

24 February 2022

Iran: House raid and judicial harassment of woman human rights defender Maryam Karimbeigi

On 21 February 2022, Iranian security officials raided the house of woman human rights defender **Maryam Karimbeigi** looking for the woman human rights defender, while she was absent. The security officials, who had in their possession a search and an arrest warrant, left a court summons, according to which Maryam Karimbeigi should be present at Shahid Moqadas (Amniat) Court, Branch 33 of Tehran Revolutionary Court, within five days. The nature of charges against Maryam Karimbeigi is still unknown.

[Maryam Karimbeigi](#) is a woman human rights defender who since 2009 has peacefully sought justice for the killing of peaceful protesters in Iran. She is the sister of the well-known Moustafa Karimbeigi, a 26-year-old protester who was shot and killed by Iranian security forces in 2009 during the widespread protests against Iran's presidential election results. Maryam Karimbeigi has been advocating for the rights of political prisoners, against the use of solitary confinement and other abusive treatment and precarious conditions of prisoners in Iran. Together with her mother [Shahnaz Akmali](#), they have made numerous attempts to seek justice for Moustafa Karimbeigi and other victims of protests in Iran, resulting in repeated threats by the Iranian government against the family.

On 21 February 2022, the house of woman human rights defender Maryam Karimbeigi was raided by security officials looking for the woman human rights defender, while she was absent. During the raid three mobile phones, two laptops, books and a memorial table with pictures of the victims of protests since 2009 were confiscated. The security agents left a court summons, according to which Maryam Karimbeigi should show up in front of Shahid Moqadas (Amniat) Court, Branch 33 of Tehran Revolutionary Court within five days. The nature of charges against Maryam Karimbeigi is still unknown.

This is not the first time that Maryam Karimbeigi and her family have been targeted due to their involvement in seeking justice and campaigning in Iran. Maryam Karimbeigi has not been able to work since she was terminated from the Iranian Chamber of Guilds in 2015 because of her human rights work. Additionally, in September 2019, Shahnaz Akmali, the mother of the woman human rights defenders was sentenced by the Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court to one year in prison on the charge of "propaganda against state" on account of her peaceful activities as a member of the *Mothers of Laleh Park*, a group of grieving mothers seeking justice for the victims of political violence.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the on-going harassment against Maryam Karimbeigi. It believes the woman human rights defender and her family are being targeted as a result of their legitimate and peaceful human rights work in defence of prisoners' rights and of victims of protests in Iran.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Iran to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally stop the judicial harassment against the woman human rights defender Maryam Karimbeigi;
2. Return the confiscated items belonging to the Karimbeigi family;
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.

Front Line Defenders respectfully reminds you that the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998, recognises the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders, their right to freedom of association and to carry out their activities without fear of reprisals. We would particularly draw attention to Article 6 (3): *“Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others to study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and, through these and other appropriate means, to draw public attention to those matters”* and to Article 2 (1): *“Each State has a prime responsibility and duty to protect, promote and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms, inter alia, by adopting such steps as may be necessary to create all conditions necessary in the social, economic, political and other fields, as well as the legal guarantees required to ensure that all persons under its jurisdiction, individually and in association with others, are able to enjoy all those rights and freedoms in practice.”*

Please inform us of any actions that may be taken with regard to the above case.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Anderson

Executive Director