly and comprehensively reviewed and resolved, so that we can serve the medical needs of this underprivileged nation and ultimately receive a greater share of the vast ocean of the medical knowledge that is fast advancing throughout the world, and succeed in advancing to higher levels of study.

I supplicate the God Almighty for your increased success.

Dr. Sina Hakiman