



## DEBATE PACK

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# British prisoners in Iran

Westminster Hall

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Debate initiated by Tulip Siddiq

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

## 1. Press articles

### **British-Iranian woman jailed in Tehran in state of 'despair'**

Guardian  
Saeed Kamali Dehghan  
02 July 2017

### **We're lucky to have Tulip, writes husband of West Hampstead woman jailed in Iran**

Camden New Journal  
Richard Osley, Tom Foot  
25 May 2017

### **Iran's dual nationals warily await outcome of presidential poll**

Financial Times  
Najmeh Bozorgmehr  
09 May 2017

### **British grandfather begins seventh year in notorious Iran jail**

Telegraph  
Press Association  
05 May 2017

### **Dual national's husband urges UK to secure her release from Iran**

Center for Human Rights in Iran  
25 April 2017

### **British-Iranian woman jailed in Tehran loses legal appeal**

Guardian  
Saeed Kamali Dehghan  
24 April 2017

### **Dual nationals are paying a heavy price for UK-Iranian relations**

Middle East Eye  
Sophia Akram  
20 April 2017

### **Amnesty International criticises Boris Johnson for lack of action over British mother held by Iran for a year**

Telegraph  
Tom Rowley  
02 April 2017

**Ailing British-Iranian grandpa serving 7-year prison sentence denied medical leave**

Center for Human Rights in Iran  
23 January 2017

**Iranian court upholds London mother's five year prison sentence**

Independent  
Bethan McKernan  
22 January 2017

**British mother has been held prisoner in Iran for seven months because of an outstanding £500 million debt owed by the UK Government, claims her family**

Daily Mail  
Julian Robinson  
21 November 2016

**UK urged to take Iran to international court over woman's jail sentence**

Guardian  
Saeed Kamali Dehghan  
13 October 2017

**As Iran's president touts openness, Britons appeal for release of prisoners**

NPR [National Public Radio]  
Michele Keleman  
22 September 2016

**Petition to free UK charity worker nears one million as she is jailed for five years in Iran**

Telegraph  
James Rothwell  
10 September 2016

**Britain and Iran restore full diplomatic ties – but four Britons remain behind bars in Tehran**

Telegraph  
David Blair  
05 September 2016

**Iran arrests dual national over UK 'spy links'**

Middle East Eye  
16 August 2016

**Foreign Office warns British-Iranian nationals of detention risk in Iran**

Guardian  
Saeed Kamali Dehghan  
20 July 2016

**Arrest of several dual-national Iranians could be politically motivated**

Reuters News Agency  
Babak Dehghanpisheh and Yeganeh Torbati  
19 July 2016

**Detained British-Iranian woman linked to 2009 protests: Iran**

Middle East Eye  
25 June 2016

**EU leaders should stop 'premature' rush to improve ties with Iran until Briton is freed, urges son**

Telegraph  
David Blair  
21 April 2016

## 2. PQs

### **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe | 161** 26 Jun 2017

#### **Asked by: Catherine West**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his counterpart in Iran on the decision of the Supreme Court in Iran not to free British-Iranian Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe; what steps he has taken to make sure Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe can see her lawyer; and what steps plans to take to ensure she is free.

#### **Answered by: Alistair Burt | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

On 17 February, the Foreign Secretary, discussed Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case with the Iranian Foreign Minister. Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family in Tehran have confirmed she has legal representation. The Iranian position on dual nationality makes progress difficult and we do not interfere with the legal systems of other countries. Nonetheless we will continue to raise her case with the Iranian authorities at the highest levels at every available opportunity, as I did in a telephone call with the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister on 21 June.

### **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe | HL1824** 26 Sep 2016

#### **Asked by: Marquess of Lothian**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Iran seeking the return of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and her daughter to the UK.

