

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets.]

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

[The excerpt below is from the section of the article that pertains to the Baha'i Faith]

[Adapted from website:] HRANA - Human Rights Activists News Agency

[Date:] 25 Mordad 1389 [16 August 2010]

Obvious Violation of Human Dignity in Condemning the Leaders of the Baha'i Community in Iran

HRANA - The secretary general of Human Rights Activists in Iran issued a press release this morning calling for the immediate recognition and unconditional release of the leaders of this religious community, calling for the recognition of the human rights and citizenship of the Baha'is of Iran.

The text of this press release is as follows:

Press Release

Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court imprisoned seven leaders of the Baha'i community in Iran, after nearly two years of detention, in an ambiguous procedure based on a series of charges such as "espionage, blasphemy, propaganda against the regime and the spread of corruption on earth." Each one was sentenced to 20 years in prison under tazir law while they were not present at the last session of their trial (22 Khordad of this year [12 June 2010]), in protest of the closed and illegal nature of the court procedure.

The sentences were handed down to Fariba Kamalabadi, Mahvash Sabet, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naimi, Saied Rezaie, Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Vahid Tizfahm following the banning of all elected and appointed Baha'i institutions in Iran in 1362 [1983/1984] and the execution of most of the members of the [previous] three National Spiritual Assemblies administering the Baha'i affairs. With the full knowledge of the Iranian government, an interim assembly called the Yaran-i-Iran [Companions of Iran] was formed, in which the seven citizens handled in a clear way the basic affairs of the 300,000 Baha'i members, as the biggest religious minority in Iran.

Regardless of the fact that all of the charges against them were unwarranted, the conviction came at a time when seven members of the Baha'i community, Iran's largest religious minority, had been deprived of their basic human and legal rights in illegal detention for more than two years. In addition to the prolonged temporary detention of these individuals (nearly two years), all of these detainees were held for long time, with the use of white torture, in closed settings such as solitary confinement or small group incarceration, and apart from other detainees.

These prisoners of conscience were also denied access to their lawyers, and there were also reports that some of them were suffering in poor physical condition during this period.

The group of human rights activists in Iran, along with other human rights defenders, while condemning the approach of the judiciary-security system, not only calls the basis for detention and

sentencing of these Iranian citizens illegal, biased and lacking the minimum legal and human credibility, but also, objectively, it violates human dignity and the basis of freedom of thought and expression.

The group accuses the Iranian government, especially the judiciary and the security services, of having a double standard, citing Mr. Larijani's remarks at the UN Human Rights Council in recognition of the citizenship rights of Iranian Baha'is.

Human Rights Activists in Iran believes that the issue of the seven members of the leadership of the Baha'i community is inseparable from the general abuse of human rights and citizenship of Baha'is in Iran, rights that have been a constant factor in assessing the human rights situation in Iran for the past three decades.

In past years, the religious government of Iran has executed dozens of Baha'i citizens in prisons, has demolished their homes and destroyed their cemeteries, and has barred them from expressing their views, making it difficult to bury the bodies of the Baha'is, and it has deprived them of their rights to education. Detention and harassment, harsh sentences, blasphemy, inquisition, [etc.,] should be added to the Iranian government's record of anti-Baha'ism and, of course, violations of freedom of thought, expression, and freedom of religion.

In this regard, the group of human rights activists in Iran, while calling for the recognition of the human rights and citizenship of the Baha'is of Iran, also calls for the immediate and unconditional release of the leaders of this religious community, as well as the restoration of their dignity or holding a public trial in a legal context, with documents. As an undeniable right, it calls on the international community to respond in an integrated manner and to continue to pursue the implementation of these rights.

Secretariat of the Association of Human Rights Activists in Iran

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