

November 15, 2011

The Iran Human Rights Documentation Center Welcomes Gissou Nia as Executive Director

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – The Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Gissou Nia as its new Executive Director.

According to Elizabeth T. Gray Jr., Chair of IHRDC’s Board of Directors, “We are immensely pleased that Ms. Nia is coming back to IHRDC as its Executive Director. Her extensive experience in international criminal justice, and her deep knowledge of human rights issues in Iran and the greater Middle East, will help us build on our past work and move us into a phase of increased partnership with key institutional actors and individuals in the Iranian community and globally. Her interdisciplinary skills will be a great asset in leading IHRDC in continuing to monitor the human rights situation in Iran during a time of significant regional developments.”

Ms. Nia rejoins IHRDC from her recent posting on a trial team at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, The Netherlands. Prior to that, she was a Legal Analyst at IHRDC and led field investigations in Turkey and Europe to collect documentation and interview 150+ survivors of human rights abuses perpetrated by the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). Ms. Nia produced comprehensive reports on human rights violations of the rights of women and ethnic and religious minorities in Iran. She also advised governmental and regional bodies, policy makers, and non-governmental organizations on the human rights situation in Iran and the larger region.

Prior to her tenure at IHRDC, Ms. Nia worked on war crimes trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) where she represented former government ministers from Bosnia and Kosovo in pre-trial, trial, and appellate proceedings. In her post at the ICTY, Ms. Nia conducted field investigations in the former Yugoslavia, and specialized in the doctrines of joint criminal enterprise and command responsibility liability. Most recently, Ms. Nia assisted in proceedings at the International Criminal Court (ICC) related to allegations of crimes against humanity committed during the 2007/2008 post election violence in the Republic of Kenya.

Ms. Nia completed her undergraduate studies in political science at the University of California – Los Angeles and received her law degree from Rutgers University – Camden School of Law. She continues to lecture and publish widely on developments in international criminal justice at the ICTY, ICC and other international criminal tribunals, as well as the rule of law in post conflict and transitional societies, and the human rights situation in Iran.

IHRDC is a nonprofit organization based in New Haven, Connecticut that was founded in 2004 by a group of human rights scholars, activists, and historians. Its staff of human rights lawyers and researchers produce comprehensive and detailed reports on the human rights situation in Iran since the 1979 revolution. The Center’s goal is to encourage an informed dialogue among scholars and the general public in both Iran and abroad. The human rights reports and a database of documents relating to human rights in Iran are available to the public for research and educational purposes on the Center’s website. www.iranhrdc.org.

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