

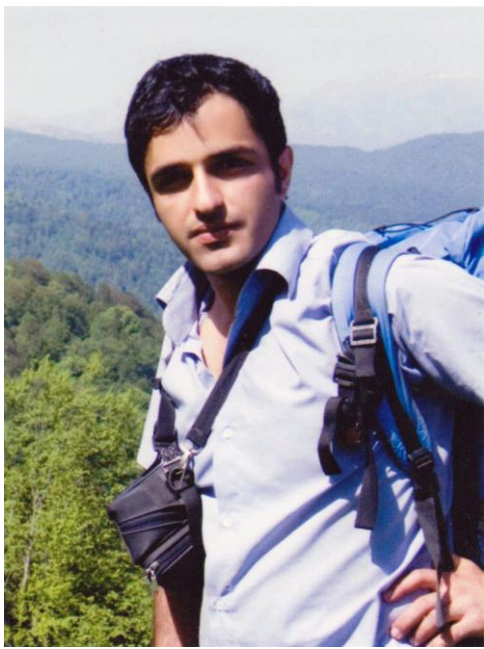
**SAYED
ZIAODDIN
(ZIA) NABAVI
IRAN**

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



**FREE THE
PRISONERS OF
CONSCIENCE**

SAYED ZIAODDIN (ZIA) NABAVI



Sayed Ziaoddin (Zia) Nabavi is a member of the Council to Defend the Right to Education, a body set up in 2009 by students barred from further study because of their political activities. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and 74 lashes in January 2010, having been arrested on the night of 14 June 2009, shortly after attending a mass protest against the announcement that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had won the presidential election. Among others arrested at the same time was his cousin Atefeh Nabavi, herself now sentenced to four years in prison for attending a demonstration. Zia says that he was beaten, kicked, insulted and humiliated during his interrogation. He has been held since then in Evin Prison, Tehran.

Zia Nabavi was sentenced to three years for "gathering and colluding against national security"; one year for "propaganda against the system"; one year for "disturbing public order"; as well as 10 years for "links to and cooperation with the People's Mujahadin of Iran (PMOI)" to be served in internal exile in Izeh, Khuzestan province. He was also sentenced to 74 lashes for "creating unease in the public mind", which have not yet been implemented. His sentence was reduced to 10 years on appeal in late May 2010.

The Iranian authorities have claimed that the PMOI and other groups were responsible for organizing the post-election demonstrations. Zia Nabavi denies all the charges, stressing that he has never had contact with the PMOI and has been extremely careful never to give the impression of doing so, since he has relatives living in PMOI-run camps in Iraq. His family cannot afford the extremely high bail set for his release pending appeal. Zia Nabavi was previously arrested while studying at Mazandaran University, and was later barred from resuming his studies.

In February 2010, Zia Nabavi wrote a letter to the Head of the Judiciary in which he said: "Every person is, without a doubt, responsible for their own actions. Therefore, condemning someone for the actions and records of his relatives is illegal and unjust. If such a condemnation was justified, there would be no innocent person on earth..."

Zia was denied temporary leave from prison for the Iranian New Year celebrations, known as Nowrouz which falls on 21 March. Zia's father, Ali Akbar Nabavi said that he had spoken to Zia over the phone a few days prior to the interview and that Zia had then said that he was doing well. He confirmed that Zia had spent some time at an "Intelligence Office". Amnesty International understands this to mean a detention facility administered by the Ministry of Intelligence. Ali Akbar Nabavi said that he has visited his son several times and mostly the visits take place in prison cabins. In these cabins, which are common in prisons in Iran, there is a partition in the room between the visitor and the prisoner, with microphones and speakers so the prisoner and visitor can communicate across the partition.

On 6 May 2011, Zia Nabavi, along with 25 other political prisoners, was transferred out of Karoun Prison to another prison reportedly called the "Clinic Camp." Amnesty International is unaware of where this facility is located and is making enquiries, though one report states it is 20 kilometres outside of Ahvaz. Zia Nabavi's family has received a phone call from him following the transfer to the new prison. During this phone call, Zia Nabavi stated that conditions in the Clinic Camp are better than those of Karoun Prison with prisoners assigned to six-person rooms, each with his own bed. The political prisoners have also been given rights to twice weekly phone calls to their families.

Zia Nabavi is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association and because he is a relative of members of the banned People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), currently based in Iraq.