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Iran: Woman human rights defender Narges Mohammadi refused to appear in a trial with new charges against her

On 11 June 2023 **Narges Mohammadi** was summoned to appear before Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. According to a notification from the court, Narges Mohammadi should have appeared to defend herself against an indictment issued by an investigator from Branch 2 of the Evin prison court. The woman human rights defender has refused to show up before the court, stating that she does not recognise the revolutionary court as a competent judicial body and that the new charges against her, which have yet to be named, are due to her legitimate human rights work.

[Narges Mohammadi](#) is Deputy Director of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC). She was elected President of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Peace in Iran, a broad coalition against war and for the promotion of human rights. She has campaigned for the abolition of the death penalty in Iran. She has been awarded the Per Anger Prize by the Swedish government for her human rights work in 2011; the Olof Palme Prize by the Swedish government in 2023; the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize in 2023; and most recently PEN America's 2023 PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award.

On 11 June 2023, the woman human rights defender Narges Mohammadi was summoned from Evin prison, where she is currently detained, to appear before Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. According to a notification, Narges Mohammadi should have appeared before Branch 29 of the Revolutionary Court to defend herself against an indictment issued by an investigator from Branch 2 of the Evin prison court. The woman human rights defender has refused to show up before the court as she stated that she does not recognise the revolutionary court as a competent judicial body and that the new charges have been brought against her for her legitimate human rights work, citing her activities within the prison. These activities include protesting against "massacres" and "executions" of protesters, issuing statements opposing "executions" and "violence against women" in detention centres, and speaking out against the "torture" of detainees held in "solitary confinement."

The woman human rights defender Narges Mohammadi has been summoned several times by Branches 1, 2 and 3 of Evin prison court in April and May 2023. However, she refused to appear or let her lawyers be present as she does not recognise the revolutionary courts as independent judicial bodies. Most recently, on 22 May 2023, the woman human rights defender was summoned by Branch 3 of Evin prison court to have a hearing on a new charge. As her lawyer was not granted access to her file, the new charges remain unknown. This was the second time in less than two months that she was summoned to a hearing on new charges. On 25 April 2023, the woman human rights defender had also been summoned by Branch 2 of Evin prison court to have a hearing on another set of trumped-up charges. These charges were issued because of her ongoing human rights work from inside the prison, including publishing several statements on the violations of human rights since the beginning of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" protests in Iran in September 2022.

The woman human rights defender has been [sentenced](#) to multiple prison sentences in less than two years, amounting to eleven years and eleven months in total, in addition to 154 lashes, a two-

year travel ban, two fines, a two-year ban from membership in political or social groups and community service.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned about the repeated sentencing of woman human rights defender Narges Mohammadi as it believes this is in reprisal against her peaceful and legitimate efforts in defence of human rights in Iran.

Front Line Defenders condemns the repeated prosecutions of Narges Mohammadi as part of a wider crackdown on human rights defenders in the context of the protests in Iran where, since September 2022, hundreds of human rights defenders have been arrested, charged and subjected to hefty prison sentences without adherence to due process or fair trial rights.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Iran to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Narges Mohammadi and all human rights defenders detained in the context of the protests ongoing since September 2022;
2. Drop the charges against Narges Mohammadi as Front Line Defenders believes she has been targeted solely as a result of her legitimate human rights work, especially in regard to her advocacy from inside prison;
3. Ensure that the treatment of Narges Mohammadi, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
4. Ensure Narges Mohammadi is granted her legitimate right to access to her lawyer;
5. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in Iran, especially in the context of the ongoing protests, and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisal and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.