

Head of Judiciary Ebrahim Raisi
c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN
Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland

,Dear Mr Ebrahim Raisi

Women's rights defender Saba Kordafshari, 21, is unjustly jailed in Tehran's Evin prison for her peaceful human rights work, including campaigning against Iran's discriminatory and degrading forced veiling laws. In November 2019, an appeal court quashed her conviction for "inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" through promoting "unveiling", reducing her prison sentence from 24 years to nine years. In late May 2020, while serving her sentence, she found out that judicial authorities had unlawfully and secretly altered the appeal verdict and other related judicial records to make it appear that the 15-year prison sentence had been upheld in November 2019 and her total sentence was 24 years. The authorities have refused to account for the causes and circumstances surrounding this alteration, of which her lawyer only became aware when Saba Kordafshari called him from inside prison. If this falsification of the verdict is not corrected, she would have to spend a total of 15 years in prison, as per Iran's sentencing guidelines.

Since her arbitrary arrest on 1 June 2019, Saba Kordafshari's due process rights have been repeatedly violated. During pre-trial detention, she was denied access to a lawyer while interrogated and held in prolonged solitary confinement and, at one point, forcibly disappeared for 12 days. She later said that during this period, she was ill-treated in order to "confess" before a camera, including by having a sack placed over her head for hours, and threatened with the arrest of her mother, women's rights defender Raheleh Ahmadi, which happened on 10 July 2019. Her subsequent trial in August 2019 was grossly unfair - she was barred from an adequate defence as her lawyer was not permitted to review the court file until the day of the trial.

Saba Kordafshari's access to the medical care has been denied, which she requires for pre-existing gastrointestinal problems that have been exacerbated in prison and from which she is in pain. She was finally taken to an outside hospital on 29 June 2020 after waiting one year. She said that the doctor failed to conduct a comprehensive examination, but referred her for coloscopy, endoscopy and ultrasound to take place at a later unknown date.

I urge you to release Saba Kordafshari immediately and unconditionally as she is jailed solely for her human rights work. Pending her release, she must urgently receive any medical care she needs and have regular contact with a lawyer of her choosing. I further ask you to order an independent and impartial investigation into her enforced disappearance, placement in prolonged solitary confinement and lack of access to legal counsel and medical care and ensure that those responsible are held to account.

Yours sincerely,