



## **Iranian Regime's Intent to Violate American Human Rights on U.S. Soil: Hostage Aid Worldwide Board Member, and Human Rights Activist, Masih Alinejad, Threatened with Abduction by the Iranian Intelligence Agents**

July 15th, 2021

Yesterday, we were shocked to learn that the U.S. law enforcement foiled an attempt by the Iranian Intelligence to abduct Hostage Aid Worldwide (HAW) board member Masih Alinejad, an Iranian American human rights activist, on American soil. According to the FBI, this marks the very first time that the Islamic Republic of Iran attempts to abduct an American in the United States.

We are deeply grateful for the efforts of the FBI and other U.S. law enforcement agencies in disrupting the kidnapping plot. But we are unsettled by the State Department's notification to the Congress after the foiled abduction attempt was exposed that the Biden Administration is to lift major oil sanctions on Iran, despite Iran's abduction attempt and despite that our fellow American hostages are still languishing in Iran's notorious Evin prison. To our further dismay, the Department of State portrayed this foiled kidnapping plan simply as a law enforcement matter and referred inquiries to the Department of Justice. We are gravely troubled with this approach and the lack of recognition of the threat of the Iranian regime, a foreign entity, to the safety of Americans and U.S residents. It also will result in downplaying the threat to Iranian-American (and Iranian) activists and dissidents as well as to the safety of other possible targets of the Iranian regime including former hostages and their families, human rights advocates and civil society and political activists.



Here again, we, former hostages, families of current hostages and activists striving for the freedom of hostages held by state actors, express our grave concern about the administration's Iran policy which gives precedence to reviving the nuclear deal over everything else including the safety and wellbeing of Americans.

Should the Iranian regime remain unscathed for its crime committed on American soil, then one can only expect the criminal regime to be emboldened and carry out more such operations to kidnap, hurt or kill Americans even right here in America. If so, no U.S. based activists who strive for the improvement of human conditions in Iran will feel safe at home. And for that matter, other authoritarian regimes may emulate this sinister Iranian behavior and carry out similar operations with impunity in America. At that time, there will be no freedom in our country to speak of, and the liberty we are proud of and live by in America will no longer have meaning.



Thus we expect from the Administration a firm response to the Iranian regime's attempted kidnapping of our colleague and HAW Board member, Masih Alinejad. And for the sake of liberty that defines America, for the sake of the safety and wellbeing of Americans, we call on the Administration to immediately revise its approach toward negotiations with Iran for reviving the nuclear deal and hold the Iranian regime responsible for the attempt to kidnap an American in America. Moreover, we also reiterate our demand that the Biden Administration halt any sanction relief until All American hostages are released from Iranian custody.