#### **Answered by: Baroness Anelay of St Johns | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

I am deeply concerned by recent reports that Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe has been sentenced without confirmation of the charges against her. On 11 September our Acting Ambassador raised our concerns with the Iranian Government and pressed for urgent confirmation of the charges and sentencing against her. We continue to raise our strong concerns about British prisoners in Iran, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, at the highest levels in both London and Tehran. The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), did so in her introductory call with Iranian President Rouhani on 9 August and again on 20 September at the UN General Assembly in New York. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), similarly raised this case in his introductory call with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif on 4 August, and followed up in writing on 29 August. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood) met Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family on 8 September to reassure them that we will continue to do all we can and that we remain ready to help them bring Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's daughter back to the UK if requested.

**Iran: British Nationals Abroad | 4497**  
**08 Sep 2016**

**Asked by: Jim Cunningham**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many British nationals are currently detained in Iran; and if he will make a statement.

**Answered by: Tobias Ellwood | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

We do not provide information about numbers of British nationals detained in a country when the low numbers involved may lead to individuals being identifiable.

**Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe | 44143**  
**08 Sep 2016**

**Asked by: Richard Benyon**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what levels of UK consular access the government of Iran has granted for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

**Answered by: Tobias Ellwood | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe is a dual UK-Iranian national. The Iranian Government does not recognise dual nationality for Iranian nationals and therefore does not permit our consular staff to visit British-Iranian dual nationals detained there. Nonetheless we continue to push for consular access to Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe and for more information about the charges against her – along with assurances that she has access to a lawyer and appropriate medical care.

**Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe | 905825**  
**12 July 2016**

**Asked by: Tulip Siddiq**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations the UK Government has made to the Iranian authorities on the case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

**Answered by: Philip Hammond | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

We continue to lobby the Iranians regularly about all our consular cases in Iran, including that of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe. I have raised the case a number of times, and, on 4 July, spoke to Foreign Minister Zarif. I subsequently followed that up with a letter. On 18 May, my hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), the Minister with responsibility for the Middle East, met Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family. We will continue to push the Iranians for consular access to her — the challenge is that Iran does not recognise dual nationality — and for more information about the charges that are alleged against her.

**Topical questions | 613 c165**  
**12 July 2016**

**Asked by: Tulip Siddiq**

Thank you, Mr Speaker. My constituent Nazanin has been detained in Iran for 100 days now, with no access to lawyers and minimal contact with her three-year-old daughter. Will the Minister join me in formally denouncing the actions of the Iranian authorities and make sure that Nazanin and Gabriella are returned to their home in West Hampstead as soon as possible?

**Answered by: Philip Hammond | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

We continue to lobby the Iranians regularly about all our consular cases in Iran, including that of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe. I have raised the case a number of times, and, on 4 July, spoke to Foreign Minister Zarif. I subsequently followed that up with a letter. On 18 May, my hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), the Minister with responsibility for the middle east, met Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family. We will continue to push the Iranians for consular access to her — the challenge is that Iran does not recognise dual nationality — and for more information about the charges that are alleged against her.

**Iran: Prisoners | HL223**  
**02 June 2016**

**Asked by: Lord Maginnis of Drumglass**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what have been the practical benefits to the UK of the July 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, and of the Foreign Secretary's visit to Iran in August 2015, in respect of obtaining the release back to the UK of prisoners such as Kamal Foroughi, and Nazanin Ratcliffe and her child.

**Answered by: Baroness Anelay of St Johns | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action applies only to Iran's nuclear programme, but offers a real opportunity for Iran to normalise its relations with the international community. Reopening our Embassies in August 2015 offers greater opportunity to discuss a range of issues, including consular cases. We regularly raise our concerns on all consular cases, both in London and Tehran. Most recently the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), raised them with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif on 17 May, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), raised them with the Iranian Charge d'Affaires in London on 18 May.

**Iran: Prisoners | HL7454**  
**20 April 2016**

**Asked by: Lord Maginnis of Drumglass**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 30 December 2015 (HL4261) and 2 February (HL5328), how many UK nationals or dual nationals they have succeeded in having repatriated, following incarceration by the Iranians, since 1 January.

**Answered by: Baroness Anelay of St Johns | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

The Government is not aware of any UK nationals who have been repatriated following incarceration by the Iranians in 2016. Mr Bahman Daroshafaei, a UK/Iranian dual national who was arrested in Iran in February 2016 was released on bail later that month.

