

GLOBAL JUSTICE & LAW NATIONAL POLITICS

# 'I Stand By You, My Sisters': From Iran, Solidarity With American Women

Sunday 25 September 2022, by [SOTOUDEH Nasrin](#) (Date first published: 18 July 2022).

**Iranian human rights attorney Nasrin Sotoudeh warns America: "As someone who lived through this loss of freedom and democracy, I can offer a warning: It will not end with this Supreme Court decision on abortion."**



*Nasrin Sotoudeh in Tehran, Iran. Being outside without a hijab, Sotoudeh is risking arrest. (Courtesy of Nasrin Sotoudeh)*

My warmest greetings from Iran. I would like to express my deep and sincere solidarity with the staff and readers of *Ms.* magazine.

This bond is rooted in my appreciation for your unreserved support for me and my husband during [the harsh days](#) of my imprisonment. With pressure that tightened like a noose around our family on a daily basis, your coverage of human rights abuses in and out of Iran's prisons, along with your clear personal concern, brought us (and others) much-needed hope.

In these difficult times, when the women's movement in the United States is facing assault and [the right to abortion](#) has been radically restricted, I wish to stand by you and declare my support from our corner of the world.

I greatly admire what *Ms.* magazine has done and continues to do to advance the rights of women in America and around the world. The vision and commitment shown by you and other advocates of women's rights come from your individual strength and your understanding of history. For this reason, I have deep confidence in your ability to confront and overcome these challenges. Many people who see your actions and resolve are sure to join your movement.

Abortion rights and contraceptive rights are now recognized in dozens of countries around the

world, thanks to the hard-fought struggles of countless women and men. Now, they are once again at risk.

Especially worrisome is the fact that this threat is emerging in what has long been the most powerful heartland of the global movement for women's rights: the United States. It is extremely sad to see your country move away from the principles of freedom and progress that (even when not fully realized) have long been such an inspiration. We should all be alarmed by what will fill the void.

After the [1979 Iranian Revolution](#), new laws that drastically stripped women and girls of their rights were part of an insidious larger effort to limit civil liberties for everyone. As someone who lived through (and campaigned against) this loss of freedom and democracy, I can offer a warning: It will not end with this Supreme Court decision on abortion.

Women in Iran continue to face laws that restrict rights over our bodies, and even over the ability to think for ourselves. We are denied the same opportunities as men in relation to marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance and travel. This country's mandatory hijab law forces us to cover our heads whenever we are in public, but it is also a way conservative forces try to exert political control. That control ensnares men, not just women. This may resemble what you experience in the fight for reproductive rights in America.

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The movement for women's rights in Iran has experienced many setbacks, but it perseveres because my country is full of people who care about fairness and justice. We continue to call for employment rights, the right to divorce, the right to abortion, the right to wear clothes freely, the right to custodianship over our children, and thousands of other rights that are now routinely violated.

I stand by you, my sisters, so that through our solidarity as women, we triumph over oppression and make the world safer and better for generations to come.

**Nasrin Sotoudeh**

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**P.S.**

• Ms. magazine. 7/18/2022:  
<https://msmagazine.com/2022/07/18/nasrin-sotoudeh-iran-us-women-abortion-rights/>