




THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH

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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
June 1, 2007

Statement by the President on Detention of American Citizens by the Iranian Regime

Several of our fellow American citizens -- including Haleh Esfandiari, Parnaz Azima, Kian Tajbakhsh, and Ali Shakeri -- are  [White House News](#) being held against their will by the Iranian regime. I strongly condemn their detention at the hands of Iranian authorities. They should be freed immediately and unconditionally.

These individuals have dedicated themselves to building bridges between the American and Iranian people, a goal the Iranian regime claims to support. Their presence in Iran -- to visit their parents or to conduct humanitarian work -- poses no threat. Indeed, their activities are typical of the abiding ties that Iranian-Americans have with their land of origin.

I am also disturbed by the Iranian regime's refusal so far to provide any information on Robert Levinson, despite repeated U.S. requests. I call on Iran's leaders to tell us what they know about his whereabouts.

The United States is committed to protecting its citizens at home and abroad. We will maintain our efforts on behalf of these citizens until all of them are reunited with their families.

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