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[Press Statement](#)**Tom Casey, Deputy Spokesman**

Washington, DC

October 17, 2007

Human Rights Defender Detained in Iran

The Iranian regime's arrest of Emadeddin Baghi, head of the Organization for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights, demonstrates its disregard for Iranian citizens campaigning for their basic rights. The regime accuses him of being a threat to national security for condemning its ongoing mistreatment of prisoners. Baghi has already served time in Iran's prisons and been subject to travel bans – all for drawing attention to the recent increase in executions in Iran, and for calling for humane treatment of prisoners. His work to protect the rights of others should be lauded not condemned.

We stand with those defending the rights of the Iranian people and call upon the Government of Iran to treat its prisoners humanely and release Baghi and other human rights activists, including Mansour Osanloo and Mohammed Salehi, immediately.

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