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**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **IRANIAN AUTHORITIES FORCE AMERICAN HOSTAGE SIAMAK NAMAZI TO RETURN TO EVIN PRISON**

Washington – Yesterday, members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) informed Siamak Namazi (50) that his furlough would not be extended further, without providing any explanation. His furlough, which started on October 1, was renewable and had already been renewed once on October 8. Late this morning (Tehran time), Siamak was taken back into custody by the IRGC and forced to return to Evin Prison.

Tomorrow, October 13, Siamak will mark the seven-year anniversary of his arrest and detention in Iran's most notorious prison simply for being an American. This furlough marked the first time he stayed overnight in a real bed in that entire period. Countless previous requests were denied without explanation, despite him qualifying for furlough under Iranian law years ago and requests being granted for prisoners with similar or longer sentences. These denials were made in the face of horrific and, at times, dangerous circumstances, including the rampant spread of Covid-19 in the prison and his father Baquer Namazi's previous life-threatening health crises.

Siamak's return to prison occurs days after Baquer Namazi (85) was finally permitted to leave Iran to receive medical care abroad after 6.5 years of wrongful detention. As a result of his inhuman treatment, denial of access to proper medical treatment, and general trauma, Baquer's health deteriorated significantly during his time as a hostage, resulting in multiple emergency surgeries and hospitalizations and manifesting most recently in serious blockages in the main arteries to his brain. Although his doctors at the Cleveland Clinic in the UAE are optimistic that the current blockage can be resolved with outpatient treatment, Baquer's health remains precarious and the stress of his son's imprisonment continues to heavily weigh on him.

Babak Namazi, Baquer's son and Siamak's brother, remarked: "I was genuinely hopeful for the first time that my father's departure was the beginning of a new, less painful chapter in the struggle to make our family whole again. But Siamak's return to Evin has shattered that hope. My parents and I are heartbroken and devastated that Siamak's furlough was not extended and he had to return to a prison cell. There is absolutely no reason he needs to be in prison – there never has been. I wish I did not have to thank the actors involved in freeing my father and call on them for new assistance all in the same breath, but I have no choice. I am calling on and begging all of them – the U.S., Oman, UAE, Qatar, the UN, and many others – to do everything necessary to bring my brother and the other American hostages, Emad Sharghi and Morad Tahbaz, home once and for all. Iran has proven the humanitarian gesture of letting my father go remains the exception and does not represent a changed reality."

In June, Siamak published an op-ed in *The New York Times* detailing his suffering at the hands of the Iranian government and urging the U.S. to take decisive action to free him and the other American hostages. While in Evin Prison, he has been subjected to prolonged solitary confinement, inhuman conditions, denial of access to medical care, and physical and

psychological torture.

Jared Genser, international pro bono counsel to the Namazi family, stated: “Iran’s decision to refuse to renew Siamak’s furlough is devastating, but ultimately unsurprising. For Iran to use Baquer’s departure and Siamak’s temporary release to portray itself as acting in good faith, only to immediately and needlessly throw him back behind bars, is a telling display of the precarious situation of the hostages. Immediate action needs to be taken to free Siamak and the other American hostages. Their long nightmare and that of their families must finally be brought to an end.”

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