



IPA Publishes List of Arrested Iranian Journalists, Publishers & Writers & Calls for their Immediate Release

Geneva, 31 July 2009 - For immediate release

Following the massive wave of arrests targeting bloggers, journalists, publishers and writers, the International Publishers Association (IPA) publishes a list of some of those under arrest (see Note for Editors), and demands their immediate release. IPA also calls on the Iranian authorities to drop the investigation of Arash Hejazi, the publisher who provided the first aid to Neda Agha-Soltan, killed during the street protests on 20 June 2009.

Publisher Arash Hejazi (Caravan publishing) is pictured on video trying to help 26 year-old Neda Agha-Soltan during her last moments. On 29 June 2009, Mr. Ahmadinejad called for a probe into Neda's "suspicious" death, and sent a letter to judiciary chief Ayatollah Mahmud Hashemi-Shahrudi requesting a serious investigation to help identify "the elements" behind Neda's killing. A few days later, Iran's police chief, Ismail Ahmadi Moghaddam, declared that Arash Hezaji, Paulo Coelho's publisher in Farsi, who was present at the death of Neda during opposition street protests in Tehran, was under investigation by both Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and by the international policy agency (Interpol). Since then, Interpol has denied any knowledge of the case.

Bjorn Smith-Simonsen, Chair of IPA's Freedom to Publish Committee, declares: "A climate of terror has taken over Iran since the 12 June elections. Massive arrests have been targeting journalists, bloggers, writers and publishers as a way to stifle freedom of expression. Ahead of Iran's review by the United Nations Human Rights Council, IPA is urging the Iranian authorities to release immediately all the journalists, bloggers, writers and publishers who have been engaged in non-violent demonstrations, thus exercising their right to freedom of expression. In addition, IPA is also calling on the Iranian authorities to drop the investigation of Arash Hejazi, the publisher who provided the first aid to young Neda, killed during the street protests on 20 June".

Notes for Editors:

Iran is now being described as the second largest prison for journalists worldwide following the wave of arrests among the intellectuals, including publishers, since the June street protests. The following is a list of named arrested journalists, writers, and publishers since the protests of last month:

Ahmad Zeidabadi - Journalist
Maziar Bahari - Journalist
Said Leylaz - Journalist

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Homa Rosta - Actress
Jila Bani Yaghub - Journalist
Issa Saharkhiz - Journalist
Keivan Samimi - Magazine Publisher
Abdolreza Tajik - Editor
Mojtaba Pourmohsen - Journalist
Mehdi Khazali - Publisher (Hayyan)
Kambiz Norouzi - Secretary of the Legal Committee of the Iranian Journalists' Association
Alireza Beheshti - Editor in Chief (Kalameh Sabz newspaper)
Shokoufeh Azar - Journalist
Behzad Basho - Cartoonist
Hengameh Shahidi - Journalist
Mahsa Amrabadi - Journalist
Masood Bastani - Journalist, Blogger
Misagh Bolhasani - Poet
Mohammad-Reza Yazdan Panah - Journalist
Majid Saidi - Photographer
Satiar Emami - Photographer
Said Movahedi - Photographer
Mehdi Zaboli - Photographer
Shadi Sadr - Journalist
Arash Hejazi - Writer, Publisher (Prosecuted)

In June 2009, IPA launched a report on freedom to publish in Iran entitled "Freedom to Publish Under Siege in the Islamic Republic of Iran". The report describes the mechanisms of censorship used in Iran and makes specific demands to curb censorship through an "IPA Road Map for Freedom to Publish in Iran". It is available at: www.internationalpublishers.org/images/pdf/FTP/PositionPapers/final%20iran_report.pdf

More about IPA:

The International Publishers Association (IPA) is the global non-governmental organisation representing all aspects of book and journal publishing worldwide. Established in 1896, IPA's mission is to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness for publishing as a force for cultural and political advancement worldwide. IPA is an industry association with a human rights mandate. IPA currently has 65 member associations in 53 countries.

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