## 3. Other Parliamentary material

### 3.1 Debates

**Iran: Human Rights** [Extract]

**Question for Short Debate | 23 January 2017 | 778 cc502-16**

[...]

**Lord Carlile of Berriew**

[...]

I turn briefly to some specific cases, specifically those of the dual nationals Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Kamal Foroughi, which have been mentioned already. Mrs Ratcliffe has been taken away from her family; she has a two year-old who was not allowed to leave Iran to live with her father, Mr Ratcliffe, in the United Kingdom. Without going into the facts further, I ask the Minister whether the Government can confirm that they have not only been protesting against what has happened to Mrs Ratcliffe but calling for her release in their discussions with their Iranian counterparts. It is extremely important that that should be done. Failure to call for her release may indeed be a misuse, at least, of administrative action. I ask whether the Foreign Secretary will make a public statement calling for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and the 77 year-old Kamal Foroughi to be released.

I remind your Lordships that Kamal Foroughi is a British Iranian serving an eight-year sentence in the notorious Evin prison in Tehran on charges of espionage and possession of alcohol. He was arrested in 2011 and kept in solitary confinement, then convicted at an unfair trial at which he was not properly represented. He did actually see the charges brought against him — the day before the trial. The authorities have barred him from legal advice and much contact with his family, and he has been denied consular assistance. According to Iranian law, a prisoner can be released after serving a third of their sentence, yet he has been in prison for more than five years. That is typical of the arbitrary and inexcusable way in which these cases are treated. Again, I ask the Minister whether she will take up this case and call for his release.

[...]

**Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns)**

[...]

On UK dual nationality consular cases, like many Members of this House, the Government are, of course, deeply concerned for the welfare of several UK-Iranian nationals currently detained in Iran. The Iranian Government do not recognise dual nationality, and on that basis continue to reject our repeated requests for consular access. In answer to my noble friend Lord McInnes, who properly raised this matter, the consequences of that is that it hobbles every opportunity to be able to

learn exactly what charges are being faced, what the evidence is and how we can best help people — or even how we can meet them. That does not stop us asking, but it certainly gives the Iranian Government the opportunity to block our efforts.

My right honourable friend the Prime Minister and my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary have both raised our concerns with their Iranian counterparts. In answer to the noble Lord, Lord Collins, the Prime Minister has not raised these matters subsequently, other than on one occasion last year, but they were raised by the Foreign Secretary again this morning and on multiple occasions by our ambassador in Iran. When my noble friend Tobias Ellwood met the Deputy Foreign Minister responsible for consular issues in Tehran last week, he reiterated our request for consular access to all detained British Iranian dual nationals. He also requested that detainees receive appropriate medical treatment and access to lawyers.

I recognise that this is such a very difficult time for all the families of detainees, let alone for the detainees themselves. The FCO is in regular contact with the families and we will continue to provide support. Tobias Ellwood has met family members and reassured them that the Government are making every possible effort and that we will continue to raise these cases with the Iranian Government at every possible opportunity.

On the condition of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, naturally we were hugely disappointed to hear the outcome of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's appeal. Tobias Ellwood called Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ravanchi earlier today to express our concerns at the outcome. FCO officials are in regular contact with Mr Ratcliffe and have met him in person on multiple occasions since Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's arrest in April last year. Tobias Ellwood met Mr Ratcliffe on 28 November to discuss her case. He will meet Mr Ratcliffe again shortly to provide an update on his — that is, Tobias Ellwood's — visit to Tehran on 18 January this year. FCO officials are also in contact with Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family in Tehran and Tobias Ellwood met them during his visit to Tehran. Consular officials stand ready to assist Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family with any support they require. We also stand ready to assist Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's family to bring her daughter Gabriella back to the UK should they wish to do so.

I was asked particularly about the matter of calling for release. The noble Lord, Lord Carlile, who is learned in law, will know that, as of yet, the process of appeal is not yet finalised. The family have yet to reflect on whether they wish to take any further legal action — that is, if further legal action is possible. We stand ready to support them in consideration of those matters. As is the case in this country too, one does not call for release until one is aware of the circumstances of evidence and proof and, finally, of the disposal of the case. That is all so obscure because of the judicial system in Iran — perhaps the court system might be a better way of describing it — which provides great uncertainty to those who are within it, both during the process of trials and subsequently.

We are also very concerned for Mr Foroughi's health and we have raised this with the Iranian authorities. Indeed, my honourable friend Tobias Ellwood raised this case with the Deputy Foreign Minister just last week in Tehran. Throughout all this, it is vital that we continue to uphold the human rights of all the citizens in Iran with our international partners. We must never forget — and this Government do not forget — that the nuclear deal has within it an ability to hold Iran to account that is separate from the matters of the dual nationals. We will not forget them and, I know, neither will this House.

**Detention of Kamal Foroughi in Iran** [Extract]  
**Adjournment debate | 19 May 2016 | 611 cc242-52**

**Oliver Dowden**

I am very grateful that this debate has been selected. It deals with an important subject, which has gained even greater relevance in recent weeks.

Kamal Foroughi is a 76-year-old dual UK-Iranian citizen. In 2001, he was working in Iran as a consultant for the Malaysian oil and gas company Petronas. He had never previously been in trouble with the law. He spent his life socialising with friends, playing and watching tennis, and working for Petronas. He had no involvement whatever in politics — in fact, he was glad to be both British and Iranian. However, on 5 May 2001 he was arrested by plain-clothes police who refused to show any identification or to explain what was happening. He was given no choice but to get into their car, in which he was driven to the notorious Evin prison. He was held there in solitary confinement for the following 18 months without charge.

Mr Foroughi was finally told the charges when his trial commenced in early 2013. The trial was conducted by branch 15 of the revolutionary court. It was lacking in even the rudiments of natural justice. He was granted access to a lawyer only the day before the hearing, he was forced to attend the trial without his lawyer, and no record or transcript of the trial has even been produced. Indeed, the Iranian authorities have never publicly mentioned Mr Foroughi's name, let alone explained why they are holding him. We know that he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment: seven years for espionage and one for possessing alcoholic beverages, both of which, of course, he denies. As hon. Members know, the United Kingdom, as part of the P5+1, recently secured agreement with Iran on the joint comprehensive plan of action to deal with its nuclear programme.

[...]

**Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Tobias Ellwood)**

First, I pay tribute to my hon. Friend the Member for Hertsmere (Oliver Dowden) for securing this important debate and for the measured tone he has adopted in raising this delicate matter. As he implied in his speech, he has not just brought this to the Floor of the House today,

but has been pursuing it and supporting the family for a long period. We have met on a number of occasions and I have been grateful for the support and communication he has provided to me in being able to place light on this, and improve the communication with the family and make the case to the Iranians. I am very grateful to him for the approach he has adopted.

My hon. Friend pointed out that we are dealing with dual nationality here, which is critical to this case in comparison with others. It is important to make it clear to the House that Foreign Office support for those who carry two passports, who have two nationalities, is different from that provided to those who have a single British passport. Ownership of that second passport obligates the citizen to that second state, and the laws and processes it has in place. From my Foreign Office consular policy perspective — this is consistent through not just our Government, but previous Governments — I can say that we do not normally provide the same level of assistance to dual nationals in the country of their second nationality, unless there are extreme, exceptional circumstances, for example, humanitarian grounds, health conditions and so on. It is important to make it clear that there is a distinction between the two.

Today, we are considering a case in Iran, which does not recognise a dual nationality, regardless of what that country is, be it Britain or otherwise. Iran formally does not recognise another country in terms of intervening in any way whatsoever. Although we disagree with that position on dual nationality when we speak to the Iranians, we need to understand it and place it into context. I have also explained in my meetings with the Iranians that the reason why Britain, the Foreign Office and Parliament take an interest in these things is that these individuals do hold a British passport, hence there is an interest and we therefore request that dialogue in certain specific cases.

Let me step back from consular matters per se, as my hon. Friend did touch on this point. Following the nuclear deal, we are seeing Iran enter a new chapter of opportunity for transition — I choose my words carefully, because there is an awful lot to move forward in order for this opportunity to come to fruition. Our embassy has reopened in Tehran, visits are now taking place in both directions and trade opportunities are also being explored.

[...]

With that embassy opening, there are more opportunities for bilateral meetings to take place. A series of meetings have already taken place at a number of levels. Most recently, the Foreign Secretary raised Mr Foroughi's case with Foreign Minister Zarif in the margins of the International Syria Support Group. The meeting took place on Monday of this week. Yesterday afternoon, in preparation for this debate, I met Iran's chargé d'affaires, Mr Habibollahzadeh, to discuss Mr Foroughi's case.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary raised Mr Foroughi's case with Foreign Minister Zarif in London in February, and the Prime Minister wrote to President Rouhani last year, and also discussed Mr

Foroughi's case with him in January of this year. The Foreign Secretary raised Mr Foroughi's case during his visit to Tehran in August 2015 when our embassy was reopened. We have also been utilising our partnership relationships with Germany, France and Italy to get them to lobby the Iranian Government on our behalf.

There has been a huge amount of effort at the very highest of levels to raise these matters. On a consular level, the team in the Foreign Office is working to support the family and to make sure that we are providing the consular assistance that is expected.

In answer to the questions of the hon. Member for City of Chester (Christian Matheson), the reopening of the British embassy on 23 August last year has enabled us to have face-to-face discussions about a series of consular cases — not just the two that have been mentioned here today. He asked specifically about the direction of travel. We have seen the results of the Majlis elections and the panel of experts. Clearly, that is an indication that Iran wants to move in a new and welcome direction, but there is a long way to go. Part of that includes showing that discussions on sensitive matters such as this can also take place at the same time.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hertsmere asked a couple of questions, to which I will now turn. First, our travel advice explains that the security services in Iran remain suspicious of individuals with links to the UK, and we advise travellers to keep in close contact with friends and family. British nationals, including dual nationals — British-Iranian nationals — face greater risks at present than nationals from other countries.

My hon. Friend asked about the medical checks for Mr Foroughi. Again, we have asked the Iranians to ensure that he receives regular medical check-ups. The Iranians have confirmed that he now has access to a doctor.

[...]

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe is another dual nationality case. She was arrested on 3 April and has not been charged. She has a very young daughter in Iran. We have provided consular support to Mrs Ratcliffe's family since we were first made aware of the arrest. I met Richard Ratcliffe yesterday to discuss the matter and I raised it at my meeting with the Iranian chargé d'affaires when I met him in the afternoon. I understand that the daughter is now with her grandparents, which is good news, and I welcome the fact that Mrs Ratcliffe has been released from solitary confinement.

[...]

The reopening of the British embassy in Tehran last year and the successful implementation of the nuclear deal earlier this year are positive steps in our relationship with Iran. Our renewed diplomatic presence gives us the opportunity for face-to-face discussions on issues such as Mr Foroughi's case. The Government will continue to do whatever we can to support Mr Foroughi's family and to raise our concerns with the Iranians at every opportunity. I sincerely hope that he

will be reunited with his family soon, and I concur with my hon. Friend the Member for Hertsmere and believe that there are strong humanitarian grounds for consideration of the release of both Mr Foroughi and Mrs Ratcliffe.

## 3.2 Early Day Motions

### **NAZANIN ZAGHARI-RATCLIFFE**

**EDM 195 (session 2017-19)**

**17 July 2017**

**Tom Brake**

That this House expresses grave concern regarding the case of Ms Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a British dual national, who is currently arbitrarily detained in Iran; is worried for the health and safety of Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who at times has been kept in solitary confinement and has been kept from seeing her now three-year-old daughter; supports the UN statement calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe and other British-Iranian dual nationals arbitrarily detained in Iran; urges the Government to publicly call for the immediate release of Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe; calls on the Government to ensure that Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case is raised in all private discussions with the Iranian authorities, to ensure consular access and secure her release; further urges the Government to take a more proactive approach to identifying and intervening in cases where British nationals face human rights violations; and calls on the Government to state that in all cases involving British nationals imprisoned abroad, any threat of or actual torture and mistreatment will not be tolerated and will be publicly condemned by the Government.

### **KAMAL FOROUGHI AND NAZANIN ZAGHARI-RATCLIFFE**

**EDM 564 (session 2016-17)**

**18 October 2016**

**Tom Brake**

That this House expresses grave concern regarding the cases of Mr Kamal Foroughi and Ms Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, British dual nationals, who are currently imprisoned without charge in Iran; is worried for the health and safety of Mr Foroughi and Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe who have both been kept in solitary confinement at times and, in the case of Mr Foroughi, has been denied urgent medical help; urges the Government to publicly call for the immediate release of Mr Foroughi and the release of Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe unless she is formally charged and granted a fair trial; supports the recent UN statement calling for the immediate and unconditional release of British-Iranian dual nationals; and calls on the Government to ensure that both Mr Foroughi and Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe's cases are raised in all private discussions with the Iranian authorities.

## 4. Government publications

### 4.1 Letter from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the International Development Committee

20

January 2017

Stephen Twigg MP  
International Development Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Secretary of State

*Dear Stephen,*

Thank you for your letter of 13 December about Mrs Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who is detained in Iran.

I recognise this continues to be a difficult time for Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe and her family. We have been supporting the family since we were first made aware of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's arrest, and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State has met them personally three times to assure them that we will continue to do all we can. Foreign & Commonwealth Office officials also remain in regular contact with them.

I was deeply concerned by the reports that Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe was sentenced without confirmation of the charges against her and the impact that her detention continues to have on her health. Both the Prime Minister and I raised Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case with our Iranian counterparts in September during the UN General Assembly in New York. The Prime Minister followed up her concerns in writing to President Rouhani on 3 October. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State regularly raises her case with the Iranian Ambassador to London, most recently during their phone call on 9 January. Our Ambassador in Tehran uses every opportunity to discuss her case with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We have repeatedly requested that the Iranian authorities grant us consular access to Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe so that we may be assured of her welfare. The Iranians have not granted us this on the basis that they consider her to be an Iranian national. While we understand that Iran does not recognise dual nationality, we consider her to be British and will continue to request access to her.

This Government will continue to raise our strong concerns about all dual British/Iranian prisoners in Iran, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, at the highest levels in both London and Tehran. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State would be very happy to meet you to discuss this further. Please contact his office on [redacted] to arrange this.

*Mr [redacted]*  
*Boris*

THE RT HON BORIS JOHNSON MP

## 4.2 Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice: Iran [as at 14 July 2017]

[...]

### **Safety and security**

British nationals - including dual British/Iranian nationals - face greater risks than nationals of many other countries. The security forces may be suspicious of people with British connections. The risks are likely to be higher for independent travellers or students than for people travelling as part of an organised tour or business people invited by the Iranian authorities or companies.

There's a risk that British nationals and British/Iranian dual nationals could be arbitrarily detained in Iran. In such cases the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has serious concerns that the subsequent judicial process falls below international standards. The Iranian authorities don't recognise dual nationality for Iranian citizens and therefore don't grant consular access for FCO officials to visit them in detention.

Any behaviour that doesn't have an obvious explanation can put you at risk, no matter how innocent you believe it to be. This may include travel off the beaten track, being present near crowds or sensitive sites, having contact with Iranians who are of interest to the authorities, taking photographs (except in major tourist sites), or behaviour that could be perceived as contrary to official Iranian interpretations of Islam. The threat to travellers is likely to be higher if there's any national unrest, terrorist incident or an increase in tensions between Iran and the international community.

You should consider carefully the risks of travelling to Iran. If you choose to travel, you may wish to keep a low profile.

The Iranian authorities have in many cases failed to meet their international obligations to notify embassies when foreign nationals have been detained. If a dual-national is detained the Iranian authorities won't notify the embassy as they view dual nationals as Iranian citizens. Even if requested, adequate consular access to foreign nationals isn't always granted and is never granted for dual-nationals. You should therefore keep in close touch with family or friends back home.

### **Border areas**

Border areas are particularly sensitive. The FCO advise against all travel to: areas within 100km of the Iran/Afghanistan border; within 10km of the entire Iran/Iraq border; the province of Sistan-Baluchistan; and the area to the east of Bam and Jask, including Bam. This area is notorious for banditry and is the main route for drug-traffickers from Afghanistan and Pakistan. The towns of Zahedan, Zabol and Mirjaveh are particularly insecure.

Some Iranian officials and media reports have falsely alleged a UK connection to separatist groups in Khuzestan and Sistan-Baluchistan. If

you travel to these areas against our advice, stick to the main routes to avoid accidentally entering the numerous restricted or military zones.

[...]

### **Political situation**

There have been reports that protestors have previously been taken into custody. You should stay away from demonstrations, rallies, large crowds and areas where police and security forces are deployed. International news events can sometimes trigger anti-western demonstrations and western diplomatic missions have been the focus for previous protests.

There is the potential for protests or demonstrations to occur on Fridays after prayers. If you are unable to leave the immediate vicinity quickly, you should find a place of safety off the street, preferably indoors.

## 5. Press releases

### **New call for release of British charity worker Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe ahead of anniversary of arrest in Iran**

**Amnesty International UK**

**01 April 2017**

Appeal comes during Iranian New Year season, a traditional time for prisoner releases.

Ahead of the one-year point (Monday 3 April) since the 38-year-old British charity worker Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe was arrested during a family visit to Iran last year, Amnesty International UK Individuals at Risk Campaigner Kathy Voss said:

“We sincerely hope the Iranian authorities listen to appeals for Nazanin’s release this Nowruz season.

“The Iranian tradition of releasing prisoners during Iranian New Year has in the past led to some very welcome turnarounds in cases we’d campaigned on for a long time.

“Nazanin is by no means the only prisoner of conscience in Iran who should be released this Nowruz - but if she’s set free and allowed to return to her family in the UK in the coming days, it will be a small but hugely valuable victory for human rights in Iran.”

Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a dual UK-Iranian national, was arrested at Tehran airport on 3 April 2016 prior to boarding a plane back to the UK after a regular family visit to the country. After being detained for over five months, initially in solitary confinement for more than month, Zaghari-Ratcliffe was sentenced to five years in prison in September after being convicted of “membership of an illegal group” in an unfair trial by a Revolutionary Court. Amnesty has designated her a prisoner of conscience and has called on the Iranian authorities to release her immediately.

Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who is currently held in Tehran’s notorious Evin Prison, is suffering with numerous health conditions - including severe arm, neck and back pain - and there have also been serious concerns over her mental state.

### **'One Day' yellow ribbon events**

Ahead of the one-year point since her arrest, Zaghari-Ratcliffe’s husband Richard and various supporters are taking part in events to mark the occasion and repeat their calls for her release. On Sunday 2 April, they are taking part in a “One Day” yellow ribbon event in Fortune Green park in north-west London (West Hampstead), near Zaghari-Ratcliffe’s family home. Supporters are being asked to send in ideas of what they would do with “one day of freedom”, with written suggestions being hung on a “One Day” tree in the park. Amnesty

activists will be doing their own “One Day” tree for Nazanin and other prisoners in Evin at the organisation’s National Conference meeting in Nottingham next weekend.

**Iran: UN rights expert calls for the immediate release of dual nationals**  
**UN OHCHR [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights]**  
**07 October 2016**

United Nations Special Rapporteur Ahmed Shaheed today called on the Islamic Republic of Iran for the immediate and unconditional release of a British-Iranian national sentenced to five-years in prison for charges unknown to her, and two elderly dual nationals who are suffering from serious health conditions that require urgent and adequate medical attention.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe was arrested on 3 April 2016 along with her 22 months old daughter. The authorities confiscated their passports, preventing her daughter from traveling back to the UK to be with her father. On 14 August, Ms. Zaghari-Ratcliffe was tried, on secret charges, in a Tehran revolutionary court and, on 6 September, she was convicted and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment. She was only able to meet her lawyer three days before the beginning of her trial. Her health has also seriously deteriorated since her arrest.

“Sentencing individuals for charges that are kept secret from defendants and their defence lawyers is a mockery of justice,” Mr. Shaheed said. “It is also evidence of the Iranian judiciary’s complete disregard for the most basic fair trial and due process guarantees enshrined both in Iranian domestic laws and the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, to which Iran is a State party.”

“The Iranian authorities should immediately and unconditionally release Ms. Zaghari-Ratcliffe,” the Special Rapporteur urged, noting that the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has recently declared the deprivation of liberty of Zaghari-Ratcliffe arbitrary.

The UN human rights experts also expressed concerns about the health of two other dual nationals, Mr. Baquer Namazi and Mr. Kamal Foroughi, who are currently incarcerated in Evin prison.

Mr. Namazi, an 80 year-old Iranian-American has been held in detention since 22 February 2016 on unknown charges and without access to a lawyer. Mr. Foroughi, a 77 year-old British-Iranian businessman is currently serving an eight-year prison sentence on charges of espionage and possession of alcoholic beverages. He was arrested on 5 May 2011.

“Arbitrarily depriving individuals of their liberty and violating their right to fair proceedings before an independent and impartial tribunal are flagrant violations of Iran’s obligations under international law,” Mr. Shaheed stated.

“I am concerned about the ailing health of Mr. Namazi and Mr. Foroughi, which has been complicated as a result of their age,” the

expert stressed, underlining the Iranian Government's obligation to protect prisoners' right to health and provide them with adequate medical care regardless of their legal status.

The UN expert welcomed the release on 26 September 2016 of Homa Hoodfar, an Iranian-Canadian national who was arrested on 6 June 2016. "I call on the Government of Iran to take all necessary measures to similarly release Ms. Zaghari-Ratcliffe, Mr. Namazi and Mr. Foroughi and allow them to be reunited with their families," he said.

Mr. Shaheed's appeal has been endorsed by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Mr. Dainius Pūras; the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Mr. Juan E. Méndez; the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Dubravka Šimonović; the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Mr. Maina Kiai; and the Chair-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Mr. Roland Adžović.

Mr. Ahmed Shaheed (the Maldives) is a Visiting Professor at Essex University, UK; a former member of the Maldivian presidential Commission Investigating Corruption; and a foreign policy advisor to the President of the Maldives. Mr. Shaheed was Foreign Minister of the Maldives from 2005 to 2007 and from 2008 to 2010. He led the country's efforts to sign and ratify all nine international human rights Conventions and to implement them in law and practice. He was appointed as the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran in June 2011 by the UN Human Rights Council. Learn more, visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/IRIndex.aspx>

The Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures' experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity. Learn more, log on to: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx>

UN Human Rights, Country Page – Iran:  
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/IRIndex.aspx>

## 6. Further reading

### **Letter to European Parliament Delegation for Relations with Iran**

Redress, OMCT [World Organisation against Torture], Fair Trials, FIDH [International Federation for Human Rights]

12 June 2017

### **Annex of cases of EU citizens and residents reportedly currently detained in Iran** includes the British-Iranian nationals:

Kamal Foroughi

Roya Saberi Nobakht

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

### **Iran and the re-election of Rouhani**

Commons Briefing Paper CBP-7983

08 June 2017

### **UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran**

UN Human Rights Council

Document reference: A/HRC/34/65

17 March 2017

### **Iran 2016/2017**

Amnesty International report 2016/17: the state of the world's human rights

21 February 2017

### **Opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at its seventy-sixth session, 22-26 August 2016: Opinion No. 28/2016 concerning Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe (Islamic Republic of Iran)**

UN Human Rights Council Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

Document reference: A/HRC/WGAD/2016/28

21 September 2016

### **Human Rights in Iran**

Commons Debate Pack CDP-2016-0125

23 June 2016

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