



November 17, 2002

## French and UK governments' policy in Calais

### condemned

On November 14, 2002 French police stormed the St Pierre-St Paul church in Calais, France, ending a four-day occupation by 99 Iraqi Kurd and Afghan asylum seekers. The asylum seekers had occupied the church in protest to their being denied entry into Sangatte, the Red Cross run centre which is refusing entry to any further asylum seekers and will be completely shutdown in April. This anti-asylum policy of the UK and French governments, in collaboration with the Red Cross, is yet another attempt

to obstruct the movement of asylum seekers to Britain and deny them much needed shelter and resources along their perilous flight.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) condemns the inhuman policies of the two governments and the Red Cross, including the French police's storming of the church to end the occupation and the closing of Sangatte to those in need. Closing Sangatte will not prevent flight but will only make the journey more hazardous for those fleeing persecution.



## Kamran Farmandeh: another lost life

Early morning on Monday 17 November, Kamran Farmandeh, an Iranian asylum seeker in Turkey, died in hospital. He had attempted suicide nearly two weeks ago in protest to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) closing of his case file deeming him deportable to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees is outraged at yet another futile

loss of life and gives its sincere condolences to Kamran Farmandeh's family and friends. IFIR holds the UNHCR and its anti-asylum policies responsible for Farmandeh's death.

Those fleeing the Islamic Republic of Iran and political Islam must be granted asylum and protection from refoulement. This is the only way to prevent such futile deaths of innocents.

**Asylum is a Civil Right!**

## Letter to Andy Gilchrist, General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union

On behalf of the International Federation of Iranian Refugees, UK branch, I would like to extend our greetings and support to you and the members of the FBU for your just demand for fair pay for the vital work and services that you so selflessly provide.

Your treatment by your employers and the government is an indictment against our unjust society in which those who provide the most essential services and produce our means of subsistence are neglected and have to fight for a living wage. Once again we salute your determination and struggle to secure a fair pay for the fire fighters.

Saeed Arman, Director, IFIR-UK  
14 November 2002

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# A campaign against the Swedish government's policies

## An interview with Esmail Moloodi and Abdullah Asadi, IFIR Swedish branch

*What are the main characteristics of this campaign?*

**Esmail Moloodi:** The aim of this week-long campaign beginning on 25 November is first and foremost to organise public opinion as well as human rights and refugee rights organisations in Sweden to oppose the Swedish government's refugee and asylum laws and to expose the realities in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Both the official and unofficial media refuse to reflect the bleak realities in the Islamic Republic of Iran because of the wheeling and dealings between the two governments of Sweden and Iran. In fact, the good

relationship between the two explains the Swedish government's silence in regards to the crimes committed by the Islamic regime and political Islam.

**Abdollah Asadi:** This is a very difficult time for Iranian asylum seekers in Sweden. The Swedish government's response to many Iranian asylum seekers is: 'We do not see Iran the way you describe it; we do not believe that Iran is an unsafe country for you.' They have mentioned many times that the type of activism an asylum seeker mentions in her/his case file does not endanger their lives. With such reasoning, they force numerous asylum seekers to

go into hiding or flee to other countries. The number of asylum seekers in hiding as well as the arrests, detentions and those deported back to Iran are increasing on a daily basis. Fear of being arrested at the work place, housing difficulties, and lack of access to medical facilities are among many problems these asylum seekers face everyday. Unsafe asylum camps are an additional problem. In the last two years, 92 children have disappeared in camps in Sweden. These are all issues that have raised the necessity of a powerful campaign in defence of asylum rights. More than anything else, the main aims of this campaign is to force the Swedish government to stop the deportations.

in these families are living under dire circumstances.

**Abdollah Asadi:** The emphasis of this campaign is to stop deportations and to reopen the case files of those asylum seekers in hiding. Asylum seekers are not criminals and thus they should not be chased after by the police in order to be deported. This campaign wishes to inform Swedish society about the plight of asylum seekers in hiding. It wants to demonstrate that Iranian asylum seekers are products of the Islamic Republic of Iran - the product of prisons, torture, executions and lack of rights. The campaign wants to show that any person who is critical of the Islamic regime is not safe in Iran. This campaign is a call to all asylum seekers and those who are critical of the Islamic regime. It is a protest against violations of the most basic rights of people, those who were not willing to be lashed or imprisoned for being happy or laughing, those who did not want to be stoned to death for having an extra-marital relationship, those who did not want their children to be given an Islamic education in schools, those who did not want to deal with the Islamic laws that belong to the middle ages, and so on. It is also a call to freedom-loving people and organisations for their direct participation in raising public awareness on the problems that asylum seekers face in this country. The

### Mansoor Hekmat (1951-2002)



With the bloody suppression of the revolution in Iran and the imposition of an ultra-reactionary life on the people, tens of thousands of human beings, alone and without organisation, fled the Islamic Republic of Iran in search of security and tranquillity. Organising this

vast human mass around the most modern and humane advances of humanity, unconditionally defending their right to asylum, and creating an international organisation without taking into consideration people's nationality, religion, sex and or political affiliation became an immediate necessity. Creating the International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) was Mansoor Hekmat's response to these conditions. As he said: 'Our entire life story is changing the lives of human beings.'

