

# URGENT ACTION

## PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE ENDS HER HUNGER STRIKE

**Iranian human rights defender Narges Mohammadi, a prisoner of conscience, ended her hunger strike after 20 days on 16 July when she was allowed a 30-minute telephone call with her children. The Associate Prosecutor has given her a written commitment, stating that she will be allowed to call her children once a week.**

Human rights defender and prisoner of conscience **Narges Mohammadi** ended her hunger strike on 16 July after she was granted permission to have a 30-minute telephone call with her nine-year-old twins the same day. In an open letter she wrote from inside Tehran's Evin Prison, published on 23 July, she said that the Associate Prosecutor (who works under the direct supervision of the Prosecutor General) has given her a written commitment, stating that she can have one telephone call with her children a week. She had been on hunger strike since 27 June in protest at the authorities' refusal to allow her to speak with her children. Her twins had to move abroad on 17 July 2015 to live with their father, as there was nobody to look after them in Iran after her arrest.

Narges Mohammadi has several serious health conditions, including a neurological disorder, and needs daily medication, as well as ongoing specialized medical care, which she cannot receive in prison. Her physical condition further deteriorated during her hunger strike. On 9 July, she was transferred from Evin Prison to a medical clinic in Tehran for treatment, as she was suffering from heart palpitations and a drop in her blood pressure. In response to her worsening physical health and the global attention that her hunger strike had received, Narges Mohammadi was threatened by the authorities and told to stop her hunger strike "because enemy media outlets [were] taking advantage of it." Narges Mohammadi was told that, if she did not stop her hunger strike, she would not be allowed to talk to her children, but she did not bow to this pressure.

Narges Mohammadi received a 16-year prison sentence after she was convicted, following an unfair trial in April 2016, of the charges of "founding an illegal group", "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security", and "spreading propaganda against the system". She was already serving a six-year prison sentence from a previous case. Her convictions are based solely on her peaceful human rights work.

### **Please write immediately in Persian, English, Arabic, French, Spanish, or your own language:**

- Calling on the Iranian authorities to release Narges Mohammadi immediately and unconditionally, as she is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for her peaceful human rights work;
- Urging them to allow her to continue having regular visits and telephone calls from her family, including her children, as well as contact with a lawyer of her own choosing;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending her release, she is provided with ongoing access to adequate specialized medical care outside prison and that she is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, which the denial of medical care can amount to.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 12 SEPTEMBER 2016 TO:**

Office of the Supreme Leader  
Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary  
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani  
Salutation: Your Excellency

**And copies to:**  
Prosecutor General of Tehran  
Abbas Ja'fari Dolat Abadi

**To ensure that all appeals reach their target, please send appeals to the above to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UK. Please send copies too.**

H.E. Mohammad Hassan Habibollahzadeh, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 16 PRINCES GATE LONDON SW7 1PT  
Tel: 02072254208 or 02072254209 Email: iranemb.lon@mfa.gov.ir

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the seventh update of UA 105/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE13/4401/2016/en/>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Narges Mohammadi's hunger strike triggered global outrage and thousands of people, including more than 100,000 Iranians, posted messages in solidarity with her during a Twitter campaign on 11 July with the hashtag #FreeNarges becoming the fifth highest trending topic on the social media platform at one point. In the open letter that Narges Mohammadi wrote after she spoke with her children on 16 July, she expressed her heartfelt gratitude to everyone who had supported her cause. She also paid tribute to fellow imprisoned mothers who are deprived of contact with their children, as well as women and mothers around the world. The letter also highlighted the plight of political prisoners in Iran.

Below is an excerpt from her letter:

*I know that during this time, I caused much worry for many people. I received beautiful, kind, and heart-warming messages from friends, compatriots, fellow prisoners, my dear colleagues [in human rights] from inside and outside the country, and human rights organizations announced their support and solidarity. I do not feel myself worthy or deserving of such kindness. With all my heart and soul, I thank each and every single dear person who, through their writings and comments and following up [of my case], resulted in the voice of my protest being heard. I am thankful and bow my head to them for their friendship...*

*During [the hunger strike], I protested against the oppression and threats made against political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. These constraints and intolerable pressures begin from the moment when the "accused" person is arrested and placed in solidarity confinement, which amounts to a blatant form of psychological torture (and has been deemed by the Supreme Court to be against both law and religion), and encompass the implementation of show trials, the imposition of heavy sentences and the placement of political prisoners in wards where they are deprived of humane living conditions.*

*In this regard, the additional hardships against female political prisoners and prisoners of conscience come to mind. The women's ward in Evin Prison is prohibited from having a telephone, even though, of the 27 female prisoners, 17 of them are mothers and four of them have young children. Two of those mothers are imprisoned at the same time as their husbands, leaving their young children without a guardian and, until now, they have been denied any [prison] leave...*

Following an unfair trial before Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran in April 2016, Narges Mohammadi was sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment, which consisted of 10 years for the charge of "founding an illegal group", five years for "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security", and one year for "spreading propaganda against the system". The court used as "evidence" against her interviews she gave to international media, as well as her March 2014 meeting with the European Union's then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton. If her conviction and sentence are upheld, Narges Mohammadi will have to serve at least 10 further years in prison on the most serious charge of "founding an illegal group", in addition to the six years she is already serving from a previous case. She also faces a charge of "insulting officers while being transferred to a hospital" in a separate case. This charge was brought against her after she filed a complaint with regards to the degrading and inhumane treatment she received by prison guards when she was transferred out of prison to hospital for examinations, including their refusal to allow her a confidential consultation with her doctors.

Narges Mohammadi is critically ill. She suffers from a pulmonary embolism (a blockage in the blood vessel that carries blood from the heart to the lungs) and a neurological disorder that has resulted in seizures and temporary partial paralysis. She requires ongoing specialized medical care, which she cannot receive in prison.

Further information on UA: 105/15 Index: MDE 13/4578/2016 Issue Date: 1 August 2016