

# **IRAN: Over 400 Dervishes arrested in the last three months and Yarvar Mohamad Salas sentenced to death**

IOPHR (04.05.2018) – On the 3rd of May 2018, a number of MEP's released an Urgent Appeal demanding the Iranian Regime stop the execution of Mr. Yavar Mohamad Salas, release Dr. Noor Ali Tabandeh from house arrest and cease the persecution of Gonabadi Dervishes in Iran.

A summary of the appeal reads as follows: Mr. Salas has been wrongfully convicted of the murder of three police officers, despite the fact that the case against him remains incomplete and unsubstantiated. During his trial, evidence surfaced that proved Mr. Salas's innocence which was completely ignored by the court.

Numerous legal violations occurred during the trial process with Mr. Salas being forced to confess under duress, lack of access to legal representation, and failure to observe the defendant's rights as set out in the Iranian constitution and penal code. Mr. Salas has been threatened, tortured and is now facing execution for a crime he did not commit.

The Iranian regime is suppressing and persecuting Sufi Gonabadi Dervishes solely because of their belief system. Senior officials representing the regime have explicitly stated that one of the top priorities of the regime is to

target and attack all Dervishes in Iran through nationwide ethnic cleansing. Since the 19th February over 400 Gonabadi Dervishes have been arrested and the Regime has made clear that they will only release the imprisoned Dervishes if they give up their beliefs.

Furthermore, the regime is also targeting the spiritual leader of this Gonabadi Sufi Order, Dr. Noor Ali Tabandeh, who has been placed under house arrest since 20th February 2018, cutting him off from all forms of communication, and denying him critical medical care and assistance.

We call on President Rouhani to take immediate action to put an end to these injustices and violations of human rights, to stop the execution of Mr. Salas, to order a new trial to take place and to order the immediate release of Dr. Noor Ali Tabandeh from house arrest.

We call on the Iranian regime to uphold fundamental human rights, prisoners' rights, the right to freedom of religion, thought and conscience, and to restore Dignity, Freedom, and Justice as set out in international conventions.

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