*What are the main demands of the campaign?*

**Esmail Moloodi:** Our demands are clear. They are:

- 1- To cancel the deportation orders of those asylum seekers who have obtained orders of deportation.
- 2- Residency permission for all asylum seekers who have fled Iran.

Our main goal is to stop deportations. Deportations have forced hundreds of people to go in hiding. Those living in hiding lack access to basic living facilities and are in a terrible physical and psychological state. Children

## A campaign against the Swedish government's policies, from page 2

IFIR's efforts and this campaign are to improve people's lives.

*Do you hold the Swedish government accountable for the current situation? Why?*

**Esmail Moloodi:** Since 1989, the Swedish government has continuously tried to change asylum laws and with each change the situation for asylum seekers has become more intolerable and inhuman. Each time there is economic and political wheeling and dealings between the Swedish government and the Islamic Republic of Iran, they clamp down on asylum seekers by deporting them. In April 2002, the Swedish foreign minister travelled to Iran. The Immigration Ministry has sent a delegation to Iran which reportedly 'contacted people and held conversations about the real situation of people's lives in Iran.' The results of their findings were that people in Iran flee the country for reasons of poverty and that the political situation in Iran is relatively fine! Which means that to publicly execute people by hanging them from cranes is 'relatively fine' according to the Swedish Immigration Ministry's

standards. This reminds me of the statement of the Dutch government officials in 1999 that said: 'the prisons are satisfactory according to third world standards'. This is nothing but racism. Like other European governments, the Swedish government also believes that the suppression of people in the Middle East and Asia is a given only because they were born in those countries. We try to expose such policies. We try to bring more people onto the streets to protest against the crimes committed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and to expose the deceptive reports of government officials.

*Do you think people will support this campaign?*

**Esmail Moloodi:** I am most certain that this campaign would be appreciated and supported by many. The current situation cannot get any worse than what it is now and asylum seekers have only one hope and that is to make a difference in their future. I am sure that many freedom-loving people will support our campaign.

**Abdollah Asadi:** To improve their lives, asylum seekers need to organise, have sit-ins

and demonstrations. To protest individually or not care about other asylum seekers once one is granted asylum, will not address the problems. Power and a radical movement in society can be the only defence for refugees and asylum seekers. The IFIR has carried on this struggle for thirteen years with all its force from Europe, Canada, United States, and Australia to Iraq and Turkey. It has defended the rights of both Iranian and non-Iranian refugees who have fled political Islam; it has criticised the asylum laws of host countries in order to change such inhuman laws and it has had a significant role in preventing the deportation of thousands defending their basic human rights. Every person is responsible to encourage their friends and relatives to support these rallies, demonstrations and sit-ins morally and financially in defence of asylum rights. It is important for asylum seekers to raise awareness and attract more people to this campaign at public places such as schools, workplaces, and gatherings. This campaign belongs to asylum seekers; they therefore need to make it into the daily news of Sweden's society. They need to gain media coverage

for the campaign and speak of it in demonstrations and public meetings. The work has to be divided among them and they can contact IFIR branches to gather and prepare materials for the campaign. Moreover, given the expenses of this campaign, we need to encourage people to support us financially. People should be assured that campaigns such as this will have a significant impact on the Swedish government's policy making. The impact of this era of IFIR's hard work can clearly be seen in Sweden.

*Are there any other particular goals that you have?*

**Abdollah Asadi:** Another angle of this campaign's work is to have the government of Sweden recognize Iran as an unsafe country and to condemn the diplomatic and political wheeling and dealings between Sweden and one of the most criminal regimes of the world – the Islamic Republic of Iran. The government of Sweden needs to be told that until the Islamic Republic is in power, cranes for hanging people will be in the streets and people will continue to flee the country.

## Stop Executions in Iran

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) unequivocally condemns the Islamic Republic of Iran and executions in all forms and calls on groups and individuals to exert pressure on the Islamic regime to stop the

executions and stonings. We must not allow this regime to kill anymore human beings. International pressure can be instrumental in saving lives. Send your letters of protest to: Mohammad Khatami, E-mail: khatami@president.ir.

Address: The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Sample Letter: I/My organisation strongly

condemn(s) the Islamic Republic of Iran for its recent executions and stonings and demand(s) an immediate end to all forms of execution.

Please send copies to ifir@ukonline.co.uk.

# JOIN IFIR

\* I wish to join the **International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR)** as:

\_\_ Member (£25.00 p.a.)\_\_ Affiliated Group (£100.00 p.a.)

\* I wish to make a donation of: £\_\_ I wish to subscribe to Hambastegi English or Iran Monitor: \_\_ (£50.00 p.a.)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to the International Federation of Iranian Refugees and mail to P. O. Box 27236, London N11 2ZF.

\* I wish to make a standing order:

To: The Manager of (your Bank) \_\_\_\_\_

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Please pay the **International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR)** the sum of £\_\_\_\_\_ each month / quarter / year (delete as appropriate) until further notice and debit my Account no: \_\_\_\_\_ Sort Code: \_\_\_\_\_

starting on (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

[FOR OFFICE USE ONLY] To: **International Federation of Iranian Refugees**, Lloyds TSB bank plc. Sort Code: 30-99-86, account no. 0057223.

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