

# Amnesty International Nowruz Action

## کارزار نوروز عفو بین الملل

The Iranian holiday Nowruz نوروز (“New Day”) is an ancient holiday celebrated on the first day of spring to welcome in the New Year. Traditional Nowruz celebrations include the preparation of a Haft Sin table which literally means the seven S’s. Seven items beginning with the Persian letter sin (equivalent to the English S) and which represent spring time are set out. To honor this tradition, we have selected seven cases, all of them prisoners for whom we have been campaigning. Several of them have been sentenced to long prison terms for their peaceful activism and several are in poor health. On this Nowruz we want to remember them with solidarity and advocacy actions:

### Solidarity Action

- Write a solidarity message for people featured in the Nowruz action and/or their families on a blank postcard or piece of paper
- Take a picture of it
- Share your solidarity message on your social media - hashtags [#NowruzAction](#) & [#AmnestyNowruz](#). You can also tag us so that we can repost your message:
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AitolIranActionCircle/>
  - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/aiiactoronto>
  - Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/amnesty\\_toronto\\_iranac/](https://www.instagram.com/amnesty_toronto_iranac/)
- If you don’t have a social media account or would like us to share your message via Amnesty Iran Action Circle’s social media accounts, please email a picture of your message to [IranCoordinator@amnesty.ca](mailto:IranCoordinator@amnesty.ca) (please put NowruzAction in the subject)

Suggested messages: “Nowruz mobarak نوروز مبارک”, “Thinking of you at Nowruz time” or “You’re not forgotten”.

### Advocacy Action

- Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media. Suggested tweets and Instagram posts for each person can be found in the following pages
- Sign an online petition: Suggested petition for each person (when available) can be found below
- Write an appeal in your words and send it to the Head of Judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi:  
*Head of Judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi*  
*c/o H.E. Majid Takht Ravanchi*  
*Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran*  
*622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor*  
*New York, NY 10017*

**Letters have a real impact on real lives. Whether it is an advocacy or solidarity action, your efforts matter! Please see the next pages for this year Nowruz cases. Thank you for joining us!**

# Ahmadreza Djalali



Iranian-Swedish academic **Ahmadreza Djalali** has been held incommunicado in prison since 24 November 2020 (with an exception of a brief family visit in February), when he learned that his death sentence for “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel-arz) was to be carried out imminently. In late December 2020, his family learned that **Ahmadreza Djalali**’s execution was halted for one month. He remains at risk of execution.

**Ahmadreza Djalali** is a medical doctor and academic living in Sweden who was on a business trip to Iran when he was arrested in April 2016. He was held for three months in solitary confinement, without access to a lawyer. He said that during this period he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, in order to force him to “confess” to being a spy. He has said that he was forced to read out “confessions” pre-written by his interrogators in front of a video camera. **Ahmadreza Djalali** denies the accusations against him and says they have been fabricated by the authorities. In a letter written from inside Evin prison in August 2017, **Ahmadreza Djalali** said he was held solely because of his refusal to use his academic ties in European institutions to spy for the Iranian authorities. In December 2018 Iranian state-run TV aired **Ahmadreza Djalali**’s “confession” during a programme titled Axing the root, which used dramatic music, graphics and international news footage interspersed with his “confession”, along with a voiceover presenting him as a “spy”.

**Ahmadreza Djalali** was sentenced to death for “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel-arz) in October 2017 after a grossly unfair trial. The court relied primarily on “confessions” that **Ahmadreza Djalali** says were obtained under torture and other ill-treatment while he was held in prolonged solitary confinement without access to a lawyer. These included threats to execute him, kill or otherwise harm his children, who live in Sweden, and his mother, who lives in Iran.

## Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - Iranian-Swedish academic [#AhmadrezaDjalali](#)'s been held in prolonged solitary confinement since 24 Nov 2020. In late Dec his family learned that his execution was halted for 1 month. He remains at risk of execution. We call on [@khamenei\\_ir](#) & [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) to [#FreeDjalali!](#) [#SaveAhmadreza](#)
  - Please RT to call on Iran's [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) [@JZarif](#) to quash Iranian-Swedish academic [#AhmadrezaDjalali](#)'s death sentence and release him. [#SaveAhmadreza](#) [#FreeDjalali](#)
- Instagram:
  - Iranian Swedish academic [#AhmadrezaDjalali](#) remains at risk of execution. I call on you [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#) to quash [#AhmadrezaDjalali](#)'s death sentence and release him. [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#) [#SaveAhmadreza](#) [#FreeDjalali](#)

2) Sign an online petition:

- <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/iran-stop-execution-of-ahmadreza>

# Maryam Akbari Monfared



Prisoner of conscience **Maryam Akbari Monfared** has been held behind bars since December 2009 serving a 15-year sentence without a single day of furlough. She was convicted of “enmity against God” (moharebeh) based on an arbitrary interference with her privacy, family and correspondence. Her conviction is solely based on the fact that she had made phone calls to her relatives, who are members of a banned group, the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), and had visited them once in Iraq.

**Maryam Akbari Monfared** submitted a complaint to the prosecutor’s office in Tehran from inside prison in October 2016. The complaint concerns the extrajudicial execution and enforced disappearance in 1988 of her sister Roghayeh and

her brother Abdolreza, who was 17 years old at the time of his arrest in 1980. In her complaint, **Maryam Akbari Monfared** requested “an official investigation into the extrajudicial execution of her siblings” and sought “detailed information about the executions including the location of the mass graves, and the identity of the perpetrators. To date, the authorities have not processed her complaint. Instead, they have subjected her to reprisals.

Between July and September 1988, the Iranian authorities forcibly disappeared and extrajudicially executed thousands of imprisoned political dissidents in secret and dumped their bodies, mostly in unmarked mass graves. Since then, the authorities have treated the killings as state secrets, tormenting the relatives by refusing to tell them how and why their loved ones were killed and where they are buried. No official has been brought to justice and, in some cases, those involved hold or have held positions of power in Iran. Families and human rights defenders seeking truth, justice and reparation for thousands of prisoners who were summarily executed or forcibly disappeared in the 1980s have faced new levels of retribution by the authorities.

## Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - [#MaryamAkbariMonfared](#) is a prisoner of conscience whose 3 brothers and a sisters were executed during 1988 mass executions in Iran. She’s serving a 15 yrs sentence for seeking [#TruthAndJustice](#). [@khamenei\\_ir](#), [@Rouhani\\_ir](#), [@JZarif](#), [@Iran\\_UN](#) [#FreeMaryam](#) now!
  - [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) We call on you to stop the harassment & persecution of [#MaryamAkbariMonfared](#) & families of the victims of 1988 mass executions, respect their rights to truth, justice & reparation, conduct an independent investigation & bring to justice those responsible.
- Instagram:
  - We call on you to stop the harassment & persecution of [#MaryamAkbariMonfared](#) & families of the victims of 1988 mass executions, respect their rights to truth, justice & reparation, conduct an independent investigation & bring to justice those responsible. [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#) [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#) [#FreeMaryam](#) [#1988massacre](#)

## Amirsalar Davoudi



Human rights lawyer and prisoner of conscience **Amirsalar Davoudi** has been sentenced to 29 years and three months in prison and 111 lashes on charges stemming from his human rights work. Under Iran's sentencing guidelines, he is required to serve 15 years of this sentence.

Arrested in November 2018, **Amirsalar**

**Davoudi** has been sentenced to a total of 29 years and three months in prison and 111 lashes. The charges included “insulting the Supreme Leader”, “spreading propaganda against the system” and “forming a group with the purpose of disrupting national security” in relation to his human rights work. The charges related to media interviews he had given and posts he had uploaded to a channel he runs on the mobile messaging app Telegram in which he raised concerns about the authorities’ treatment of lawyers and, more generally, the human rights situation in Iran.

**Amirsalar Davoudi** is a prominent human rights lawyer who has represented many prisoners of conscience including human rights defenders, other civil society activists and members of ethnic and religious minorities. He was the lawyer of Iranian Kurdish woman **Zeynab Jalalian**, who was sentenced to death in early 2009 for the charge of “enmity against God” (moharebeh) after a grossly unfair trial. He played an instrumental role in the subsequent commutation of her death sentence. He has also persistently advocated for **Zeynab Jalalian**'s access to medical care.

### Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - [@khamenei\\_ir](#), [@Rouhani\\_ir](#), [@JZarif](#), I urge you to release [#AmirsalarDavoudi](#) immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, jailed solely for his human rights work [#FreeAmirSalar](#)
  - Human Rights Lawyer [#AmirsalarDavoudi](#) has been sentenced to 29 years and 3 months in prison and 111 lashes for his work defending human rights. [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) must [#FreeAmirSalar](#) and stop targeting and harassing human rights lawyers
- Instagram:
  - Human rights lawyer [#AmirsalarDavoudi](#) has been sentenced to 29 years and 3 months in prison and 111 lashes for his work defending human rights. [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#) must release him immediately, quash his sentence, and stop targeting and harassing human rights lawyers [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#) [#FreeAmirsalar](#)

## Zeynab Jalalian



Iranian Kurdish woman, **Zeynab Jalalian** is serving a life sentence following a grossly unfair trial in December 2008 that lasted a few minutes without her lawyer present.

