

Iran's one million signatures campaign member sentenced to six months

Wednesday 7 October 2009, by [JAVAHERI Jelveh](#) (Date first published: 5 October 2009).

Iran's One Million Signatures Campaign Member Jelveh Javaheri Receives Six Month Sentence as Protections for Prisoners' Rights Continue to Deteriorate.

One Million Signatures campaign activist Jelveh Javaheri has been issued a six month prison sentence by Iran's Revolutionary Courts for her participation in a peaceful protest on June 12, 2008. Ms. Javaheri has been targeted for arrest and harassment on numerous occasions as a result of her work as a women's rights activist and journalist, most recently on May 1, 2009 for taking part in a demonstration marking International Workers Day, for which she spent over one month in prison, including sixteen days in solitary confinement. She was also issued a six month sentence in 2008 for "disturbing public opinion, propaganda against the state, publication of lies for writing for the site of the Campaign (Change for Equality)." This new sentence is based on charges that Ms. Javaheri "endangered state security" as she joined other women's rights activists in commemoration of the National Day of Solidarity of Iranian Women. She had been awaiting a ruling based on that arrest for almost sixteen months.

Ms. Javaheri's sentence is of particular concern in light of recent reports of government restrictions on civil society organizations working to protect the rights of detainees. According to Change for Equality, the offices of the Organization to Defend the Rights of Prisoners were sealed shut by security officials on September 9. The NGO's offices were closed without prior warning, and with no reason given by authorities. The organization, which provided legal services and research on human rights in prisons, was closed down on the same day as the office of Mehdi Karroubi, as well as that of a joint committee established by former presidential candidates Mr. Karroubi and Mir Hussein Moussavi to investigate reports of death and torture in the wake of mass arrests following the June 12 election. Ms. Javaheri has also written an account of women imprisoned as a result of discriminatory laws.

Among other activists and detainees whose status remains a grave cause for concern is Bahram Ahmadi Amouie. Mr. Ahmadi Amouie, the husband of journalist and women's rights activist Jila Baniyaghoub, was initially arrested along with his wife on June 22, 2009. He has remained in detention for three months although his case has yet to be registered with the Revolutionary Court. Without clear charges, his attorney has been unable to prepare a defense. Campaign member Shiva Nazar Ahari, a student and women's rights activist detained among the wave of arrests on June 14, 2009, also remains in prison. Her bail was reduced from 500 million tomans to 200 million tomans (roughly \$200,000), which remains too high for her family to pay, and an interrogator threatened that Ms. Ahari would remain in detention even if her family does post bail.

Journalists and human rights defenders must be allowed to speak out without threats of harassment, arrest, and torture. As government restrictions on free expression have tightened and reports of prisoner torture and rape have increased following this year's presidential election, WLP calls upon the Iranian government to protect the rights of all detainees.

Please forward this message to your friends and colleagues.

Thank you.

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P.S.

* From Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace:
<http://www.learningpartnership.org/en/advocacy/alerts/iranwomenarrests0307>