

IABA Expresses Concern Over Harassment of Iranian Lawyers

Harassment of Mohammad Mostafaei Underscores Recent Attacks on Iranians Lawyers

Washington, D.C. - August 12, 2010 -

On July 24, 2010, Mr. Mohammad Mostafaei, a prominent human rights lawyer in Iran known primarily for his representation of juveniles, women and political prisoners facing the death penalty, was reportedly interrogated by the Iranian government for his representation of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani and other human rights activities. Following his interrogation, Mr. Mostafaei fled Iran. Iranian authorities subsequently arrested Mr. Mostafaei's wife, brother-in-law and father-in-law under threat that they would be permanently detained until Mr. Mostafaei returned to Iran.



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The Iranian American Bar Association ("IABA") is an independent, voluntary, non-governmental and non-political organization of nearly 1,500 judges, lawyers, and law students throughout the United States. IABA regards the fair application of the rule of law as one of the principle cornerstones of a just society. To that end, IABA is committed to promoting an independent judiciary and a legal regime that is free from undue political influence and respects the independence of lawyers and advocates.

IABA is deeply concerned about the ongoing allegations of governmental abuse and intimidation of lawyers in Iran due to their representation of clients, whether in politically sensitive or human rights cases or otherwise, such as in the case of Mr. Mostafaei. Such governmental actions have a chilling effect on the ability of the legal profession to act as independent advocates for their clients. An independent legal profession is an essential prerequisite to ensure the protection of human rights and the impartial administration of justice.

While IABA welcomes the decision by the Iranian government to finally release Mr. Mostafaei's family members from their

detention, IABA condemns any attacks on lawyers, jurists, or their family members, to restrict the independence of lawyers. IABA believes such acts to be contrary to the effective exercise of the rule of law.

About the Iranian American Bar Association

With over 1500 members and chapters in 12 different metropolitan areas around the country, the Iranian American Bar Association ("IABA") is one of the most prominent minority bar associations in the United States. IABA chapters hold networking events, publish articles on key legal developments, and provide outreach to lawyers and law students. IABA also provides an annual scholarship to law students looking for assistance and provides lawyer mentors for those seeking guidance and helps serve the Iranian-American community and the community at-large by providing legal advocacy on important issues.

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