



Witness Statement of Fariba Davoodi Mohajer

Name: Fariba Davoodi Mohajer

Place of Birth: Tehran, Iran

Date of Birth:

Occupation: Journalist, Writer, Human Rights and Iranian Women's Rights Activist

Interviewing Organization: Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC)

Date of Interview: September 23, 2008

Interviewer: Habib Rahiab

Witnesses: None

This statement was prepared pursuant to an in-person interview with Mrs. Fariba Davoodi Mohajer. The statement consists of 54 paragraphs and 13 pages. The interview was conducted on September 23, 2008. The statement was approved by Mrs. Davoodi Mohajer on February 26, 2009.

Witness Statement

The History of Secret Prisons in Iran

1. The history of secret prisons in Iran goes back to the beginning of the Revolution. Iran has never had a unified [political] system, and fragmentation has marked the regime's [history] from its founding to the present. This fragmentation and factionalization led to the formation of secret prisons in Iran. In the past, each and every faction inside the regime had access to its own [government] channels which it used to suppress opponents. During the early years of the revolution, when the regime was consolidating its rule, groups such as the *Mujahedin-i Khalq* or the *Mujahedin-i Feda'i* (or other government-sponsored groups such as the *Basij* or the Revolutionary Guards) often relied on these illegal measures without repercussions.
2. However, after Khatami's victory in the election of 1997 (which became known as the victory of the 2nd of Khordad Front) the situation changed. The Ministry of Intelligence fell into the hands of Khatami's supporters after the commission of the Chain Murders. A number of the ministry's agents were either forced out or left voluntary. These individuals were absorbed by other intelligence organizations, such as the ones connected to the Revolutionary Guards or the Law Enforcement Forces. A particularly radical branch of these organizations established the Parallel Intelligence Apparatus (PIA).
3. Structural defects within the regime eventually led to partisanship and allowed political opponents of Khatami to exploit the friction between various power centers in order to protect their own interests. One of the agencies that entered the political fray during this period was the Judiciary, which established an Intelligence Protection Center that was linked to the PIA.
4. As the factional infighting between the reformists and conservatives worsened, radical elements within the regime that operated under the leadership of the PIA began to use secret prisons in an effort to crush the reformists. It is alleged that during the early years of the revolution the regime had confiscated or bought a large number of private residences owned by political opponents. Groups linked to the regime such as the Revolutionary Guards and the *Basij* used these confiscated residences to imprison and force confessions out of opponents. To the extent that little dissent existed within the regime during the early years and most regime opponents were foreign elements, there was little public resistance [regarding the use of secret prisons]. But this changed during Khatami's time. A number of individuals who backed the reform movement and were moderate supporters of the regime were arrested by plainclothes agents and disappeared. This caused an uproar and the issue of secret prisons became the subject of daily discussions in Iran.

5. I imagine that the allegation that secret prisons were housed in residential areas is true. Some of my friends were detained in a prison located in Youth Square. There are in fact no official detention facilities in close proximity to Youth Square. But a number of detainees were secretly held in this area (or perhaps in the underground area of Shah Abdol-Azim). They also took a number of bloggers to Vanak Square. From Vanak Square you could see the dome of the Hosseiniyhyih Ershad – no prisons exist there. They had taken another group of my friends to a prison near Tajrish and Niyavaran. There are only private residences around that area. So where were these individuals detained? It is apparent that these prisons must have been located in residential neighborhoods.
6. The regime also purchased some residential homes located close to government ministries such as the Ministry of Intelligence, the Revolutionary Guards, the *Basij*, and the Law Enforcement Forces for rather exorbitant amounts. Publicly, the goal of these purchases was to guarantee the security of military and intelligence facilities, but the aforementioned agencies also used these residences as detention facilities. These homes have retained their residential character but are now used for different purposes.
7. After the formation of the PIA, use of these locations and areas as secret prisons became commonplace. At that time the PIA was made up of radical elements within the Ministry of Intelligence, the Revolutionary Guards, and a group of young thugs from the *Basij* who had joined the Law Enforcement Forces. Some of these kids belonged to the Amir Mosque, or the ones who gathered at the Martyrs Mosque located on Ahang Avenue.
8. The PIA coordinated their arrests and interrogations with judges [working with the Judiciary]. The judge assigned to these cases was not impartial. He was responsible for conducting the investigations – he both supervised the interrogations and passed judgment. For example, Haddad Zareh Dehlavi, who was the judge assigned to my case supervised most of my interrogations after I was released from detention. He wanted me to cooperate with my interrogators and do as I was told. One time Judge Haddad said, “If you listen to your interrogators I will not charge you with any crimes.”
9. I suppose the PIA implemented and coordinated all the torture sessions [during detention]. Torture, solitary confinement, unsanitary conditions, lack of proper nourishment, lack of access to a doctor, intimidating stares by guards during the evening hours, lack of access to restroom facilities, lack of access to a lawyer and family members, physical abuse and other [violations] were all part of a system of punishment meted out by the PIA. Judge Haddad once informed me that “anyone who stays in these prisons for 45 days will confess to anything.” I am certain that Haddad was personally responsible for managing these secret prisons, and that the violent interrogations must have taken place pursuant to his wishes. Haddad was a head interrogator during the early years of the revolution, after which he became a judge. He tried many times to strike up conversation with me, but I refused to talk

