



United States Senate

September 16, 2020

His Excellency Mr. Majid Takht Ravanchi
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
United Nations, New York

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

Given the coronavirus pandemic and her deteriorating medical condition, I write to express my concern regarding Iran's continued detention of human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, and I urge the Iranian government to release her so that she can receive immediate medical treatment.

Ms. Sotoudeh received a sentence of 38 years in prison and 148 lashes after she advocated on behalf of women imprisoned for protesting Iran's compulsory hijab law. Ms. Sotoudeh has been on a hunger strike since August 11, and she is now in critical condition and requires urgent medical care.

Ms. Sotoudeh noted in her letter from prison on August 11th that "the conditions of political prisoners [in Iran] have become so difficult that it is impossible to continue their detention under these oppressive conditions." In March, your government appeared to recognize this concern and temporarily released tens of thousands of prisoners from Iranian prisons to alleviate the impact of the coronavirus outbreak. However, Iran has refused to release dissidents sentenced to more than five years in prison for peaceful activities designated as national security offenses.

Prisoners have disproportionately suffered the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and should not be put at medical risk for the politically-motivated charges against them. This is a violation of their most basic human rights, and I urge the Iranian government to immediately release Ms. Sotoudeh into medical care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

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