

Mandates of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

REFERENCE:
UA IRN 27/2017

18 September 2017

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 27/1, 34/18, 32/32, 34/5 and 34/23.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning the alleged arrest of a woman human rights defender, Ms. **Raheleh Rahemipor**.

Ms. Raheleh Rahemipor is the sister of Mr. Hossein Rahemipor, whose case is under review by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. In addition to seeking justice in the case of her brother, Ms. Rahemipor has been active in promoting the rights of survivors and family members of individuals who have suffered human rights violations in Iran.

Concerns about the judicial harassment of Ms. Rahemipor and the criminalization of her legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of expression were raised in previous communications sent by Special Procedures mandate holders on 5 August 2016 (UA IRN 23/2016), on 22 November 2016 (UA IRN 29/2016), and on 26 January 2017 (UA IRN 3/2017).

According to the new information received:

On 10 September 2017, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Ms. Raheleh Rahemipor was arrested at her home by agents of the Intelligence Ministry. The agents also confiscated her laptop, her mobile phone and some personal documents.

On 11 September 2017, Ms. Rahemipor's lawyer went to the Revolutionary Prosecution office at Evin prison and received confirmation that Branch 6 of the Revolutionary Prosecution had issued her arrest warrant, and that she was

detained there. That evening, persons associated with Ms. Rahemipor received a call from her, during which she indicated she had been interrogated, but was not allowed to share any details with her relatives.

We reiterate our serious concern at the judicial harassment of Ms. Rahemipor which appears to be directly related to her legitimate activities in defence of human rights in Iran and, more particularly, to her claim for truth and justice regarding the case of her brother. We also express concern at the lack of evidence to justify the charges brought against her, as well as the use of national security to criminalize her legitimate exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we would like to refer to Article 13 (3) and Article 13 (5) of the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance; to resolution 7/12 of the Human Rights Council; to articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by Iran on 24 June 1975; and to the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, also known as the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, in particular articles 1, 2, 5, 6 and 12.

The full texts of the human rights instruments and standards recalled above are available on www.ohchr.org or can be provided upon request.

In view of the urgency of the matter, we wish to reiterate to Your Excellency's Government, our request for information on the initial steps taken to safeguard the rights of Ms. Rahemipor, in compliance with international instruments.

It is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention. We therefore request, once again, your information and observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide information about the specific charges levelled against Ms. Rahemipor, which have led to her arrest.
3. Please provide information about the evidence produced by the prosecution to justify the charges against her.
4. Please indicate how her arrest and detention are compatible with Iran's obligations under international human rights law, in particular with respect to articles 19 and 21 of the ICCPR.

5. Please provide information on any measures taken to ensure the human rights of Ms. Rahemipor are protected.
6. Please provide information about measures taken or to be taken to bring the Iranian Criminal Code into line with international human rights law.
7. Please indicate what measures have been taken to ensure that human rights defenders in Iran are able to carry out their legitimate work in a safe and enabling environment without fear of threats or acts of intimidation, harassment or prosecution of any sort.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person(s) responsible for the alleged violations.

Your Excellency's Government's response will be made available in a report to be presented to the Human Rights Council for its consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Houria Es-Slami
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

David Kaye
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Annalisa Ciampi
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