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Iran: Human rights defender Amirsalar Davoudi's sentence upheld despite Supreme Court ruling for retrial

On 31 July 2021, the lawyer of **Amirsalar Davoudi** announced that on 18 July Branch 28 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court made their decision to uphold the verdict of Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court from May 2019 against the human rights defender, corresponding to 30 years' imprisonment and 111 lashes, quashing the Supreme Court's earlier decision for retrial. According to Art. 134 of the Islamic Penal Code, the human rights defender must serve the most severe single sentence, which in his case is 15 years for "forming a group with the purpose of disrupting national security". The lawyer of the human rights defender has announced that they have appealed the decision of Branch 28 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court, which they found to be in utter contradiction with the opinion of Branch 41 of the Supreme Court.

[Amirsalar Davoudi](#) is a human rights defender and a member of the Human Rights Commission of the Iranian Bar Association. In his work as a human rights lawyer, Amirsalar Davoudi has represented many detained human rights defenders and political prisoners. The human rights defender is also the founder and director of a Telegram Channel, "Without Retouching," featuring a variety of content about the Iranian authorities' treatment of lawyers in particular and more generally, the human rights situation in Iran.

On 13 June 2021, human rights defender Amirsalar Davoudi was released on bail for 20 billion IRR from Rajaie Shahr prison in Alborz province. His temporary release was followed by the decision of Branch 41 of the Supreme Court to accept the human rights defender's request for retrial, due to irregularities in the legal process of his trial. Consequently, Branch 28 of Tehran's Revolutionary court was assigned for the retrial of the human rights defender. The first court session was rescheduled from 20 June 2021 to 13 July 2021.

On 14 April 2021, Amirsalar Davoudi's lawyer announced that the human rights defender's request for a retrial was accepted by the Supreme Court, and his case was sent back to the Revolutionary Court.

Amirsalar Davoudi was initially arrested on 20 November 2018 by security agents in his law office. On 28 May 2019, the human rights defender learned that Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran had sentenced him to a total of 30 years' imprisonment and 111 lashes, on account of six charges including "insulting the Supreme Leader", "spreading propaganda against the system" and "forming a group with the purpose of disrupting national security" in relation to his human rights work. The charges are in connection to media interviews the human rights defender had given and posts he had uploaded to his Telegram channel. According to Art. 134 of the Islamic Penal Code, Amirsalar Davoudi must serve the most severe single sentence, which in his case is 15 years for "forming a group with the purpose of disrupting national security".

Front Line Defenders expresses its concern with regards to the quashing of the Supreme Court's decision for a retrial of Amirsalar Davoudi. Front Line Defenders believes the human rights defender has been targeted in reprisal for his peaceful and legitimate efforts to promote and protect human rights in Iran and for practicing his profession by representing the prisoners with security related charges.

Front Line Defenders calls on the authorities in Iran to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally quash the convictions against Amirsalar Davoudi as Front Line Defenders believes he has been targeted solely as a result of his legitimate human rights work;
2. Ensure Amirsalar Davoudi is allowed sufficient time and legal access for appealing the opinion of Branch 28 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court regarding the retrial for his case;
3. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in Iran and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.