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## Iran sentences Bahari to 13 years in prison, 74 lashes



Newsweek

New York, May 10, 2010—The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns a 13-year prison sentence handed down to Iranian-Canadian journalist [Maziar Bahari](http://www.cpj.org/tags/maziar-bahari) (<http://www.cpj.org/tags/maziar-bahari>) in absentia on Sunday.

*Newsweek* correspondent Bahari, who was held in detention for four months on manufactured anti-state charges in 2009, was sentenced by a Tehran Revolutionary Court on Sunday to 13 years in prison, in addition to 74 lashes.

Bahari received a sentence of five years in prison for “congregation and mutiny with the intent to commit crimes against national security,” four years for “collecting and keeping confidential and classified documents,” one year for “propagation against the regime,” two years for “insulting the [Supreme] Leader,” six months for “insulting the President,” and one year and 74 lashes for “disruption of public order.”

Authorities interrogated Bahari for four months, he told CPJ, and coerced him to “confess” to a host of serious criminal acts on Iranian television. He was then convicted for an entirely different set of crimes.

“We condemn the conviction of Maziar Bahari,” said CPJ’s Middle East and North Africa program coordinator, Mohamed Abdel Dayem. “Bahari’s trial bears absolutely no resemblance to a legal process. The sentence is arbitrary and punitive and is unrelated to the initial charges, which were themselves falsified. The conviction is a reminder to us that the dozens of Iranian journalists [who remain in jail](http://cpj.org/2010/05/iran-remains-worlds-worst-jailer-of-journalists.php) (<http://cpj.org/2010/05/iran-remains-worlds-worst-jailer-of-journalists.php>) are at the mercy of a cruel and vindictive regime.”

Bahari has been part of an international [campaign](http://www.oursocietywillbeafreesociety.org/) (<http://www.oursocietywillbeafreesociety.org/>) that includes CPJ called “Our Society Will Be a Free Society,” advocating for the release of imprisoned Iranian journalists and writers, and has made numerous statements and appearances on their behalf.

Today CPJ and the Overseas Press Club of America sent [a letter to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](http://cpj.org/2010/05/letter-from-cpj-opc-to-iran.php) (<http://cpj.org/2010/05/letter-from-cpj-opc-to-iran.php>) calling on him to bring an end to a nearly year-long campaign of harassment and intimidation of critical Iranian journalists working domestically and abroad. The letter was signed by nearly 200 prominent media figures who attended the Overseas Press Club’s awards ceremony in New York on April 22.

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