

# INTERNATIONAL PEN

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Brownlow House • 50/51 High Holborn • London WC1V 6ER • United Kingdom

e-mail: [info@internationalpen.org.uk](mailto:info@internationalpen.org.uk) website: [www.internationalpen.org.uk](http://www.internationalpen.org.uk)

telephone: +44 (0) 20 7405 0338 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7405 0339

## RAPID ACTION NETWORK

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23 June 2009

RAN 26/09

### **IRAN: Canadian-Iranian journalist, writer, film-maker and playwright detained without charge.**

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The Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) of International PEN protests the detention without charge on 21 June 2009 of leading Canadian-Iranian journalist, writer and film-maker Maziar Bahari. He is among over twenty journalists to have been arrested in Iran following the disputed presidential elections on 12 June 2009. International PEN WiPC reminds the Iranian authorities of their obligations to Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Maziar Bahari and all those currently detained in Iran for peacefully exercising their right to free expression.

According to PEN's information, *Newsweek* correspondent Maziar Bahari, who has been living and working in Tehran for the past ten years and has dual Canadian-Irian citizenship, was arrested on 21 June 2009 and remains detained without charge. Index on Censorship gives the following background to Bahar's work as a writer and commentator:

*'Maziar, 41, is one of the most talented journalists of his generation — a writer, playwright, editor and documentary maker, as well as a news correspondent. He is also one of the bravest. He has consistently made films in Iraq since 2003, at great risk to his own safety, and his documentaries and writing add up to one of the most varied portraits of Iran over the past decade. His work includes a remarkable film about an Iranian serial killer And Along Came A Spider and, most recently, An Iranian Odyssey about the plot to overthrow Mossadegh in 1953. More than any other journalist working today, Maziar Bahari's work gives a profound insight into the life and history of the country, partly because he is a creative writer as well as a reporter. His book Transit Tehran, an anthology of writing by young Iranians edited with Malu Halasa, offers an immensely rich portrait of modern life that defies categorisation. He has also contributed to Index on Censorship.'*

Read Bahari's article on the current protests published on 17 June 2009:

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/202475?from=rss>

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## Background

Following the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmedinejad in the presidential elections announced on 13 June, widespread peaceful protests by supporters of opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi who dispute the election result have been suppressed by the authorities. As the protests continue in Iran's major cities, reports suggest that at least two hundred people have been arrested – mostly in Tehran. Those targeted include reformist leaders and journalists, and although most have since been released at least twenty are believed to remain detained or in hiding. There have also been serious restrictions on foreign reporting and increased censorship of the internet, local media and blocking of access to communications.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS:**

- Protesting the detention of Canadian-Iranian journalist and writer Maziar Bahari;
- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all those currently detained in Iran in violation of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a signatory.

### **APPEALS TO:**

#### Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei,  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: [info@leader.ir](mailto:info@leader.ir) or [istiftaa@wilayah.org](mailto:istiftaa@wilayah.org)

#### Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency  
Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: via Judiciary website: [Iranjudiciary.org/feedback\\_en.html](http://Iranjudiciary.org/feedback_en.html)  
Salutation: Your Excellency

### **COPIES TO:**

#### President:

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad  
The Presidency,  
Palestine Avenue,  
Azerbaijan Intersection,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Fax: Via Foreign Ministry: +98 21 6 674 790  
(mark: "Please forward to H.E. President Ahmadinejad")  
Email: [dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir](mailto:dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir)  
via website: [www.president.ir/email](http://www.president.ir/email)

If possible please send a copy of your appeal to the diplomatic representative for Iran in your country.

\*\*\*Please check with this office if sending appeals after 10 July 2009\*\*\*

*For further information please contact Cathy McCann at International PEN Writers in Prison Committee, Brownlow House, 50/51 High Holborn, London WC1V 6ER, Tel.+ 44 (0) 20 7405 0338, Fax: +44 (0) 20 7405 0339, email: [cathy.mccann@internationalpen.org.uk](mailto:cathy.mccann@internationalpen.org.uk)*