



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

November 25, 2009

His Excellency Ali Larijani
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami
Baharestan Square
Tehran, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

His Excellency Abbas Jafari Dowlatabadi
Office of the Tehran Prosecutor

Your Excellencies:

We, the undersigned independent human rights organizations, respectfully express our deep concern over the death of Dr. Ramin Pourandarjani, aged 26. We welcome the announcement from the office of His Excellency Abbas Jafari Dowlatabadi, that an investigation into his death would take place. We strongly urge that this investigation be thorough, impartial and independent and we also urge you to ensure that internationally respected forensic experts be invited to assist in such investigations. We respectfully draw to your notice that experienced forensic specialists from Physicians for Human Rights, would be willing to assist in the investigation.

Dr. Ramin Pourandarjani's body was discovered in a room at Tehran police headquarters on 10 November. While the Chief of Police, General Esmail Ahmadi-Moqaddam, has said that Dr. Pourandarjani, committed suicide and that a letter found near his body suggested that he had been depressed, officials had initially said he had suffered a heart attack in his sleep and later that he had died of poisoning. Dr. Pourandarjani's father, Reza-Qoli Pourandarjani, said he had spoken to his son the night before his death and that he did not appear to be depressed. He told the Associated Press that he had initially been informed by the authorities that his son had broken his leg in an accident and that his [the father's] consent was needed for surgery. However after travelling to Tehran from his home in Tabriz, Reza-Qoli Pourandarjani discovered that his son was dead.

Dr. Pourandarjani had been working at the Kahrizak Detention Center about once a week as part of his military service. Iranian officials have acknowledged that abuses at Kahrizak took place. At least three people died as a result of torture there, including Mohsen Rouhalmami, the son of a top aide to presidential candidate Mohsen Rezaei, who reportedly died of cardiac arrest and bleeding in his lungs two weeks after he was detained on 9 July; his body bore the marks of severe torture. In July, the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordered the closing of the Kahrizak detention center.

As part of his duties, Dr. Pourandarjani treated detainees who had been tortured at Kahrizak. Dr. Pourandarjani had been interviewed by a special parliamentary committee charged with investigating allegations of abuses during the post-election unrest. Before his death he reportedly received threats to prevent him from revealing the abuses he had witnessed at Kahrizak. He had also reportedly been forced to certify that one detainee had died of meningitis. We have also noted reports that the special parliamentary committee will also be looking into Dr. Pourandarjani's death in the course of their investigations.

Because of the unusual circumstances of his death, we believe it is essential that any investigation be fully transparent and that reputable independent experts be called in to ensure the integrity of the investigation. We respectfully remind you of the Iranian government's obligations under international law to investigate possible incidents of torture or extra-judicial killings and urge that any investigation into Dr. Pourandarjani's death fully comply with the United Nations Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions.

Again we would like to offer expert professional assistance from Physicians for Human Rights whose contact details are given below.

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