Since 29 April 2020, as prisons across Iran experienced outbreaks of COVID-19, ministry of intelligence agents have transferred **Zeynab Jalalian** to four different prisons across the country and, in violation of the absolute prohibition against torture and other ill-treatment, held her in prolonged solitary

confinement and deliberately denied her access to adequate health care. Ministry of Intelligence agents are torturing her by deliberately denying her health care to coerce her into providing a videotaped “confession”. This intentional denial of health care is causing her severe pain and suffering, particularly as she has serious medical conditions, including post-Covid19 breathing difficulty. The ministry of intelligence is conditioning access to adequate health care, transfer to prison closer to her family home in West Azerbaijan province and an end of reprisals against **Zeynab Jalalian** and her family on her “confessing” to wrongdoing and expressing remorse for her past political activities on camera and agreeing to work with the ministry of intelligence.

**Zeynab Jalalian** has been intentionally denied transfer to outside facilities for medical treatment unavailable in prison for over six years. Only once in 2020, she was briefly provided health care outside of prison in June after testing positive for COVID-19.

### Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - [#ZeynabJalalian](#) has been in prison since 2008. She requires medical care outside prison. She needs adequate access to health care, including for a post COVID-19 respiratory condition. We call on [@khamenei\\_ir](#) & [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) to [#FreeZeynab!](#)
  - Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence agents are torturing Iranian Kurdish woman [#ZeynabJalalian](#) by deliberately denying her health care to coerce her into providing a videotaped “confession”. We call on [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) [@JZarif](#) to [#FreeZeynab](#)
- Instagram:
  - I call on you [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#) to [#FreeZeynab!](#) Iranian Kurdish woman [#ZeynabJalalian](#), serving a life sentence, has been behind bars since 2008. Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence agents are torturing her by deliberately denying her health care to coerce her into providing a videotaped “confession”. This intentional denial of health care is causing her severe pain and suffering, particularly as she has serious medical conditions, including post-Covid19 breathing difficulty. [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#) [#FreeZeynab](#)

2) Sign an online petition:

- <https://amnistie.ca/participer/2020/iran/zeynab-jalalian-doit-etre-liberee>

## Niloufar Bayani



Prisoner of conscience and McGill graduate, **Niloufar Bayani** is one of the scientists behind bars in Evin Prison since January 2018.

Without providing any evidence, the Iranian authorities accused the conservationists, affiliated to the non-profit organization, the Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation, of using scientific and environmental projects, such as tracking the Asiatic cheetah with cameras, as a cover to collect classified military information, even though the use of cameras is a standard tool used by conservationists to monitor rare and endangered species.

Following their arrests, the scientists were held incommunicado without access to a lawyer and

limited family contact. The unfair trial relied almost entirely on “confessions” allegedly made under torture and later retracted, as the main evidence against them. **Niloufar Bayani** told the court that she only made a “confession” after she was “broken” through physical and psychological torture and that she later retracted her “confession”. She said interrogators threatened to beat her, inject her with hallucinogenic drugs, pull out her fingernails and arrest her parents; they also showed her a piece of paper saying that it was her death sentence.

**Niloufar Bayani** has been sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment. She has managed to send out some letters from the prison describing the torture, including the threats of sexual assault, that she was subjected to by her interrogators.

### Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - [@khamenei\\_ir](#), [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) I call on you to free [#NiloufarBayani](#) and other imprisoned conservationists immediately and unconditionally! [#FreeIranConservationists](#) [#Hope4Nature](#)
  - [@khamenei\\_ir](#), [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) [#NiloufarBayani](#) and her conservationist colleagues shouldn’t have been arrested at first place, let alone facing long imprisonment, torture and charges such as ‘espionage’ and ‘corruption on earth’. Release them! [#FreeIranConservationists](#) [#Hope4Nature](#)
- Instagram:
  - Niloufar Bayani is a highly accomplished young woman, a McGill graduate, and a wildlife conservationist. She has been imprisoned since 2018 for conducting research into Iran’s endangered Asiatic cheetahs together with other conservationists. [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#): release [#NiloufarBayani](#) and her colleagues immediately and pending their release protect them from torture and other ill-treatment. [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#) [#FreeIranConservationists](#) [#Hope4Nature](#) [#anyhopefornature](#) [#FreeNiloufar](#) [#womeninscience](#)

## Saba Kordafshari & Raheleh Ahmadi



Women's rights defender **Saba Kordafshari**, 22, is unjustly jailed in Tehran's Evin prison for her peaceful human rights work, including campaigning against Iran's discriminatory and degrading forced veiling laws. In November 2019, an appeal court quashed her conviction for "inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" through promoting "unveiling", reducing her prison sentence from 24 years to nine years. In late May 2020, while serving her sentence, she found out that judicial authorities had unlawfully and secretly altered the appeal verdict and other related judicial records to make it appear that the 15-year prison sentence had

been upheld in November 2019 and her total sentence was 24 years. The authorities have refused to account for the causes and circumstances surrounding this alteration, of which her lawyer only became aware when **Saba Kordafshari** called him from inside prison.

