

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PRESS RELEASE

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More than 1 million people join global campaign to demand Iranian government release Nasrin Sotoudeh

More than a million people in more than 200 countries and territories across the globe have come together to express their outrage at the sentencing of prominent Iranian human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh to 38 years and six months in prison and 148 lashes after two grossly unfair trials, Amnesty International announced today, as signatures demanding her release were handed in to Iranian embassies around the world.

To mark one year since Nasrin Sotoudeh's arrest, Amnesty International is organizing a global handover of the signatures collected, calling on the Iranian authorities to release her immediately and unconditionally. Under Iran's sentencing guidelines, she is due to serve 17 years in prison.

"The cruel sentence handed down to Nasrin Sotoudeh for defending women's rights and standing up against Iran's discriminatory and degrading forced veiling laws has sent shock waves around the world. The injustice of her case has touched the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people who, in a moving display of solidarity, have raised their voices to demand her freedom," said Philip Luther, Research and Advocacy Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International.

"We hope the support for Amnesty International's campaign shows Nasrin Sotoudeh that, despite having to face an agonizing ordeal, she is not alone. Her continued detention has exposed the depths of the Iranian authorities' repression on an international stage. Today we are sending them a clear message: the world is watching and our campaign will continue until Nasrin Sotoudeh is free."

Nasrin Sotoudeh's case is emblematic of a wider crackdown by the Iranian authorities in the last few years to quash Iran's civil society and silence those advocating for human rights in the country. Amnesty International is calling on the Iranian authorities to stop attacks on human rights defenders, including [human rights lawyers](#) and women's rights defenders.

“This campaign demonstrates that, whether we are in Argentina, Cameroon, Japan, Pakistan or Spain, what unites us is our common humanity and we need to stand up against human rights violations wherever they are happening in the world,” said Philp Luther.

As of 10 June, 1,188,381 people had signed Amnesty International’s petition.

Background

Nasrin Sotoudeh is a prominent human rights lawyer and women’s rights defender who has dedicated her life to peaceful human rights work, including through opposing discriminatory forced veiling laws and the death penalty. She was arrested at her home on 13 June 2018.

In March 2019, she [was sentenced to 33 years and six months](#) in prison and 148 lashes in connection with her human rights work. Under Iran’s sentencing guidelines, the actual prison term she has to serve in this case is 12 years.

In September 2016, Nasrin Sotoudeh had been sentenced in her absence to five years’ imprisonment in a separate case also linked to her human rights work.

Taking both cases together, the total prison sentence against her is 38 years and six months, 17 years of which she is expected to serve.

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