



## Open letter in protest against violence in Iranian prisons

The Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran – Montreal, (ADDHI), is deeply concerned with the further degradation of already disastrous conditions in prisons of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the inhuman treatment imposed on political prisoners. We are, once more, witness to the death of a detainee under severe torture in the infamous Evin prison; a crime that reminds us those perpetuated against Mrs Zahra Kazemi, the Canadian-Iranian photographer who was found dead in July 2003, few days after her arrest in Teheran by the agents of Iranian secret police.

This time the victim is Mr. Sattar Beheshti, a 35 years old blogger who had published articles criticising the Iranian regime. He had been arrested on October 30<sup>th</sup> in his house in «Rabat-Karim», in south west of Teheran. On November 6<sup>th</sup>, his family received a call from Evin Prison authorities demanding that first the family acquire a burial place and then go take possession of Mr. Sattar body! The burial took place on November 8<sup>th</sup> and against repeated demands of the family to undertake a serious investigation in order to shed light on the circumstances of his death nothing was done. On November 12<sup>th</sup> faced with international pressure and undeniable witnesses of his cellmates an autopsy was performed and due to the intensity of injuries on his body it was declared his death was due to repeated multiple hematomas on his body.

In addition, last week Amnesty International called upon Iranian authorities to investigate serious accusations of bad treatments of nine female political prisoners in Evin (Mrs. Bahareh Hedayat, Nazanin Dayhami, Jila Bani-Yagoub, Mahsa Amr-Abadi, Hakimeh Shakari, Jila Karam-Zadeh, Nasim Soltan-Baigi and Raheleh Zokayi). These prisoners had undertaken a hunger strike to protest against inappropriate and illegal body search. They were all given heavy prison terms as a revenge for their activities in the defence of women, children, prisoners and unionists' rights.

Another disturbing case of mistreatment portrays the situation of Mrs. Mme Nasrin Setoudeh, lawyer and defender of Human rights who was arrested on September 21<sup>st</sup>, and had been given a 6 years prison sentence and a ban of practicing law for 10 years. She is one the symbolic personalities, recognized for her determination in the defence of her clients in particular women and children. Mrs. Sotoudeh has undertaken a hunger strike to protest against the treatment that prison is imposing on her. Recently, Sakharof 2012 annual prize for «free Thought», highlighting annually the work of selected human rights defenders by the European Parliament was awarded to her but the Iranian government did not allow the representatives of the members of European Commission to travel to Iran and give her the prize. She is detained in one the worst prisons of the regime and her 12 years old young daughter who is forbidden to leave the country is used as a mean of pressuring her Mother.



Association pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme en Iran - Montréal

We are extremely preoccupied by the scalding deterioration of conditions of detentions and the degree of repression against political prisoners in Iran as these condition place the life of prisoners in danger.

We request the help of Mrs. Navi Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and M. Ahmad Shaheed, UN special envoy to Iran to :

- + Demand that the Iranian authorities shed light on the exact circumstances of the death of M. Beheshti and avoid that this crime remains unpunished as the track record of Iranian regime on this subject is alarming;
- + Put pressure on Iranian regime to allow the UN special envoy for Iran to undertake an independent investigation on the human rights situation in Iran and particularly on the pre-occupying situation of political prisoners.

**Montreal, 14 November, 2012**

***Association for the defense of Human Rights in Iran – Montreal  
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