- to him. He always attempted to convey his threats by using “nice” language. For example, he once told me “If you cooperate with your interrogators, your husband will be safe.”
10. The PIA illegally eavesdropped on the telephone conversations of targeted individuals weeks if not months before [the person’s arrest], and monitored the person’s activities and family/private relations. After identifying vulnerabilities in the individual’s personal life, they would (often illegally) arrest the individual and force her to explain her personal activities. When they uncovered moral or behavioral weaknesses they would coerce that individual into meeting their demands. For example, they would request the target to go in front of a camera and admit to political activities or crimes which she had not committed.
 11. For example, my interrogators asked me about telephone conversations I had had months prior. They didn’t only ask about the numbers I had dialed but about the content of the conversations that had taken place between me and others. Similarly, my interrogators asked about encounters I had with a group of personal friends and coworkers months ago. Fortunately they couldn’t find anything to take advantage of – otherwise they could have done whatever they wanted to me.
 12. The PIA was an effective tool used to defeat the reform movement. It was gradually able to take over non-military agencies and foster a creeping *coup d’état* that eventually hijacked the presidency and the parliament during Ahmadinejad’s time. Today the PIA has strengthened its grip on the entire country.

Unlawful Arrest

13. It was an afternoon day in February 2001 and I was bringing my daughter home from school. I realized that a few patrol vehicles were parked in front of our home. I suspected trouble. I parked my car in the garage and entered the house. I was about to close the door when I realized that some plainclothes men were attempting to enter the house by force. They neither requested permission to enter nor presented an arrest warrant. As soon as I asked them who they were and what they wanted the beatings started. They struck my sides and legs with their guns while others kicked my legs and knees. During the struggle one of my attackers’ hands hit my face and broke a tooth. I don’t think it was intentional, but the accident caused serious damage to my tooth (I was later forced to undergo surgery on the tooth). I don’t remember the exact number of individuals who attacked me, but my guess is that there were seven or eight of them. After a while one of them attempted to drag me out of the house but I resisted. I resisted because I had no idea who they were and what they wanted with me. When I fiercely resisted and stuck my foot out into the doorway [so I they couldn’t drag me out], one of them pressed the door on me so hard that my legs gave out. My ribs hurt badly and I felt as though my kidneys were about to explode. My daughter saw me from upstairs and screamed that they were attacking her mother. My husband, son and

relatives (who lived close by) hurried and tried to free me from my kidnapers. In the course of the ensuing skirmish my *hijab* was pulled off and I ran into the house to cover myself.

14. In response to the ensuing struggle between the plainclothes men who had attacked me and my family members, seven or eight more vehicles arrived at the house in an effort to assist the attackers. Our house was surrounded, and none of our neighbors were allowed to leave their homes. A little later, several plainclothes agents entered our house and began to rummage through our belongings. They violently searched our house from 3 p.m. until 11 p.m. They confiscated books, tapes, CDs, family photos and notebooks. Two female agents searched our bedroom because my husband forbid the men from entering.
15. They left the house at 11 p.m. and took me with them. As we were leaving, my husband told me to take care of myself and assured me that he would take care of things. By this he meant that I shouldn't worry about him; that he would contact international human rights organizations and media outlets. My husband and I had previously reached an understanding regarding [how to handle] these issues.
16. After we exited the house they forced me inside a patrol car. As soon as I entered the car they placed a sack over my head, and one of the agents ordered me to put my head down between my legs. For an hour or more they circled from one street to another so that I would lose track of where we were. Once they were certain that I had lost my bearings, the car stopped.

