



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President, CEO

February 19, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

The American Medical Association has become aware of a disturbing situation regarding two Iranian physicians, and we wish to bring your attention to this matter.

Dr. Kamiar Alaei and Dr. Arash Alaei are brothers and physicians who have developed innovative programs for preventing and treating HIV in Iran. They have frequently traveled abroad to describe their programs and to learn from others. Dr. Kamiar Alaei is a doctoral candidate at the State University of New York Albany School of Public Health who had been expected to resume his studies there last fall. (He also has a Master's degree from the Harvard School of Public Health.) Dr. Arash Alaei is the former director of the International Education and Research Cooperative of the Iranian National Research Institute of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

Approximately six months ago both brothers were arrested in Iran and charged with "cooperating with an enemy government." Alleged to be working with the United States government, they were tried in a secret court with no way to confront their accusers, hear evidence presented against them, or even to hear all of the charges that had been brought against them. Recently they were convicted and given sentences of 3 years (Kamiar) and 6 years (Arash) in prison. Several human rights groups report they fear the brothers have been and are being abused by their captors.

Recently the World Medical Association wrote to the Iranian government demanding that these physicians be released from this unjustified detention and urging the government not to harm them. A copy of the letter is enclosed.

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According to a recent article in the *Washington Post*, the Iranian government is now using these cases as an early test of the Obama Administration. We strongly urge that discussions of human rights, justice and respect for the medical profession (and the Alaei brothers specifically) must be part of any opening dialogue with Iran.

If the American Medical Association may be of service in this matter, we would be pleased to provide assistance.

Thank you in advance for your urgent attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA

Enclosure

cc: Nancy H. Nielsen, MD, PhD
J. James Rohack, MD
Joseph M. Heyman, MD
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