

**//For Immediate Release//**

## **New campaign launched for seven imprisoned Iranian Baha'i leaders**

The New Zealand Baha'i community has joined a new global campaign calling for the immediate release of seven unjustly imprisoned Iranian Baha'i leaders. The seven are in their eighth year of incarceration in Tehran's infamous Evin Prison. The **'Enough! Release the Baha'i Seven'** campaign emphasises the fact that, under Iran's own national penal code, these prisoners are now overdue for conditional release, says Bev Watson, a spokesperson for the NZ Baha'i Community. "They should never have been arrested in the first place and their long incarceration, based exclusively on their religious beliefs, is unjustifiable legally, logically, and morally."

Last December the United Nations General Assembly again passed a resolution on the human rights situation in Iran which, among other things, called for the release of the seven Baha'is, whose trial has been recognised as being deeply flawed.

Ms Watson said the aim of the campaign was to encourage individuals, governments and organisations from all sectors of society around the world to call on the government of Iran to follow its own national laws and to immediately release the seven imprisoned Baha'i leaders.

The Baha'i Faith is Iran's largest religious minority and its followers have been persecuted throughout its 172-year history. "While calling attention to the long and unjust imprisonment of these innocent men and women, we also voice our deep concern for other Iranian citizens whose human rights are similarly being abused," said Ms Watson. "We hope that the abhorrent experience of the Baha'is can serve as yet another reminder of the need to protect the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which, among other things, uphold the right to freedom of religion or belief."

**//ENDS//**

A special campaign page has been established with information about their current legal situation and other resources [www.bic.org/8-years/enough-release-bahai-seven](http://www.bic.org/8-years/enough-release-bahai-seven), including a Facebook page [www.facebook.com/SituationBahaisIran](https://www.facebook.com/SituationBahaisIran).

#ReleaseBahai7Now

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ENOUGH!



Eight years in Iranian prisons

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