

# URGENT ACTION

## JAILED FILMMAKER NEEDS URGENT MEDICAL CARE

**Jailed Iranian filmmaker Keywan Karimi is in urgent need of specialized medical care. After multiple episodes of coughing up blood, doctors at Tehran's Evin prison have said that he has bronchitis and a lung infection, and needs immediate medical treatment outside prison. Despite this, prison authorities have refused to transfer him to hospital.**

Iranian filmmaker **Keywan Karimi**, who has been jailed since 23 November 2016, has been taken to the clinic in Tehran's Evin prison several times in the past month after coughing up blood. The clinic doctors have diagnosed him with bronchitis and an acute lung infection and have advised that he be urgently transferred to a hospital outside prison to receive specialized medical care. However, Evin prison authorities have so far refused to authorize the transfer. Keywan Karimi is currently only receiving sedatives. He also suffers from a pre-existing bone condition called aneurysmal bone cyst (blood-filled fibrous cysts that expand the bone and can cause pain, swelling and fractures), for which he needs specialized medical care. Around 10 years ago, he had surgery to remove a cyst in his shin bone, and his doctors have said that he requires ongoing monitoring in case further surgery is needed.

Keywan Karimi, a member of Iran's Kurdish minority, was arrested on 14 December 2013 and held for 12 days in solitary confinement in Section 2-A of Evin prison, without access to a lawyer, before being released on bail on 26 December 2013. On 13 October 2015, following an unfair trial before a Revolutionary Court in Tehran, the Iranian capital, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for "insulting Islamic sanctities" and 223 lashes for "illicit relations falling short of adultery". The former charge was imposed in connection with a music video the authorities had found on his hard drive; the latter for "shaking hands" and "being under one roof" with a female friend and poet "who had not covered her head and neck". An appeal court upheld Keywan Karimi's flogging sentence and ruled that he must serve one year of his six-year prison sentence. The remaining five years were suspended, conditional on his "good behaviour".

### 1) TAKE ACTION

**Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:**

- Calling on the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Keywan Karimi, as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression and association;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is granted immediate access to specialized medical care outside prison, the denial of which could amount to torture or other ill-treatment;
- Calling on them to allow him regular access to his family and lawyer of his own choosing;
- Urging them to abolish flogging sentences, as they constitute a violation of the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment under international law.

**Contact these two officials by 8 March, 2017:**

Associate Prosecutor  
Office of the Prosecutor  
Evin Prison  
Dasht-e Behesht  
District 2, Tehran,  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Office of the Supreme Leader  
Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations  
622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Fax: (212) 867-7086 | Phone: (212) 687-2020  
Email: [iran@un.int](mailto:iran@un.int)  
Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

### 2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

Here's why it is so important to report your actions: we record the number of actions taken on each case and use that information in our advocacy. **Either email [uan@aiusa.org](mailto:uan@aiusa.org) with "UA 19/16" in the subject line or [click this link](#).**

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Keywan Karimi was arrested on 14 December 2013 by Revolutionary Guards officials and held in solitary confinement for 12 days in Section 2-A of Evin Prison without access to a lawyer. He was only allowed to make a brief telephone call to his family one week after his arrest, but was not allowed to tell them he had been arrested or where he was being held. He was released on bail on 26 December 2013.

Keywan Karimi's trial, held before Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran, started on 11 May 2014 and concluded on 13 October 2015. He had seven hearings in total, each lasting between only 15 to 20 minutes. His lawyer was present during the trial sessions but the court did not give him a reasonable amount of time to present his defence. There were also irregularities in the court's conviction and sentencing. Keywan Karimi also faced the charge of "spreading propaganda against the system", in connection with his 2012 film *Neveshtan Rooye Shahr* (Writing on the City), about graffiti written on the walls of Tehran's streets. However, the court made no mention of this charge in its verdict. Instead, the verdict imposed six years' imprisonment on Keywan Karimi for "insulting Islamic sanctities"; the authorities had initially failed to inform him of this charge and he learned about it for the first time when the verdict was issued on 13 October 2015. Following a hearing before an appeal court on 23 December 2015, which was attended by representatives from security and intelligence bodies, Keywan Karimi learned on 20 February 2016 that the court had upheld his flogging sentence and ruled that he serve one year of his six-year prison sentence.

Keywan Karimi was at liberty throughout his trial period. Despite never receiving an official summons, the Office for the Implementation of Sentences had repeatedly phoned him since February 2016, after he had learned that his conviction and sentence were upheld, ordering him to present himself to Evin prison to begin serving his sentence.

Keywan Karimi is the director of 12 films, including documentaries and fictional works. His documentary *The Broken Border* was awarded the best short documentary prize at the 2013 Beirut International Film Festival. The film focuses on the issue of smuggling state-subsidized petrol from Iran to Iraq by an impoverished section of the Kurdish community in the western province of Kurdistan. He also directed *The Adventure of a Married Couple*, which was screened at Freiburg, San Sebastián and Zurich film festivals. Keywan Karimi is among a number of artists arrested and convicted of charges based on their peaceful artistic activities. They include brothers Mehdi Rajabian, a musician, and Hossein Rajabian, a filmmaker, who have both been sentenced to six years' imprisonment. See: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5275/2016/en/>

Amnesty International's research shows that the authorities deliberately deny political prisoners access to adequate medical care, in many cases as an intentional act of cruelty intended to intimidate and punish political prisoners, or to extract forced "confessions". Common practices that threaten the health and lives of political prisoners in Iran include: deliberately delaying or refusing urgent and/or specialized medical care; downplaying or outright dismissing the seriousness of prisoners' medical grievances, and prescribing them ordinary painkillers and sedatives without addressing the underlying medical problem they complain of; withholding medication; refusing to release prisoners who are critically ill on compassionate grounds, making medical leave conditional on extortionate bail amounts; and forcing prisoners who have been transferred to hospital or granted medical leave to interrupt their treatment and return to prison against medical advice (see *Health taken hostage: Cruel denial of medical care in Iran's prisons*, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/4196/2016/en/>).

Name: Keywan Karimi  
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 19/16 Index: MDE 13/5557/2017 Issue Date: 25 January 2017