

AMERICAN HOSTAGE SIAMAK NAMAZI MARKS 2,000 DAYS IN IRANIAN PRISON

Washington, D.C. – Today, April 3, 2021, American citizen Siamak Namazi marks his 2,000th day in Iran’s Evin Prison. He is the longest held American-Iranian dual national imprisoned by Iran, having [surpassed](#) the 1,601 days of detention endured by American-Iranian Amir Hekmati last March.

Siamak Namazi was arrested and detained on October 13, 2015. In October 2016, he was convicted of “collusion with an enemy state” – the United States – and sentenced to ten years in prison along with his father, who was arrested and detained in February 2016. During his 2,000 days in Iran’s notorious Evin Prison, Siamak has been subjected to lengthy solitary confinement, inhuman conditions, inadequate access to medical care, and physical and psychological torture.

In the past year, he has also been unnecessarily [exposed](#) to the deadly Covid-19 virus multiple times due to the Iranian authorities’ [refusal](#) to grant him a furlough to safely quarantine. Although the Iranian judiciary [commuted](#) Baquer’s sentence and closed his case in early 2020, Iran continues to hold him hostage through an arbitrary travel ban. The ban prevents him from seeking the international medical care he desperately needs, namely for severe blockages in the main arteries to his brain. With Baquer consequently at high risk of a stroke and Siamak trapped in prison as Covid-19 continues to [ravage](#) Iran, both their lives are in danger.

Jared Genser, who serves as the Namazis’ pro bono international counsel, stated “Siamak’s ongoing detention serves as the prime example of why the Biden Administration cannot take Iran at its word. He was left behind during the 2016 JCPOA prisoner swap largely due to assurances by Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif that he would be released within a few weeks. Instead, this nightmare has now dragged on for five and a half years and Iran has continued to use hostage-taking to gain international leverage. It is vital that the Biden Administration take new and concrete measures to hold Iran accountable for this barbaric practice, both unilaterally and with its global partners. Otherwise, families like the Namazis will continue to suffer.”

Officials within the Biden Administration have made clear verbal commitments to prioritize the release of American hostages and [attempted](#) to communicate with Iran directly on the issue earlier this year. In a press briefing on April 2, 2021, a State Department official [referred](#) to Siamak’s 2,000-day anniversary as a “terrible milestone” that “should offend all who believe in the rule of law.” When asked if detained Americans would be discussed in the indirect talks between the U.S. and Iran scheduled to begin next week in Vienna, the official reiterated that the safe return of wrongfully detained Americans is a “top priority” and called on Iran to release the Namazis and other imprisoned American immediately.

“Every moment that Siamak spends in Evin Prison is a moment too long,” said Babak Namazi, Siamak’s brother and Baquer’s son. “To think that it has now been 2,000 days since he has seen the outside world is absolutely devastating for my family. While we are grateful for the Biden Administration’s engagement on both Siamak and my father’s cases so far, I urge the U.S. to continue to do all it can to secure their releases and to refuse to make any concessions to Iran that do not include my family’s freedom. What is clear to me is that what has been tried by the two previous U.S. Administrations for the past 2,000 days has not yielded success, and I hope and expect President Biden will take immediate, fresh, and bold approaches to get my family out of prison. At the same time, I implore the Iranian authorities to act with humanitarianism and dignity by granting them their freedom. My brother and father are innocent men, and neither will be able to survive this ordeal much longer.”

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