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Human Rights Monitoring Group Report

Update on Nasrin Sotoudeh - Follow up from the October 2020 Intervention letter

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Update:

On October 22, 2020, Convocation approved an intervention on behalf of Nasrin Sotoudeh, a prominent human rights lawyer from Iran. The intervention called on the Iranian government to immediately release Nasrin Sotoudeh so that she could receive medical care. Credible reports indicated that her health had been rapidly deteriorating and that her life was in jeopardy.

On November 9, 2020, Ms. Sotoudeh was temporarily released from prison to seek medical attention. Her husband posted on social media that she had tested positive for COVID-19.

Shortly after her release from prison, Ms. Sotoudeh posted the following statement on her social media channels:

'Dear friends and human rights activists,

'With your love and care, I have returned home on medical leave to pursue my treatments. Every day that I spend out of prison, I am waiting to hear the news of the release of all political prisoners. I'd like to express my gratitude for all national and international organizations in Iran and abroad, bar associations in various countries, human rights organizations as well as different individuals such as artists, writers, politicians, civil rights activists, defenders of human rights, news outlets and my dear colleagues around the world.

It is because of your love and support that political prisoners can endure prison. Hoping for the release of all political prisoners.

Background:

Nasrin Sotoudeh is a prominent human rights lawyer who has advocated for the rights of women and girls in Iran for many years. She has been arrested and imprisoned four times for exercising her legitimate professional duties on behalf of her clients. On several occasions, the Law Society has expressed grave concern regarding the treatment of Ms. Sotoudeh and has issued letters of intervention on her behalf.

Ms. Sotoudeh is serving a sentence of 38 years imprisonment for her work in defending women's rights. Ms. Sotoudeh commenced a hunger strike from August 11 to September 25, 2020 to bring attention to the plight of political prisoners in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, her health greatly deteriorated. Ms. Sotoudeh, who suffers

from a heart condition, was reported to be suffering from shortness of breath and extreme weakness. She spent four days in the intensive care unit of Tehran's Taleghani Hospital from September 19 to 23, but was transferred back to prison before she could make a full recovery.

Upon receiving information about Ms. Sotoudeh's worsening condition from credible sources, the Human Rights Monitoring Group recommended that Convocation approve an intervention to bring awareness to her case. On November 9, several news organizations began releasing stories stating that Ms. Sotoudeh had been released temporarily from Evin prison so that she could seek medical attention.