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HOSTAGE AID WORLDWIDE BRINGS TOGETHER MORE THAN 20 FAMILY MEMBERS FROM FOUR COUNTRIES OF PAST AND CURRENT HOSTAGES TO DISCUSS THEIR COMMON EXPERIENCES

In an extraordinary and groundbreaking webinar via Zoom, Hostage Aid Worldwide (HAW) held a meeting with former Iranian, Syrian, and Cuban hostages and with more than twenty hostage families, whose loved ones are being held as bargaining chips, most prominently in Iran and Syria.

This meeting's purpose was to find common ground among the hostages, their families, and Hostage Aid Worldwide in a listening and learning session about their experiences with home governments, questions concerning whether to get access to the media in their struggles to free their loved ones, and a myriad of other issues confronting them, all as a means of assisting HAW, whose mission is to help both hostages and their loved ones to break the chain of the ever prevalent act of state sponsored hostage diplomacy.

The nearly two-hour session was moderated by Ali Arab, the Georgetown Professor of Statistics, human rights activist, and board member of HAW who said after the event "the similarities between the cases and the sheer desperation of the families helplessly embroiled in complex political disputes spanning decades was breathtaking and horrifying. It clearly demonstrates the cynical hostage business model followed by several countries and underlines the urgency of finding globally enforced solutions to stamp it out"

Nizar Zakka, CEO of Hostage Aid Worldwide continued "this was probably the most important hostage victims meeting in the last 40 years and the sheer volume of attendees willing to share their horrifying experiences proves beyond all doubt that hostage diplomacy is a real and burgeoning global problem. Our organization is determined to play a key role in ending it for good and to bring the perpetrators to justice"

A full transcript of the call is available to interested parties by contacting chedid.c@hostageaid.org