Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur Street, Vali Asr Avenue, South of Serah-e Jomhouri
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran

Copy to:
Iranian Interests Section
2209 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Date: _____

Your Excellency:

We appeal for the release of the prominent reformist commentator and journalist **Isa Saharkhiz**, age 58, whose health has deteriorated alarmingly during his two years as a prisoner of conscience. Isa Saharkhiz is the co-founder of Iran's Association for the Defense of Press Freedom. He is the former editor of the monthly magazine *Aftab* and the newspaper *Eghtesad*, both suspended in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

His family home in Tehran was raided on June 20, 2009 while he was traveling in Northern Iran and campaign materials for the opposition presidential candidate he was supporting were confiscated. On July 2, he posted an article on the news website "Rooz". On July 4, Isa Saharkhiz was arrested in Northern Iran and taken to an undisclosed location. He has said that his ribs were broken as a result of beatings sustained during his arrest. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in September 2010 on charges of "insulting the leadership" and "propaganda against the system". On August 5, 2011, he was sentenced to an additional two years in prison for his former journalistic activities.

In late November and early December 2010 he was reported to have been suffering from severe pain. He has a torn eardrum and has lost mobility of his right leg for unknown reasons, but he has been denied medical leave to seek treatment. When it was discovered that he was bleeding internally, a medical team was brought to perform surgery on him in the prison clinic. In June 2011, Isa Saharkhiz was among several prisoners who went on a hunger strike. He was transferred to the Raja'i Shahr Prison clinic on June 27, 2011 because of his deteriorating health.

We join with the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Isa Saharkhiz, who is held solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression. He should also be allowed immediate access to any medical treatment that he may require.

Signature	Print Name	Home Address
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____