

30 Days for Freedom

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#FreethePress

WAN-IFRA www.worldpressfreedomday.org

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Your Excellency,

We are writing as part of the global online campaign '30 Days for Freedom' to call for the release of Ahmad Zeidabadi and all journalists imprisoned in Iran for their work.

Dr. Ahmad Zeidabadi, a prominent journalist and political scientist, is currently serving a six-year prison sentence and is banned for life from the profession of journalism. Throughout his career - from his days as a student leader to becoming a prolific journalist - he has relentlessly displayed a commitment to freedom of expression, human rights and democracy.

In 2010, he was awarded the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers' Golden Pen of Freedom for repeatedly braving the dangers of journalism in Iran. In 2011, Dr. Zeidabadi received the UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

Your Excellency, we are appalled that once again Iran has the notorious distinction of being the world's largest prison for journalists. Prominent journalists are frequently imprisoned while opposition publications are routinely censored or shut down. A widespread government attempt to suppress and silence post-election protests in 2009 saw at least 110 journalists jailed and 20 news media censored. Many of those remain in jail, while the brutal crackdown forced many more still into exile.

Your Excellency, we implore you to create a better environment for journalists so that the freedom of the press can flourish. We call on Iran to stop criminalising journalists and for you to send a strong message in support of freedom of expression by releasing Ahmad Zeidabadi and all other journalists currently jailed because of their work.

Sincerely,

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The 30 Days for Freedom campaign

Organised by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, the '30 Days for Freedom' campaign aims to highlight the plight of imprisoned journalists worldwide in the 30 days leading up to 3 May, World Press Freedom Day.

www.wan-ifra.org / www.worldpressfreedomday.org

