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MEDIA RELEASE

**SIAMAK NAMAZI, AMERICAN HOSTAGE IN IRAN,
CONCLUDES SEVEN-DAY HUNGER STRIKE**

Washington, D.C. – Siamak Namazi, who has been imprisoned in Iran since October 2015, has ended his seven-day hunger strike in Evin Prison. As detailed in his [open letter](#) to President Biden, Siamak started the hunger strike on January 16 to mark the seven-year anniversary of the Obama Administration’s decision to exclude him from a prisoner swap with Iran that freed all other American hostages at the time. He called on President Biden to consider the plight of American hostages in Iran for a minute each day of the hunger strike – one minute for each of the seven years of freedom he has lost since that fateful 2016 prisoner swap.

Siamak deprived himself of all food for the entire seven-day period. As a result, he lost some 10 pounds and his blood pressure spiked above normal levels. Over the course of the week, he also suffered a drop in energy and ability to focus and struggled to stay warm.

The White House [affirmed](#) that it received Siamak’s letter and stated that the “U.S. government is continuing to work to bring him home, along with U.S. citizens who are wrongfully detained in Iran, including Emad Shargi and Morad Tahbaz.” The State Department similarly [conveyed](#) that its officials are working “ceaselessly” to free Siamak and the other American hostages in Iran.

Though the hunger strike has taken a toll on Siamak’s physical health, the positive international response has renewed his hope for freedom. He is very grateful for the extensive media coverage surrounding his actions and the messages of support he has received from across the globe. Siamak has emphasized his recognition that he is but one of many people suffering under the Iranian regime who desperately need the world’s attention at this time. Therefore, he is especially touched by the current efforts to shed light on his case and advocate for the release of the American hostages in Iran.

In concluding the hunger strike, Siamak issued the following statement:

I've been Iran's prisoner for a very long time. Longer than all of the many hostages being held here. Longer than anyone in Evin Prison's Ward 4, in fact. I know better than most that a hunger strike is a prisoner's weapon of last resort – to be used only if our cup of endurance has truly run over and after exhausting all other options.

I went on hunger strike because I've learned the hard way that U.S. presidents tend to rely more on their political thermometer than their moral compass when deciding whether or not to enter a prisoner deal with Iran – or indeed who to include in one. I denied myself food for an entire week so that maybe President Biden will recognize just how desperate the situation of the U.S. hostages here has become. So that he may realize that we have suffered far too much for far too long, and that it is time to match claims that freeing us is a U.S. government priority with the tough decisions needed to bring us home. All of us.

It's impossible for me to express how grateful Morad, Emad, and I are for the strong show of sympathy you've offered us during the past week. The deluge of coverage gave me the strength to carry on when my body was at its weakest. It lifted all our spirits and renewed our hope. Please continue to raise awareness about our plight and don't get inured to our being Iran's hostage. Don't let President Biden leave us in this abyss of misery.

Having said all that, I cannot be as remiss as to ask others to recognize our tribulations without acknowledging the pain of so many others who are unjustly languishing in prison with me. Everyone here for the sole crime of speaking their mind and for demanding their rights and the rule of law deserves our attention and respect. I particularly want to shine a light on the indomitable political prisoners in the women's ward. Just like outside, inside these walls these dauntless women face far more restrictions than the men do, yet they display the kind of courage that we, frankly, fail to pluck. They are truly an inspiration to us all.

*Siamak Namazi
American Hostage in Iran
October 2015 – Present
@sianamazi on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)*

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Contact:

Jared Genser
+1 202 320 4135
jgenser@perseus-strategies.com