



Nizar Zakka, Seven Years since his Kidnapping in Tehran: “Enough with Empty Promises and Political Games.”

September 18, 2022

Today marks exactly seven years since HAW member Nizar Zakka was kidnapped in Tehran by the IRGC. He had been officially invited by the Iranian government to speak at a conference for women empowerment. On his way to the airport after the conference, two cars stopped the taxi he was riding in, forced him out, and took him away.

Nizar was falsely accused of being a U.S spy and spent nearly four years in notorious Evin prison, two years of which were in solitary confinement in harrowing conditions. He was released in 2019.

Three years after his release, the torture, agony and despair of the ordeal still haunt him. No innocent human being should have to suffer like this: to hope and pray for freedom and then have that hope shattered to pieces time and again; to have to trust in the moral courage of others taking action only to be heartbreakingly disappointed; to believe that governments are working to free you only to feel the pain, anguish and frustration of being left behind as Nizar was in 2016.

On this day, Hostage Aid urgently calls on the Biden Administration to correct past mistakes and take decisive action to free all U.S hostages and unlawfully detained around the world without leaving anyone behind again.

Hostage Aid urges Biden, as a President and Leader, and as a Father, Husband and Son, to do everything in his power to prioritize the release of all US hostages in Iran, without exception, including U.S LPR Shahab Dalili, regardless of the JCPOA.

It is cruel and inhumane to tie the fate of innocent hostages to the success of the JCPOA, especially when it seems Iran has been willing for over a year, to make a hostage deal separately from the nuclear agreement.

Hostage Aid also calls on all EU countries and governments to ACT NOW to bring all their unlawfully detained back home to their loved ones, before it is too late.

All hostages, unlawfully detained, and their families, cannot take any more political games and are fed up with empty promises. It is time to put words into action and follow through on promises as the only true measure is the actual safe return of everyone home.