



Defend Asylum Seekers in Australia

Since 16 January 2002 hundreds of asylum seekers in Woomera have initiated a hunger strike and protest against the Australian government's policy of detention and its freeze on asylum applications of Afghans; several have sewn their lips together or attempted to commit suicide. Other asylum seekers at various detention centres have also begun hunger strikes and protests in support of the legitimate demands of the Woomera detainees. The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) has received reports from asylum seekers in Curtin detention centre that over 140 began demonstrating against their conditions today. Slogans

being shouted by asylum seekers demanding their rights were heard over the phone while speaking to a detainee. Detainees are denied access to Hambastegi, IFIR's Persian paper; sections of newspapers that report the escalating protests are cut out before being given to asylum seekers in order to keep them in the dark about others protests. Yesterday, fifteen unaccompanied minors inside Woomera threatened to commit suicide together. Hundreds of people have also been protesting at various detention centres demanding the release of all detainees. Demonstrators stormed a Federal office building in Melbourne on 24

January and the IFIR-Australia Branch organised a 24-hour long sit-in on 26 January in defence of their demands. Media gathered in Woomera are kept about 500 yards from the camp and are not allowed to speak to the asylum seekers.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees condemns the Australian government's anti-asylum policies and laws and holds the Australian government directly responsible for the acts of despair committed by asylum seekers in various concentration camp-like centres. IFIR calls on groups and individuals to intervene and demand the following:

3. The Australian government must recognise the right to asylum of protesting and other asylum seekers.

Until now, the escalating protests have forced the government to back down to an extent. Neville Roach, a senior adviser to the Australian government quit over the treatment of asylum seekers. Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock has responded to the protests by agreeing to provide asylum seekers with more information about their status. He agreed to the move after the independent detention advisory committee spent 11 hours with Woomera detainees on Wednesday 23 January.

This is not enough. Our intervention can and must end acts of despair and self-mutilation and raise a global banner of positive resistance against the Australian government. Pressure must be kept on the Australian government until the protesting asylum seekers gain their legitimate demands.

Deported Iranian is Executed by the Islamic Regime

Karim Tujali, an Iranian asylum seeker deported to Iran from Turkey three years ago, has been executed by the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mahabad on Thursday 24 January. Tujali was arrested by the Turkish authorities while attempting to reach Europe in order to apply for asylum. He was a member

of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) strongly condemns the Islamic Republic of Iran for the execution of another political opponent of the regime. It also holds the Turkish authorities, fortress Europe and its closed borders responsible for his murder.

1. The Australian government must immediately address the legitimate demands of the protesting asylum seekers, including assessing all Afghan asylum claims.
2. All detention centres must be shut down and the women, men and children imprisoned in them resettled in various communities with decent housing and lodging arrangements.

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Open Letter to Trade Unions and Labour Organisations in Australia

Maryam Namazie



Dear Friends:

Since 16 January, hundreds of asylum seekers have been protesting the freeze on Afghan asylum applications

and their detention, including sewing their lips, attempting to commit suicide and hunger striking. This is an intolerable situation. The Australian government is directly responsible for this abysmal situation and the unofficial murder of asylum seekers. With the assistance of the media, people who have fought and fled rightlessness, sexual apartheid, execution, repression, and poverty are criminalised and dehumanised. Instead of being given refuge and decent living conditions, they are detained and caged like

animals and denied their basic rights. Among these protesting asylum seekers are labour activists, political opponents, women's rights activists, and civil rights activists. They must be supported.

If this situation is allowed to continue right near your homes and workplaces, if such inhuman policies and practices are allowed to force people to such heights of despair, and if civil rights abuses and such blatant racism are permitted, you will be next. A government that

so callously violates the rights of asylum seekers will easily violate the rights of others living in Australia. This assault must be stopped.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) calls on you to step up your protests against this human catastrophe and stand alongside us in defending basic civil and human rights.

