



DUBLIN

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
First Floor, Avoca Court
Temple Road, Blackrock
Co. Dublin, A94 R7W3, Ireland

info@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +353 1 212 3750
fax +353 1 212 1001

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +32 2 230 9383
fax +32 2 230 0028

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Iran: Farhad Meysami's health deteriorating due to hunger strike

On 25 May 2022, human rights defender, **Farhad Meysami**, was transferred to Rajaie Shahr prison in Alborz province from hospital, where he was reportedly handcuffed and shackled to a bed. Following the deterioration of his health due to a hunger strike, the human rights defender had been transferred to hospital on 21 May 2022. The human rights defender has been on hunger strike since 7 May 2022 and is calling on Iranian authorities to halt the imminent execution of Ahmadreza Djalali, an Iranian-Swedish academic and disaster medicine doctor, convicted of espionage for a hostile government and sentenced to death.

[Farhad Meysami](#) is a civil and women's rights defender, teacher and medical doctor. He has been in detention since 31 July 2018, when he was arrested for his involvement with "Girls of Enghelab Street" — a series of peaceful protests against the compulsory hijab in Iran. He was convicted on charges of "spreading propaganda against the system", "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security" and "insulting Islamic sanctities". In December 2018, he was handed down a five year prison sentence, a one year restriction on his civil and political rights and a two year travel ban by Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court. During his imprisonment, Farhad Meysami has led peaceful protests against the restriction of prisoners' rights.

On 16 May 2022, the spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry announced that the judiciary was considering an appeal by Iranian-Swedish academic and disaster medicine doctor Ahmadreza Djalali's lawyers to delay his execution that was scheduled for 21 May 2022. Following this, Farhad Meysami informed his lawyer that he will continue his hunger strike, which began on 7 May 2022, until the halting of the execution and the release of teachers' rights defenders, who have been arrested widely since the beginning of May 2022 in Iran.

Farhad Meysami is suffering from gastrointestinal complications and requires medication, including for intestinal colitis. The human rights defender [contracted COVID-19](#) in October 2020 and had, at no point, been granted furlough on health grounds during the pandemic. According to his lawyer, the human rights defender had very low readings for blood pressure and for his blood sugar, and was subsequently transferred to hospital. On 25 May 2022, Farhad Meysami, was transferred back Rajaie Shahr prison in Alborz province from hospital without receiving appropriate treatment.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned about the grave deterioration of the health of human rights defender Farhad Meysami while on hunger strike in Rajaie Shahr prison. The organisation is particularly concerned, given the vulnerable health condition of the human rights defender, about his pre-existing gastrointestinal problems and the living conditions for detainees in the prison while on a hunger strike. Front Line Defenders believes that the treatment of Farhad Meysami in Rajaie Shahr prison is solely due to his peaceful and legitimate work in defense of prisoners' rights and protesting peacefully against the death penalty.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Iran to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Farhad Meysami and quash his convictions, as Front Line Defenders believes that he has been targeted solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful human rights work;

2. Ensure that the treatment of Farhad Meysami, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
3. Cease using the death penalty for offences that are incompatible with international human rights law. Countries that have not yet abolished the death penalty may only impose it for the "most serious crimes", which is interpreted as crimes of extreme gravity involving intentional killing;
4. Ensure protection and hygienic provisions for all detained human rights defenders, and grant non-discriminatory access to temporary release and furlough;
5. 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.