13 December 2018

Mr. Mohammad Javad Larijani

High Council for Human Rights

Esfadniar Boulevard, Niayesh Intersection

Vali Asr Avenue

Tehran - Islamic Republic of Iran

Your Excellency,

As a member/supporter of ACAT-Switzerland, the Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture and the Death Penalty, I am writing to you on behalf of

Reza Entesari, Kasra Nouri, Mohammad Sharifi Moghadam, Mehdi Eskandari, Hesam Moini,
Morteza Kangarloo, Amir Nouri and Sina Entesari,

These eight Gonabadi Dervishes have been arrested on 20 February 2018 in 7th Golestan Street in Tehran as the police and *Basij* militia raided the house of Dr. Noorali Tabandeh, spiritual leader (*Qutb)* of the Gonabadi Dervishes in Iran. The eight arrested Gonabadi were all sentenced by the Branch 15 of Tehran Revolutionary Court to heavy prison terms and/or lashes, exile or ban to leave the country. They were imprisoned at the *Fashafouyeh* prison, near Tehran. On 29 August 2018, security guards raided their cell in ward 3 of the prison. During almost 4 months the eight Gonabadi were held *incommunicado* within the prison. Very recently they were transferred in a security ward and a phone contact was possible with the families. However, the conditions of their *incommunicado* detention still remain unclear.

The prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment (among which *incommunicado* detention), and the rights to life, to the security of person, to be treated with humanity as a detainee, to communicate with counsel of his own choice, to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and of peaceful assembly, are enshrined in the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which the Islamic Republic of Iran is Party of, and thus is bound to respect.

I am deeply concerned about the fateof Reza Entesari, Kasra Nouri, Mohammad Sharifi Moghadam, Mehdi Eskandari, Hesam Moini, Morteza Kangarloo, Amir Nouri and Sina Entesari**,** and I urge you to:

* Order an immediate enquiry about their exact whereabouts and inform their families about it;
* Order their immediate and unconditional release if they are detained solely because of their being member of the Gonabadi Dervish minority, or their belief/peaceful activities in this movement;
* Pending their release, protect them against torture or other ill-treatment; grant their families and lawyers regular access to them, and provide them with all necessary medical support;
* Order an enquiry about their *incommunicado* detention and possible violence committed against them by the security forces, and search for, prosecute and judge the responsible of such violence.

I thank you for the attention you will give to this concern.

Yours respectfully,

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Copy**:** Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Thunstrasse 68, 3006 Berne