

## **Fact Sheet Nasrin Sotoudeh, Iran.**

As a human rights lawyer, Nasrin Sotoudeh has defended many of the human rights activists who were arrested after the presidential elections in June 2009. She defended Shirin Ebadi, the human rights lawyer and Nobel laureate who co-founded the *Defenders for Human Rights Center* (DHRC). She also acted as lawyer for the Iranian-Dutch Zahra Bahrami, who was executed in Iran on 29 January 2011. Next to that she has fought diligently for equal rights for women and the abolishment of the death penalty for persons who committed crimes below eighteen years of age.

On 28 August 2010, members of the intelligence service searched Sotoudeh's office and home. Furthermore, her assets were frozen. On September 4, 2010, she was arrested.

On January 9, 2011, Nasrin Sotoudeh was sentenced by Branch 26 of the Islamic Revolution Court to 11 years of imprisonment, on charges of "acting against national security", "propaganda against the system", "collusion and gathering with the aim of acting against national security" and "membership in an illegal organisation" (DHRC). Furthermore she was banned from practicing law and traveling abroad for 20 years. On 14 September 2011, this sentence was reduced by the Appeal Court to 6 years imprisonment and a 10-year ban on practicing law.

After the sentence was announced, Sotoudeh's husband was summoned to appear in the prosecutor's office in the Evin Prison, where he was arrested on 16 January 2011 and held in detention for one night. It is unclear what he is charged with, but it is believed that his arrest is linked to remarks he made in interviews he gave in connection with the case against his wife.

On July 11, 2012, Sotoudeh's 12-year-old daughter was summoned by authorities and informed that she was banned from traveling outside the country.

In September and October 2012, Sotoudeh's visitation day in the Evin prison was changed from Sunday to Wednesday. This was done without any legitimate ground being provided by the prison authorities. Furthermore she was only allowed to see her family members from behind a glass wall. In reaction to these measures, on 17 October 2012, Nasrin Sotoudeh went on hunger strike to protest against the above described harassment by the judicial authorities towards her family. After she went on hunger strike, her visitation day was changed back to Sunday. Her family members had been denied the right to visit her for a few weeks, except on November 12 when Sotoudeh was allowed to see her children face to face, although only for a few minutes and in the presence of the prison guards.

Following her hunger strike, Sotoudeh was placed in solitary confinement from October 31st until November 19.

On Wednesday the 21st of November Nasrin Sotoudeh's husband declared that he was allowed to see Sotoudeh for a few minutes on 20 November. Sotoudeh is emaciated due to the 5 weeks of hunger strike. Even though her husband tried to convince her to break her hunger strike, Sotoudeh told him that she will continue the hunger strike until the restrictions on visits of her family members are lifted, and the harassment by the judicial authorities towards her family ends.

Nasrin Sotoudeh was one of the three nominees for the [Martin Ennals Award 2012](#).

In November 2012 Nasrin Sotoudeh was awarded the [Sakharov Price for Freedom of Thought](#) by the European Parliament.