

A Call for Urgent Action

Freedom of Association and Assembly in Iran

#FoAAIRAN2019

#freedomofassociationiran

link to petition: <http://chng.it/nSVfSSRTmb>



A VOICE FOR
IRANIAN CIVIL
SOCIETY

 **VolunteerActivists**



Iranian authorities have long been pursuing a strategy to eradicate independent and authentic civic action. Civic space is shrinking at an alarming rate, and authorities use all means to spread and promote a phobia of civil society. Civil society activists, especially environmental activists, labor union and teacher union activists, as well as human rights defenders have been wrongfully persecuted. Eight environmental activists are sitting in prison on charges of espionage, four of whom are additionally charged with "sowing corruption on earth". If convicted, they will face death penalty.

Another environmental expert, **Dr. Kavous Seyed Emami**, died in detention, and the circumstances of his death are unclear.

Human rights defenders and lawyers are targeted with extreme persecution and unjust sentencing, as is the case of **Nasrin Sotoudeh** – human rights lawyer – sentenced to 38 years of prison and 148 lashes, or **Nargess Mohammadi** – a human rights defender – sentenced to 16 years in prison.

The Iranian Parliament is now looking into passing a draft bill to create and put in force a Media Council, which, if passed into law, will be in charge of issuance or cancellation of journalist license and put an end to independent journalism in Iran.

These human rights violations are enhanced by the fact that the judiciary does not act independently and does not follow due processes when handing judgements on human rights defenders.

Given this closed civic space and impunity on the part of Iranian authorities, we urge our civil society partners to join this petition to call for greater accountability for human rights violations in Iran.

Specific Tasks:

We, the undersigned, call on the Government of Iran to create and maintain, in law and in practice, an enabling environment for Iranian civil society activists and organizations, in accordance with the rights enshrined in the UN Declaration on Human Rights, the ICCPR, the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and Human Rights

Council resolutions 22/6, 27/5 and 27/31.

In light of the restrictions facing civil society in Iran we call on Iranian authorities for the following:

- Respect the civic right of its citizens to establish and actively engage with civil society organizations in full independence, and remove legal and policy measures that unwarrantedly limit the right to association and assembly.
- Recognize the right of its citizens to peaceful assembly, and adopt a policy which, in accordance with international standards, requires a simple notification of assemblies being held, rather than explicit permission being needed to assemble.
- Legalize the existence of labor unions and create an enabling environment for them, as per ILO's Conventions CO87 and CO98, to raise issues affecting their members without fear of intimidation or arrest.
- Refrain from the practice of associating the work of civil society with unfounded accusations that are linked to the security of the state, and ensure that civil society representatives are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear of undue hindrance, obstruction or legal and administrative harassment.
- Amend all restrictive provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Cyber Crime Laws, so that they are in line with international human rights and civil society standards.
- Refrain from adopting any laws, including the IRI Media Council, providing for censorship or undue control over the content of the media, both social and conventional, and ensure that freedom of expression is safeguarded in all forms.
- Unconditionally and immediately release all civil society representatives, human rights defenders and citizens who have been detained for exercising their fundamental rights to the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression.