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Iran: Human rights defender Mansoureh Behkish faces eleven and a half years in prison

Human rights defender Mansoureh Behkish faces eleven and a half years in prison after an appeal court hearing held in Branch 54 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court on 3 January 2018 indicated its intention to confirm a seven and a half year sentence, in addition to the human rights defender's initial sentencing of four years from a separate case in 2012.

[Mansoureh Behkish](#) is a women's rights defender and member of the organisations Mothers of Khavaran (Iran) and Mothers of Laleh Park (Iran) which help the mothers, sisters and wives of the thousands imprisoned or executed by the authorities of the Islamic Republic to seek justice through legal and humanitarian channels. Through her human rights work with these organisations and as a supporter of organised non-violent resistance, Mansoureh Behkish has spent the past three decades empowering survivors and victims of human rights abuses. She herself has faced continuous harassment, the confiscation of her passport, the violation of her right to travel and three terms of imprisonment.

On 24 January 2017, Mansoureh Behkish was sentenced to seven and a half years imprisonment in the Primary Court on charges of "propaganda against the regime" and "collusion against the security of the country". An appeal hearing was held in Branch 54 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court on 3 January 2018 in order to contest the seven and a half year sentence. The hearing was held in violation of international due process standards as it went ahead in the absence of the defender's principal attorney, who had requested the postponement of the hearing. During the appeal court hearing, judges of Branch 54 expressed their intention to confirm the verdict.

At this time, Behkish has not had the formal decision communicated to her or to her legal representative. The human rights defender will face eleven and a half years in total if the sentence is upheld. On July 15 2012, Mansoureh Behkish had already been sentenced to six months in prison with an additional suspended sentence of three and a half years if she re-offends within a five year period.

Front Line Defenders condemns the continued judicial harassment of human rights defender Mansoureh Behkish.

Front Line Defenders calls upon the government of Iran to:

1. Immediately quash the convictions of Mansoureh Behkish as Front Line Defenders believes that she has been targeted solely as a result of her legitimate human rights work;
2. Cease all further judicial and non-judicial harassment of the defender;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that human rights defenders in Iran are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.