

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

I am writing to you, as an American, former hostage, and father of a current hostage, to request an urgent meeting to convey the horrific circumstances of my son's plight and share my personal experiences with Iran's hostage diplomacy. As you are aware, I was held hostage for nearly seven years, and my son, Siamak Namazi, remains wrongfully imprisoned in Iran's most notorious prison. My family desperately needs your assistance to bring him home.

I would like to express my gratitude for your ultimately securing my freedom. I was finally able to embrace my son Babak, daughter in law, and grandchildren for the first time in six and a half years. I hope that you, as a devoted father and grandfather yourself, can begin to understand the pure joy I felt during those reunions – reunions I often feared would never come.

However, for that same reason, I hope you are also able to grasp the constant torture I feel as I helplessly watch my child suffer from afar. It broke me to leave Iran without Siamak by my side. And though I would do everything in my power to bring him home, I recognize that his fate is now primarily dependent on your discretion. Therefore, I respectfully ask that you grant this suffering 86-year-old man the opportunity to meet with you in person, so that I may speak to you not just as a U.S. citizen in dire need of assistance from his country's leadership, but also as one father to another. I would welcome other families of U.S. hostages in Iran joining this meeting.

I was 79-years-old when I flew into Tehran seven years ago in response to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' assurances that I would finally be able to see Siamak, who had been held *incommunicado* for months. I was 85-years-old when I was finally permitted to leave Iran's borders late last year. From my own two years in Evin Prison and the nearly five additional years the Iranian government spent toying with my life and freedom, I can personally attest to the cruelty and inhumanity that Siamak and the other American hostages continue to endure. Iran's refusal to grant me even the most basic level of care during life-threatening medical emergencies almost killed me on multiple occasions. It would be reckless to believe this willful disregard for human life does not extend to the remaining hostages.

Accordingly, ensuring their safety requires your personal commitment to freeing them – all of them – immediately. Siamak, having been first left behind during your tenure as Vice President, is tragic proof that excluding anyone from a deal leads to years of prolonged suffering and diplomatic frustration. And with the chance to bring the hostages home now seemingly back within reach, I believe it is critical you hear firsthand just how devastating that fateful decision and every subsequent missed opportunity has been and continues to be for my family.

In closing, I hope and expect you will provide me with the same opportunity you have given to other returned hostages and hostage families. As a person who has experienced immense loss and tragedy, you are aware of the inexpressibly precious nature of every moment with your loved ones. All the potential future moments I have with my son, with whatever little time I have remaining, are in your hands. I implore you not to let them slip through your fingers; so many of them have already been irreversibly lost.

Respectfully,
Baquer Namazi