The Secret Prison

17. When we entered the yard two women conducted a body search and left. Then they took me through a narrow hallway threw me in a small cell measuring 1m by 1.5 m. They took off the blindfold I was wearing. A [thick] net covered the prison, allowing a faint light to enter. A male guard requested that I hand over my socks, hair band and *hijab*. I refused. I told them I didn't know where I was. The place didn't look like a prison at all. Then they threw me in another cell, which was as big as a coffin. The cell's height was similar to mine. It was extremely narrow and had no windows. The guard gave me a red card and told me to slide it underneath the cell door anytime I needed something. He warned me not to call out to a guard or knock on the cell door.
18. Soon thereafter the interrogation began and lasted until the morning. I vividly remember the first threatening words that came out of my interrogator's mouth. One of them said, "No one knows where this prison is, and none of the other prisoners know where they are. So don't even try to contact anyone on the outside." Interrogators didn't inform me of my charges, but started interrogating me based on my beliefs. I asked for an attorney. One of the interrogators responded with: "You think you are in the U.S.?" I told them that I'm in extreme pain and I want to see a doctor. But they didn't listen. I insisted that a medical

examiner see me before we continued with the interrogations. The interrogators paid no attention to my requests and continued on with the questioning. It wasn't an interrogation really – it was an inquisition. For example, they asked “do you believe in the Supreme Leadership of Khamenei or not?” Or “Do you believe in democracy or not?” Or they asked, “Do you believe in the *Velayat-i Faqih*¹ or not?” Or they pressed me on whether I followed Montazeri. All of these questions concerned my beliefs and had nothing to do with charges presented in the Iranian penal code. They wanted to know what I believed in and what I didn't. They asked all of these questions in threatening and terrifying fashion in a very small room.

19. The interrogation room was small and measured 1.5m in width and 170m in length. They sat me in a student desk facing the wall. They wanted me to use the desk to write down my confessions. Two or three interrogators would sit behind me and ask questions. A strong spotlight shined in my face. The interrogations lasted for hours. Sometimes the interrogators sat so close to me that I could hear their breathing and feel their breath on the back of my chador. The close proximity between me and my interrogators made me extremely uncomfortable.

Threats, Intimidation and Insults

20. My interrogators wanted me to repeat certain words and sentences. For example, they ordered me to say that I hated my husband, and that I was interested in a political activist. Or they told me to say that I am in love with someone else. They wanted me to repeat these sentences so that I would eventually believe them.
21. My interrogators also relied on psychological pressure. Some of these pressures were directed at members of my family. They said they would arrest my son and torture my husband. They said no one knows, or will ever know, where I am. That if I didn't give in to their demands I would stay in this prison for a very long time. A couple of times they threatened to detain me with AIDS-infected prisoners so that I, too, would contract AIDS. They wanted to break me and render me hopeless by telling me that no one cares about my release or my whereabouts. A few times they even blamed me for the [possible] death of my mother. They would tell me that my mother is dying of heartache and that I would be responsible for her death. They fed me horrible information regarding the health of my mother and told me that she is seriously ill, and that if I refused to confess I would never see her again.
22. What I realized during the course of the interrogation was that before my arrest, they had conducted a lot of inappropriate research about my personal and family relationships. For example, they would ask why I had gone to a particular

¹ *Velayat-i Faqih* literally means “Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist.” It is a *Shi'a* religious doctrine advanced and developed by Ayatollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, and provides the theoretical underpinning for the theocratic system of government which currently existing in the Islamic Republic.

- person's house on a particular day, or why I had called them. Months had passed since the events they questioned me about. During the course of the interrogation, I realized that my arrest was not a sudden incident and that things weren't as simple as I had originally imagined. I had been selected for targeting months ahead of time. If they found the slightest weakness in my family or personal life, [they would exploit that weakness] and do whatever they wanted.
23. Some torture methods were relied upon on a daily basis. For example, when they took me to the interrogation room they played a recording that repeated the following sentence over and over: "Woe to the forgotten captive." This recording was extremely troubling and lasted for hours. [During this time] no one came to check up on me and see how I was doing. I was truly a forgotten captive. They had, in a very deliberate manner, created an extremely suffocating psychological environment. Another method used was the repetition of a single sentence by the interrogator. For instance, one my interrogators would start with "The truth shall set you free" every time he entered the room. He repeated this Arabic phrase over and over again – which caused great anxiety within me. Yet another method was to leave me unattended [for hours] and expose me to the tortured voices of other prisoners. Many times they left me in the interrogation room for hours while they forced prisoners in the next room to beg and plead until they gave up and would say things like "I'll say whatever you want me to."
24. Interrogations also involved accusations and insults. They accused my nine-year old daughter with indecent acts. When I protested and mentioned that my daughter was a child, they insulted and scorned me and said that I knew nothing about my daughter. They used words like "fraud," "stupid" and "dumb." My head interrogator was a soldier and was particularly fond of lengthy interrogations. When he arrived he would take off his prosthetic leg, place it on the chair behind me and begin asking questions. He would curse and yell at me. When he got tired he would leave and another interrogator would come and continue the questioning.
25. In addition to this, my interrogators would often scream at me during evening sessions and force me to confess to crimes with heavy sentences. For example, they alleged that I had conspired against the regime and that I should confess and reveal the nature of my covert acts. They ordered me to confess to my role as a liaison between the student movement, the Religious-Nationalists² and Ayatollah Montazeri. They wanted me to admit to receiving money from Montazeri and transferring the funds to Sahaji so that he could use the money finance the student movement. They also requested that I reveal the amount I had received from foreign governments and the method I used to disburse the funds amongst reformist newspapers. The third issue they wanted me to confess to involved a film regarding the Chain Murders. They wanted me to confess to my role in distributing the film in an effort to strike a blow against the regime. They said that I

² The Religious-Nationalists, or *Melli-Mazhabis* (as they are known in Iran), are a group of politically active individuals affiliated with the reformist movement.

- had no choice but to go in front of a television camera and apologize for my past actions and admit to Montazeri's role in directing the student movement. I believe the reason for my arrest was to link the student movement to Ayatollah Montazeri and provide a basis for suppressing the former.
26. The purpose of my interrogators' threats was to connect me to serious charges. They accused me of being a spy and reminded me that the punishment for spying is execution. They alleged that I had a relationship with the U.S. government, and provided the name of a coworker who had confessed to my being a spy and working for the U.S. government. And then they would recommend that I cooperate with them so as to not cause more trouble for myself.
27. Screaming and yelling was commonplace during my interrogations. The interrogator yelled, slammed the door, threw the chair at the door/wall, and then stood over me and threateningly ordered me to confess to what they wanted. Then he would hand me a paper and tell me to write about myself. He would then read my writings and tell me that this is not what they had in mind – I had to write down that which they wanted me to write down. When one interrogator got tired another would replace him and continue with the interrogation.
28. One of the interrogators attempted to play the role of the good cop and do the exact opposite of what the bad cop was doing. He treated me with kindness and made big promises. For example, he would tell me that if I cooperated with them I would live a comfortable and quiet life. He assured me that I could continue my current journalistic activities and be a critic of the government – that I could curse and insult the government at will. On the condition, of course, that I report the activities of the opposition. When the good cop tired of his role, I had to face the harsh interrogations yet again.
29. The long interrogations were incredibly difficult for me. These types of interrogations often lasted until the next morning and continued on through the day. The pressure that the door put on my sides and kidney [during my arrest] caused me to bleed from my bladder. As a result, I frequently needed to use the restroom, which was unusual. But I couldn't go to the restroom as often as I needed because I was always in the presence of male interrogators. Also, they didn't know about my medical issue in the beginning and so they didn't let me use the bathroom until the third day when my injury worsened and the interrogators realized that I was seriously ill. From that point on they allowed me to use the toilet during the interrogations. My need to access the restroom was not only an issue during the interrogation sessions. (I often needed to use the bathroom when I was in my coffin-like cell too.) Yet they didn't allow me to use the restroom [when I was in my cell]. Instead they gave me a glass bottle to use.
30. After 12 days they finally realized that I was sick. A male doctor came to examine me. The doctor was blindfolded like I was. They sat the doctor behind me. The doctor complained but they paid him no attention.

31. Interrogations were only interrupted when it was time to pray. During *azzan*³ they returned me to my cell so I could pray but they never took my blindfold off. I was blindfolded even when I visited the restroom. Detainees were never allowed to enter the hallways at the same time, and the cell doors were never opened simultaneously.

Lack of Accommodations

32. I was confronted with lots of problems at the male facility. The lack of female guards and feminine hygiene products caused lots of problems for me. After a while, I needed feminine hygienic products while in prison. But they were not accessible there and I could not ask the male guard or the male interrogators to bring me some. So I requested that they bring in a woman so I could share my needs with her. When she came, I realized that like me, she was blindfolded. I told her what hygienic products I needed. That woman told me that during her time working in the prisons, which exceeded 15 years, she had never seen a case like mine. She told me that she didn't know where they had brought her either, and added that they circled around the city for a while so that she would lose her sense of direction. I saw that woman only twice. Both times were when she brought me female hygienic products.
33. Going to the bathroom was also a problem. They refused to take off my blindfold. A male guard would hold one end of a rope and I would hold the other end. They would then transfer me from the narrow hallway to the bathroom, and would not allow me to stay there for more than a few minutes.
34. One other issue that I faced while in prison was the lack of access to a shower. In prison, the shower had no doors and cleaning supplies were used only for the men. When I wanted to take a shower, one of the guards would stand behind the door so I could take a shower. I wanted to close the door, but the guard wouldn't let me. I could not take a shower with the door open, in the presence of an unknown man. Of course the guard assured me that he would stand behind the door and turn around so I could take my shower. But I just couldn't convince myself to take a shower in the guard's presence, even if he stood behind the door and turned around so I could take my shower.
35. My fears were to some extent justified because one of the midnight guards whose shift was every other night checked me out from the small window of my cell for 10 to 15 minutes. The way he looked at me worried me. When he came and stared at me, I covered myself with three dirty blankets that they had given me the very first day (one of which was covered in the vomit of a previous detainee) and I avoided looking at the door. But the guard continued to stare at me. I think he had evil intentions, otherwise why would he stare at me so late at night? There was

³ The Muslim call to prayer.

- enough light in the room to ensure that I was alive and hadn't escaped from prison. So why did that prison guard keep staring at me?
36. Finally, after some time, one of the older guards secretly promised to allow me to close the door while taking a shower. He came through on his promise. This was the only shower that I was able to take during my detention.
37. They wouldn't let me go outside so I could get some fresh air. They always kept me inside. They threatened me and told me that I'd never again see the outside world.
38. N/A

Incommunicado Detention

39. They rarely allowed me to use the telephone to contact the outside world. When they did allow me to [use the phone], they did so based on their needs and desires. For example, when my family or husband gave interviews with domestic and international media outlets and requested assistance from international human rights organizations, my interrogators allowed me to call home and ask my family not to contact foreign radio stations or provide interviews. They also wanted me [to tell them] to forget about hiring a lawyer for me, attempting to contact me or claiming that I was being held in an undisclosed location. They instructed me to tell my husband that I was not being mistreated and that I did not wish to retain a lawyer. When I made these calls I was blindfolded and my words were monitored. A guard stood above me and listened to my conversations. As soon as I exchanged several phrases with my family they would disconnect the phone.
40. After a while I realized that this prison was very small, that the number of solitary cells was very limited and that the [other] detainees were all men. (This may have been the first time a woman was kept in a secret prison along with men.) I came to realize this from the manner in which the guards paced and the number of cell doors that opened. When a guard went from one end of the hallway to the other you could easily hear his footsteps. The absence of female detainees in this prison was another indication of this.
41. I don't know where this prison was located. One day I fainted from exhaustion during an interrogation session. I think it was the tenth or twelfth day of my interrogation. They splashed water on my face. The head interrogator ordered them to bring me some food. (The food inside the prison was horrible.) He thought I had fainted because I was hungry. They brought me a warm pizza – it was obvious that they had brought it from somewhere close by. The pizza box read "Pizza Anya." Pizza Anya was located close to Eshratyab Square in *Sipah* Square. From the pizza box I guessed that I must have been arrested by the Revolutionary Guards and that I was being detained in one of their secure prison locations.

42. On three separate occasions I was confronted with other detainees. The purpose of this was to testify against the others. One time they confronted me with Sahaji and filmed the encounter. They wanted me to testify against Sahaji but I refused. After Sahaji left, my interrogator yelled at me and asked me why I had refused to listen to them. Another time they confronted me with Ali Afshari. Judge Haddad was also present during this session. Yet another time they brought me face to face with Seyyed Montazeri. After he left they cursed me and used words like “stupid,” “idiot,” “dirty” and “traitor.”
43. Of course I had my own “red line,” and I refused to allow them to insult me mercilessly. After all their interrogation methods failed to yield results, I refused to confess, my husband continued to give radio interviews (despite my requests from prison) and international media and human rights organizations began to pressure the government of Iran, the PIA had no choice but to release me. My presence [in detention] was no longer to their advantage.
44. After a month and a few days I was released from detention after posting bail. But my freedom was subject to monitoring and surveillance. After my release I was confronted with two problems.