Saba's mother, **Raheleh Ahmadi** is also behind bars, spending a prison sentence of 31 months for charges including "propaganda against the state" and "collaboration with foreign media". Authorities have recently separated mother and daughter by transferring Saba to another prison.

### Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - Iranian women's rights defenders [#SabaKordafshari](#) and her mother [#RahelehAhmadi](#) are both behind bars. We call on [@khamenei\\_ir](#) & [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) to free the women's rights defenders now!
  - Women's rights defenders [#SabaKordafshari](#) and her mother [#RahelehAhmadi](#) are unjustly jailed for their human rights works, including campaigning against Iran's discriminatory forced veiling laws. [@khamenei\\_ir](#), [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) must immediately and unconditionally release them
- Instagram:
  - Women's rights defenders [#SabaKordafshari](#) and her mother [#RahelehAhmadi](#) are unjustly jailed for their human rights works, including campaigning against Iran's discriminatory forced veiling laws. We call on you to immediately and unconditionally release from prison all women's rights defenders detained for peacefully protesting against forced veiling [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#) [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#)

## Arash Sadeghi & Golrokh Iraee



Human rights activist **Arash Sadeghi** has been imprisoned in Tehran's Evin Prison since June 2016, serving two separate prison terms totaling 19 years. **Arash Sadeghi** is being punished for his peaceful human rights activities. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in August 2015 after being convicted of spurious charges including "spreading propaganda against the system", "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security", "insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic" and "spreading lies". The court verdict cited over 50 peaceful human rights activities as

"evidence" of his involvement in "actions against [national] security" including communicating with Amnesty International and other human rights groups outside Iran. **Arash Sadeghi** was diagnosed with a cancerous bone tumour and underwent surgery on September 12, 2018, only to be transferred back to Raja'i Shahr prison on September 15, against strict explicit medical advice that required him to spend at least 25 days hospitalized following the operation so that he could be monitored by specialist doctors. Doctors said that they needed this post-operative recovery period to assess whether **Arash Sadeghi** required chemotherapy, radiation therapy or additional surgery. The authorities have been deliberately refusing to provide **Arash Sadeghi** with urgently needed medical care (denial of medical care constitutes torture as defined in international law). The denial of his access to life-saving medical care also violates his right to life.

**Arash Sadeghi's** wife, **Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee**, also a human rights activist and a writer, is behind bars. Golrokh Iraee was originally sentenced to six years in prison on charges including "insulting Islamic sanctities" for writing a fictional story about the horrific practice of execution by stoning. This story had not been published but was found when authorities searched her personal computer. **Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee** started serving her sentence in October 2016 and has been in and out of prison since then. As per the reports by human rights organizations, in December 2020, Golrokh was violently transferred from Gharchak Prison in Varamin, south of Tehran, to Ward-2A of Evin Prison, which is controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). After being interrogated for 43 days, Golrokh was returned to Gharchak Prison on January 24, 2021, and on the same day – without being allowed to collect her clothes and other belongings – was sent to the Central Prison in Amol, northern Iran.

### Advocacy Action

1) Send a message to Iranian authorities on social media:

- Twitter:
  - [@khamenei\\_ir](#), [@Rouhani\\_ir](#): [#GolrokhIraee](#) and [#ArashSadeghi](#) must be freed immediately and unconditionally and their sentences should be quashed! Their charges stem from their peaceful human rights work. They are prisoners of conscience
  - [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@Rouhani\\_ir](#) [@JZarif](#): prisoner of conscience [#ArashSadeghi](#) is suffering from cancer and needs specialized medical care outside prison. We call on you to release him and his wife [#GolrokhIraee](#), also a prisoner of conscience, immediately and unconditionally.



- Instagram:
  - Human rights defenders [#GolrokhIraee](#) and [#ArashSadeghi](#) must be freed immediately and their sentences should be quashed! Arash Sadeghi suffers from cancerous bone tumor and requires medical care outside prison. Golrokh Iraee was physically assaulted by the prison guards in December 2020. [@hrouhani](#) [@khamenei\\_ir](#) [@jzarif\\_ir](#) [@raisi\\_org](#) [#AmnestyNowruz](#) [#NowruzAction](#) [#FreeArash](#) [#FreeGolrokh](#) [#FreeArashGolrokh](#)