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Press Statement**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**

Washington, DC

July 17, 2007

Iran Unjustly Parades American Citizens

The United States is appalled at the mistreatment of Americans Haleh Esfandiari of the Wilson Center, Kian Tajbakhsh of the Open Society Institute, and Ali Shakeri of University of California at Irvine's Center for Citizens Peacebuilding, all currently imprisoned in the notorious Evin prison, and Parnaz Azima of Radio Farda, prevented by authorities from departing [Iran](#).

We are outraged that the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran would parade two of these American citizens on state-run television on July 16, showing Dr. Esfandiari and Mr. Tajbakhsh apparently reading statements made under duress.

These two individuals have labored for years to build bridges of understanding between our two countries; their efforts should be recognized as a benefit to both our nations. We call upon Supreme Leader Ali Hosseini Khamenei to treat these people with the respect they deserve, to put an end to any further broadcasts, and to release all Americans currently being held on groundless charges. We also call on Iranian authorities to provide the U.S. with information regarding the whereabouts of Robert Levinson.

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