

NOTE: This outline is based on a French update revised and approved by Mehrnoushe Solouki

Montreal, October 14, 2007

Mehrnoushe Solouki was arrested 19 February 2007 in Tehran, detained in isolation for a month at the ill-famed Evin prison, then released on 18 March 2007. Her passports were handed back at the time, but to this day she is still forbidden to leave Iran.

For seven months she has not been able to pursue her professional activities, her computer, her video cassettes, her video camera and all her research has been seized by Iran's Ministry of Intelligence. She had entered the country with her Iranian passport and had obtained a permit from the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance to research and film her project.

On July 29 a motorcyclist ran into her without warning and she was thrown to the ground. The motorcyclist fled the scene without stopping. She was wounded to the head and cheek and has undergone four (4) surgeries to resolve the facial paralysis she still suffers from. Her Tehran doctor stated he could not be responsible for her health anymore and that she must return to France to receive further treatment.

For several weeks now, Ms Solouki has been residing on occasion at the French Embassy in Tehran as a guest; a courtesy the Embassy extends to her since she is a French national. She doesn't feel safe staying in hotels anymore.

On September 14, her father was informed that her case was finally transferred to a judge (of the 15th Chamber). Contacted by her father, the judge said he would need time to study the case, but gave no idea of the delay. Since that time, Ms Solouki is being represented by the lawyer Hushang Pourbabai, a specialist of human rights.

Via Reporters Without Borders, she has addressed a letter to the French President Nicolas Sarkozy reminding him of his speech where he stated he would make the defense of human rights in the world a priority and that he won't accept the repression of journalists.

Since late September, Mehrnoushe Solouki has been stuck in a bureaucratic circus. While trying to clarify the ban on her traveling, her two passports were seized by the Office of The President of Republic of Iran (Secret Services).

Upon reception of her file in preparation for her November 17 court date, Ms Solouki's lawyer consulted the 400-page document and was not able to locate the letter banning her from exiting Iran. He also found little details about her accusation. He was able to talk to the judge to understand that Ms Solouki will be accused of « propaganda against the regime related to her attempt at making a film ». Essentially, she will be accused of having the intention of making a propaganda film. A film that does not exist yet, since the raw material was seized by the Iranian authorities.

Given her parents had to put their house as a warranty, Mehrnoushe Solouki wants her bail lifted to release the house. She wants the accusations to be dropped and then be allowed to leave Iran.