

**UNITED NATIONS DECIDES THE DETENTIONS OF U.S. CITIZENS
SIAMAK AND BAQUER NAMAZI ARE IN VIOLATION
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND DEMANDS THEIR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

New York and Washington – Just as Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has arrived in New York for the opening of the UN General Assembly, Siamak and Baquer Namazi's international lawyer has today made public [Opinion No. 49/2017](#) of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (Working Group). In its decision, the Working Group concluded that:

"The deprivation of liberty of Mr. Siamak Namazi and Mr. Mohammed Baquer Namazi, being in contravention of articles 9, 10 and 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of articles 9, 10, 14 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, is arbitrary . . . the Working Group considers that . . . the appropriate remedy would be to release [them] immediately and accord them an enforceable right to compensation and other reparations . . ."

In response to this decision, Babak Namazi, the brother of Siamak and son of Baquer said "I am incredibly gratified that the United Nations has found the detention of my father and brother illegal. This shows unequivocally what we have known all along: that they have done nothing wrong. I urge the Government of Iran to release them immediately on humanitarian grounds." Mr. Namazi will be in New York from late Monday through Thursday and is available for media interviews.

Jared Genser, Founder of Freedom Now and counsel to the Namazi family, added: "This decision explains in detail precisely why the detention of the Namazis is illegal and in violation of international law. It is time for Iran to resolve these cases and allow the Namazis to be reunited with their family."

The Working Group is an independent and impartial body consisting of five members appointed by the UN Human Rights Council. Its members are currently from Australia, Benin, Latvia, Mexico, and South Korea. It is mandated to consider and render opinions about alleged cases of arbitrary detention. The Working Group's detailed deliberations and conclusions are presented in a 10-page written opinion.

In its decision, the Working Group concluded:

"[Siamak and Baquer Namazi] have been denied their right to be informed promptly

of the charges against them . . . and their right to legal representation . . . They were also denied their right to examine witnesses against them as well as denied proper access to all the evidence against them . . . Furthermore, they were both denied their right to defend themselves during the trials as they were prevented from speaking in the court except for answering questions posed by the judge . . . Messrs. Namazi were not provided with written judgements . . . and the Government of Iran has failed to invoke any reasons justifying this."

The Working Group also found that their arbitrary detention was motivated by discrimination against them as dual Iranian-American citizens, noting an "emerging pattern" of this practice in Iran.

Finally, the Working Group expressed its "grave concern about the deteriorating health" of both Siamak and Baquer Namazi.

Siamak Namazi (46) and Baquer Namazi (80) are Iranian-American dual nationals. Siamak was arrested on October 13, 2015; Baquer was arrested on February 22, 2016. Both are currently detained in Iran's notorious Evin prison in Tehran, after being sentenced to ten years each in prison on the charges of "collusion with an enemy state" (referring to the United States). Siamak has been subjected to lengthy interrogations, solitary confinement, and torture. Baquer has also been subjected to solitary confinement and suffers from serious heart conditions, for which he has not received any necessary medical care. Both Namazis have been detained with limited access to their family.

In addition to the opinion of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran Asma Jahangir wrote to the Government of Iran expressing concern about the situation and requested a response.

The full text of Opinion No. 49/2017: <http://bit.ly/2f09Lwa>

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