

## PRESS RELEASE

### Iran Human Rights Documentation Center Condemns Release of Mykonos Killers

(New Haven, December 11, 2007) - The Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC) greets with concern the decision of the German government to release and deport convicted assassins Kazem Darabi and Abbas Hossein Rhayel before the completion of the sentences they received for their part in the 1992 Mykonos Restaurant murders which left four people dead.

In September 1992 a team assembled by agents of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) murdered three leading members of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) and a close colleague in the Mykonos Restaurant in Berlin. The team was assembled by Kazem Darabi and an Iranian intelligence officer, Abdol-Rahman Banihashemi. Abbas Rhayel, a veteran member of Hezbollah, was one of the gunmen who actually carried out the murders. The attack was one of a series of assassinations designed to intimidate and disrupt the activities of political opponents of the Islamic Republic in countries as diverse as the United States, Austria, Dubai, France and Turkey. The IHRDC investigated the circumstances surrounding the murders in its report *Murder at Mykonos: Anatomy of a Political Assassination*.

Darabi and Rhayel have been released at the earliest opportunity allowed under German law and, in Darabi's case, in direct contravention of the recommendation of the judge who tried his case. The IHRDC is concerned that the German authorities may now consider the Mykonos case closed despite the fact that there are still three outstanding arrest warrants relating to the murders. Abdol-Rahman Banihashemi and getaway driver Farajollah Haider both managed to flee to Iran after the attack and the ultimate architect of the killings, former Head of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security Ali Fallahian, is still an important figure in Iranian politics. Fallahian is the subject of an Interpol Red Notice and national warrants have been issued for his arrest in Germany, Switzerland and Argentina. Until these three men have been brought to justice the Mykonos case cannot be considered closed, despite political pressures to the contrary.

"Continued international attempts to prosecute key figures in the Mykonos case such as Ali Fallahian and Abdol-Rahman Banihashemi are vitally important. As fugitives from justice neither man can easily travel overseas for fear of arrest, they may not yet be in prison but they are not entirely at liberty either, and that is a small victory for the victims of their crimes," said Tom Parker, Executive Director of the IHRDC.

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***Murder at Mykonos: Anatomy of a Political Assassination*** is currently available in English and Farsi on IHRDC's website at <http://www.iranhrdc.org>. This report is the first in a planned series of three reports on Iran's international campaign of political assassination.

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