

Iran: Women's Rights Campaigner Negin Released on Bail

Contributed by DI Monitoring & Investigation Committee
Wednesday, 08 October 2008
Last Updated Sunday, 22 February 2009

On November 23, 2008, human rights activist Ms. Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami was released on bail after being arrested for unknown reasons in Tehran.

DI extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to DI member organisations, DI Defenders, subscribers, supporters and friends for their assistance, sending letters or otherwise supported the campaign.

Result of DI
campaign / latest news:

- On November 23, 2008, Ms. Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami was released from Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, on a bail of over 35,000 euros.
- No date for her trial was given following her release.
- There is no further information on the charges she is facing.

Information about DI campaign:

Name: Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami

Sex: Female

Age: 33

Authorities: Iranian

Category: Prisoners
of conscience / Arbitrary detentions / Fear of torture or ill-treatments /
Harassment / Human rights defenders

The case:

Ms. Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami (hereafter Negin), 33 years, a women's rights defender, was reportedly arbitrarily detained by the Iranian intelligence services, the Ettelaat, on October 5, 2008 in Tehran. She is thought to have been taken to Section 209 of Evin Prison in the capital Tehran, which is run by the Ministry of Intelligence and outside the control of Iran's Prison Authority.

Negin is member of
the One Million Signatures Campaign against discriminatory laws and has also

served as President of the Azarmehr Cultural Association of Women. She is actively engaged with the principles of gender equality, especially promoting the empowerment of women, in particular with regard to greater involvement of marginalized women and elimination of gender gaps in health and job opportunities. She is an academic and journalist whose only goal has been to publish articles on women's rights and to promote understanding.

According to human rights defenders in Iran, Negin will be kept in detention until after 25 November, the United Nations International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women. This may be an attempt to prevent planned events, such as days of activism against gender-based violence, from taking place.

DI Views:

DI has been informed by DI Defenders in Iran that Negin has recently had a complicated surgery in her chest and DI is deeply concerned about the health and well-being of Negin.

The journalist Negin was aware of the difficult circumstances under which women's rights activists continued their work, however she joined the struggle for equality and was demanding that laws which discriminate against women be revised. She pledged to keep up her activities until those demands were met by authorities.

Iranian authorities are required to create an environment conducive to human rights defenders, to take effective measures to protect, promote, and respect them, and to take action to prevent attacks and harassment against them.

International Law

UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders states:

Article

1: Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels.

Article

5: For the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels:

(a)
To meet or assemble peacefully;

(b)

To form, join and participate in non-governmental organizations, associations or groups;

(c)
To communicate with non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations.

Article
12:

1. Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration.

3. In this connection, everyone is entitled, individually and in association with others, to be protected effectively under national law in reacting against or opposing, through peaceful means, activities and acts, including those by omission, attributable to States that result in violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as acts of violence perpetrated by groups or individuals that affect the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

DI Demands:

Defend
International strongly condemns the detention of women rights campaigner Ms. Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami and demands her immediate release. Moreover DI urges the Iranian authorities to stop detaining, harassing and prosecuting human rights defenders who are simply exercising rights protected by international conventions ratified by Iran.

Iranian
government must drop all charges against activists who have peacefully advocated for human rights. Iran must encourage civil society to promote and facilitate the enjoyment of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, to allow women's rights defenders to use civil means to address their concerns, and to raise public awareness of the equal rights and responsibilities of male and female through campaigns, training, distribution of manuals and brochures etc.

Defend
International:

Announces its full support and solidarity with women's right defender Negin, and calls upon all its members to express their solidarity by writing to the Iranian embassies in their

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad,

The
Presidency, Palestine Avenue,

Azerbaijan
Intersection,

Tehran,

Islamic Republic of Iran,

Fax: + 98.21.649.5880,

E-mail: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir This e-mail
address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view
it

Your
Excellency,

I am deeply concerned
at the news that Ms. Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami was detained on October
6, 2008 in the capital Tehran and maybe has been taken to
Section 209 of Evin Prison.

I call
for the immediate and unconditional release of Ms. Negin
Shaykh Al-Aslami as she
appears to be held solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of
expression and association. In addition she should be granted immediate and
regular access to her family, lawyer and to any necessary medical treatment as
she recently had a very complicated surgery.

I urge
you to guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity
of Ms. Negin Shaykh Al-Aslami. I also urge you to put an end to legal
discrimination against all women in Iran and to allow women's rights
campaigners to continue their peaceful activities without any obstacles.

Finally
I would like to express my hope that she will be released very soon.

Thank
you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Yours
respectfully,

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Head
of the Judiciary,

His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi,

Ministry
of Justice,

Park-e Shahr,

Tehran,

Islamic Republic of Iran,

Fax: +98.21.879.6671 / +98 21 3 311 6567,

Email: Irjpr@iranjudiciary.com / info@dadgostary-tehran.ir;

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Minister of Foreign Affairs,
His Excellency Mr. Manuchehr Motaki,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran,
Fax: + 98.21.390.1999,
Email: matbuat@mfa.gov;

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Ambassador Mr. Ahani,
Embassy of Iran in Brussels,
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt, 15 A
1050 Bruxelles, Belgium
Fax: + 32 2 762 39 15.
Email: iran-embassy@yahoo.com.

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