

DETAILS OF SAEED MALEKPOUR'S CASE

Web programmer Saeed Malekpour, an Iranian national with permanent resident status in Canada, has been imprisoned in Iran since his arrest on 4 October 2008. He is serving a life sentence in Evin Prison.

In late 2010, he was initially sentenced to death for “spreading corruption on earth” in relation to a web program he created for uploading photos which the Iranian authorities said was used on pornographic websites. This was an open source program and Saeed has maintained that the use of this web program on other websites was without his knowledge.

His death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 2012. Saeed was also sentenced at the same time to seven and a half years’ imprisonment on vaguely worded charges, including “insulting the Leader”, “insulting the President”, “insulting Islamic sanctities”, and “spreading propaganda against the system”. These charges were in relation to the web program as well as the public letter Saeed wrote in 2010 detailing the torture he was subjected to while in pre-trial detention.

Saeed has said that he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated following his arrest, including during an extended period of solitary confinement that lasted over one year. He has also said that he was denied medical care for the injuries he sustained as a result of torture and other ill-treatment. His televised “confessions”, which he says were made under torture, were subsequently used as “evidence” to secure his conviction in court. His sister has told Amnesty International her brother’s forced televised “confessions” are the only “evidence” that was presented against him in court.

Saeed’s arrest and sentencing was part of a larger operation called Gerdab (Whirlpool), which was conducted by the Cyber Crimes Unit of the Revolutionary Guards in 2008 and sought to crack down on online activities deemed “immoral” or “un-Islamic”.

Below you will find a guide to write a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, asking her to advocate for Saeed’s release. Please make sure to also locate instructions for writing a letter to your local Member of Parliament.

LETTER-WRITING GUIDE TO CHRYSTIA FREELAND

Write a letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland. A sample letter is on the back of this page.

Please address your letter to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Honourable Chrystia Freeland:

Include:

- Your concern for Saeed
- His permanent resident status
- A few details about his detention, torture, and “confession”
- Urge your MP not to forget Saeed and to do everything in their power to secure his release

End your letter:

- With your signature
- Hand write your name and address

SAMPLE LETTER

Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Honourable Chrystia Freeland,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern about the situation faced by Saeed Malekpour, a Canadian permanent resident who has been arbitrarily imprisoned in Iran since 2008. I am also calling on you to champion Saeed's case and to work for his release from prison and return to Canada.

Saeed is a computer programmer who, while visiting his ailing father in 2008, was arrested by the Islamic Republic of Iran's Revolutionary Guards and transferred to the notorious Evin prison. While in custody, Saeed claims to have been subjected to brutal physical and psychological torture.

Iranian authorities allege that a computer program he created for uploading photos was used for pornographic websites. With the exception of a forced televised confession he gave under immense duress, Saeed has consistently and vehemently denied any involvement or knowledge of the misuse of his computer program.

Saeed was tried in 2009 in a court that refused to investigate his claims of torture and without adequate access to counsel. In 2010, Saeed was sentenced to death. His death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 2012.

Saeed Malekpour has been arrested on vague charges, tortured, and given a trial that falls far short of minimum international standards. In short, every element of his case has been a miscarriage of justice.

That is why I'm calling on you not to forget Saeed and to do everything in your power to secure his release. As a Canadian permanent resident imprisoned on the basis of a false confession obtained under torture, it is essential that the government of Canada do everything possible to seek his immediate and unconditional release.

Your help on this matter is crucial. I hope that you will not forget about Saeed.

Sincerely,

[signature]

Name:

Address: