

The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
His Excellency
Mr. Ebrahim Raisi
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Your Excellency;

Please forgive me for approaching you on behalf of the Iranian Christians, Mr. Ahmad Sarparast, Mr. Ayoub Pourrezazadeh and Mr. Morteza Mashoudkar.

These three men have exercised their right to change their faith and have joined the house church, called "Church of Iran," and they have subsequently shared their personal beliefs and experiences with other people. Article 18 of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and Article 18 of the "The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (ICCPR) – a covenant binding under international law, which Iran has ratified, guarantee full freedom of religion and include the right for individuals to change their faith and also to promote their new faith.

These three Christians are now accused of "propaganda against the state" only because they have talked about their new Christian faith to other people. The three former Muslims were arrested in their homes, following raids on May 8, 2022, although they had been released on bail only in the autumn of last year. On April 9, 2022, the Revolutionary Court in Rascht sentenced them to five years in prison, and a higher court confirmed this sentence at the end of June.

I therefore take the liberty, dear Mr. President, to beseech you to advocate the immediate unconditional release of these three Christian prisoners.

Most respectfully,