The Psychological Effects of Detention

45. The first problem was the psychological effect of caused by the abuse [I suffered] in prison. I would regularly get lost on the way to and from home. I wouldn't know where I was, even though I was raised in Tehran and was completely familiar with the area around my home. And sometimes I fell out of my bed and had terrifying nightmares about torture, insults and abuse.
46. The second problem related to the harassing telephone calls and illegal surveillance conducted by the PIA. One of the members of the PIA who was a commander of the Law Enforcement Forces once told me that they currently used “soft tactics” to fight the opposition. He described this method of suppression as a way of imprisoning the opposition in an open space. This strategy involved persecution, telephone warnings, surveillance of political activists, summoning [of these individuals] to [the offices of] judicial authorities, and forcing them to report on their activities. The aforementioned person described this strategy to be extremely useful, and told me that with this strategy the target did all the work and there was no longer a need to monitor them. Even though the target is not really free, the strategy allows the regime to escape criticism from international human rights organizations.
47. After being freed from the secret prison, the PIA subjected me to these [soft arrests.] They called me and threatened me many times. They had me under surveillance, stopped my car from time to time and interrogated me, and

summoned me to court occasionally and interrogated me there for hours. This method of interrogation and unlawful surveillance was repeated several times.

Harassment After Release

48. The PIA caused me problems in two ways after my release. First were the back-to-back interrogations that occurred in the chambers of the judge assigned to my case, which I referred to previously. And second were the surveillance, threats and kidnappings that occurred periodically and unexpectedly. In relation to the latter, I can easily say that I was under constant surveillance for a year after my release.
49. With regard to the first problem, they would call me randomly and asked me to go to Judge Haddad's office. I was threatened for everything I did. Once there, I was threatened for my activities and interrogated the same way I was interrogated in the secret detention center. The interrogation room was next to Judge Haddad's office. Interrogations usually started at 9:00 a.m. and continued until mid-day, although lasting sometimes until 10:00 p.m. In the first week after my release, this type of interrogation happened three times. I was interrogated for several hours each time. I remember spending the first three days after my release in the room next to Judge Haddad's office. I was interrogated and questioned about my beliefs in Judge Haddad's office two to three times a week in the first month after my release. Sometimes Judge Haddad personally interrogated me. He made me sit facing the wall. Once during an interrogation, Judge Haddad said, "Your time is over now. You have failed; you are crushed and defeated."
50. After some time, the frequency of these types of interrogations reduced to once a week. After that whenever I became active or something happened in Tehran, they called, questioned and interrogated me in Judge Haddad's office.
51. After two years my trial convened. It was not attended by my lawyer or journalists. The court handed down a three year suspended sentence and warned me that if I continue to engage in political activity I would again be imprisoned.
52. The second problem occurred as a result of the kidnappings and constant surveillance. I could not predict when and how they would capture me. I was always nervous because all of a sudden they would appear in front of me and would start threatening me. For example, someone once threatened me with a gun on Shahrak Gharb Avenue in front of the Karaj Golestan. He warned me not to make a scene and ordered me to follow him quietly. It was around 8:00 p.m. and it was already dark. They took me to the back alley. I think I had seen one of the guys in prison during the same day that they confronted me with Seyyed Montazeri so that I would testify against him. Yes – I had seen him there, because at that time I didn't have a blindfold on. They threatened me again and told me to stop my political activities and not give interviews to the media. They didn't keep

- me for long, but they made some serious threats and assured me that they wouldn't [be as lenient] next time.
53. The second time was around 8 p.m. in the evening during *Ramadan*. They had arrested two of my friends and colleagues already. I was worried. I got a flat tire. Suddenly, I saw three people. One of them sat next to me, and the other two were on a motorcycle. They took me to a back alley. Again, they came up with same old threats and intimidations, like asking me to stop my political activities (or members of my family would face difficulties).
54. The third time, it was in a parking garage in one of the shopping centers of Tehran. I went upstairs to shop when someone threatened me to follow him with a gun that was under his coat. This occurred before the start of a demonstration. They asked me to cancel the demonstration.