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GERMANY

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Hassan Rouhani

c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN

Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28

1209 Geneva

**SCHWEIZ**

*Esmail Bakhshi and Sepideh Gholian*

Dear Mr Rouhani,

I was extremely distressed to hear of the situation concerning the activists **Esmail Bakhshi** and **Sepideh Gholian.** From Amnesty International I have heard that the two Iranian citizens were arrested in Ahvaz in Chuzestan Province on 20 January and have been held in a detention centre of the Ministry responsible for the intelligence services and since then have been held there without access to legal counsel of their choice. It is apparent that the arrest was retaliation for the fact that the two men had spoken openly about the beatings they had undergone when they were being held in prison in November and December of last year. We have reason to believe that they will be tortured and mistreated in other ways during the current period of imprisonment.

In the light of the disturbing facts, dear Mr Rouhani, I call upon you to ensure that

* Esmail Bakhshi and Sepideh Gholian are released unconditionally and without delay, as they are peaceful prisoners of conscience, who were arrested simply because they had exercised peacefully the right to freedom of speech, association and association;
* pending their release they are protected from all forms of torture or other forms of mistreatment;
* the charges of torture are investigated and that those suspected of being responsible are tried fairly in a court of law.

Yours faithfully,

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