In Solidarity,

Maryam Namazie
Executive Director

Sample Letter of Protest

Philip Ruddock
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Julia Gillard
Shadow Minister for Population & Immigration
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600
Fax: (02) 6277 8457
Email: julia.gillard.mp@aph.gov.au

- I/My Organisation condemn(s) the Australian government's violations of asylum rights and call on the government to:
1. Immediately address the legitimate demands of the protesting asylum seekers, including assessing all Afghan asylum claims.
 2. Shut down all detention centres and house the women, men and children imprisoned in them in various communities with decent housing and lodging arrangements.
 3. Recognise the right to asylum of protesting and other asylum seekers.

Name
Organisation (if any)
Date

Cc: ifir@ukonline.co.uk

Detention Centre Occupied and Wrecked

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) congratulates the 'Movement of and for Disobedients' (Movimento delle/dei Disobbedienti) for its act of resistance against detention centres. On Saturday 26 January, over a hundred people occupied and dismantled an area of a detention centre in Via Mattei in Bologna Italy. Hundreds more demonstrated outside the centre. The action was the first step of the campaign of the 'Movement of and for Disobedients' following the demonstration of 150000 people on 19 January in Rome.

German Conference Asylum After Sept. 11

The tenth annual conference of the IFIR - Germany will be held from 8-10 February 2002. The main theme of the conference will be the right to asylum after September 11. The first day of the conference will be conducted in German and English. Government representatives, the head of the parliamentary commission on asylum and representatives of political parties and organisations, refugee agencies and pro refugee celebrities will participate in the opening day of the conference. The remaining two days will be conducted in Persian. For further information and details of how to attend the conference please contact: +49(0)1737334270, +49(0)1732743686, or send us an email at: pramazanal@yahoo.de, Ngaedi@aol.com.

Campaign to Free Detainees in Zurich

Several Iranian asylum seekers have been detained at Zurich airport for the past two weeks. From the moment the International Federation of Iranian Refugees-Zurich Branch received reports of the detention, it initiated a campaign for their release. As a result of these efforts, Gholam Nikbeen was released. IFIR-Zurich

continues to call on the Swiss government to immediately release two others, Omeed Sadegh Torki and Golnaz Alaiee who is six months pregnant.

For more information, contact Mahmmud Rahbari, IFIR Zurich Director at M_Rahbary@Hotmail.Com.

IFIR International Secretariat

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees has restructured its International Secretariat after the 9th bi-annual international conference. At the Conference, Maryam Namazie was elected Executive Director of the organisation. Keyvan Javid is the Deputy Executive Director. Department Heads are: Mahin Alipour, Department of Refugee Women's Committees; Siamak Amjadi, Publicity and Website Departments; Ladan Davar, Finance Department, Farshad Hoseini, Legal Advice and Research Departments; Keyvan Javid, Department of Affairs of Countries Neighbouring Iran, Public Relations Department, Editor of Hambastegi Persian Monthly; Mehrnoush Musawi, Editor of Hambastegi Persian Weekly, Fundraising and Campaigns Departments; Ramin Niakan, Support Letters in Countries Neighbouring Iran; Nasrin Ramzanali, Organisational Development and Country Director; Mohammad Shokohi, Civil

Rights in Iran Department; Rahim Yazdanparast, Conference Director. Other Secretariat Members: Saeed Arman, Country Director; Javad Aslani, Hambastegi English and Civil Rights Monthly in Iran Assistant Editor; Lotfolah Badawi, Country Director; Kobra Bahrami, Country Director; Mahmoud Gasvini, Country Director; Ghafar Gholamveysi, Country Director; Jamal Kamangar, Department of Affairs of Countries Neighbouring Iran - Northern Iraq; Yadi Karimi, Department of Public Relations; Esmail Moloodi, Country Director; Habib Nesouhi, Finance Department; Hossein Pish Ehsan, Country Director; Afsaneh Rahimi, Country Director; Rezar Rezaiee, Department of Affairs of Countries Neighbouring Iran - India; Amir Tavakoli, Hambastegi Persian Weekly Assistant Editor and Country Director. Rebwar Arif, Executive Director of the Federation of Iraqi Refugees is also a member of the Secretariat.



End Detention Now!

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