

WORLD MOVEMENT for DEMOCRACY

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Democracy Alert

Iranian Journalist Arrested, on Trial on Spying Charges

A prominent Iranian Journalist, Siamak Pourzand was detained by the Office of the Public Morals Police on the evening of November 24, 2001, with no charges given. After four months with no clear charges leveled, he is now charged with espionage and threatening national security. His trial began on March 7. He has been held at the State Inspectorate, to which a number of other Iranian intellectuals, reformist writers, and journalists have recently been summoned. According to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, Pourzand has been denied his right to a fair trial and has had no access to lawyers during his incommunicado detention. In addition, although he has been in ill health, he has had no access to needed medicine.

The 73-year old journalist runs the Tehran Cultural Centre, and has worked as a cultural commentator for reformist newspapers, most of which have been shut down in an ongoing press crackdown by the hard-line judiciary in Iran in response to the reformists' sweep of parliamentary elections in February 2000. Pourzand is the husband of a human rights lawyer and women's rights activist in Iran, Mehrangiz Kar. She was herself imprisoned for charges in connection with her participation in a social and cultural conference in Berlin in April 2000. She is currently in the United States for medical treatment.

Starting with Pourzand's arrest, the Iranian judicial authority has recently increased its pressure on reformist intellectuals in Iran. Over 20 journalists and writers have been investigated by the Office of the Public Morals Police without any specific charges. They have also been intimidated and threatened with physical violence by interrogators in that office. These summonses and abductions have led to protests by reformers, including the Culture Minister Ahmad Masjed Jamei and a number of pro-reform legislators.

For more information about Pourzand's case and ongoing repression of intellectuals in Iran, see the following:

- [Amnesty International's Report of Pourzand's Arrest](#)
- ["Iran: Pourzand's 'Trial' a Mockery of the Law"](#)
- ["Iran: Reformists Targeted by Unknown Agents in New Hard-Line Crackdown"](#)
- ["Iran: Journalist's Trial Indicates Hard-Line Crackdown"](#)
- ["Hard-Liners Put Iranian Journalist on Trial on Spying Charges,"](#) *New York Times*, March 14, 2002, A13
- ["Tell Me, Where is My Father?"](#) by Azadeh Pourzand, *Washington Post*, December 30, 2001, B7

A number of international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have called for actions to urge that Pourzand be treated fairly. If you wish to send appeals seeking clarification on his arrest and the charges against him and urging a fair trial, please write to the following:

Leader of the Islamic Republic
His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue

<http://www.wmd.org/alert/apr402.html>

SP00057

4/10/2002

Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Ayatollah Khamenei, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency
Email: webmaster@wilayah.org; (on the subject line write: For the attention of the office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei, Qom)

President
His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: President Khatami, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: khatami@president.ir
Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary
His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahruqi
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of Judiciary, Tehran, Iran
Faxes: +98-21-879-6671 (number may be unreliable; please mark "care of Director of International Affairs, Judiciary")
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence
His Excellency Hojjatoleslam 'Ali Younesi
Second Negarestan Street
Pasdaran Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Intelligence Minister, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:
Minister of Foreign Affairs
His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Tehran, Iran
Fax: +98-21-390-1999 (number may be unreliable; please mark "care of the Human Rights Department, Foreign Ministry")
Salutation: Your Excellency

Parliamentary Committee
Mohsen Mirdamadi Najafabadi
Article 90 Commission (Komisyon-e Asl-e Navad), Majles-e Shura-ye Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Majles, Tehran, Iran
Telex: +98-21-42-32 ICAI IR
Faxes: +98-21-646-1746 (Can be difficult to reach, please be patient)
Salutation: Dear Sir

Parliament of Iran
Speaker Mehdi Karubi
Fax: +98-21-646-4745

Interests Section of the Islamic Republic of Iran
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2209 Wisconsin Avenue
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Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
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For further information:

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