



COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF REFERENDUM IN IRAN

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CSRI Concerns for health and Safety of Ahmad Batebi

According to the reports from human rights organizations and Ahmad Batebi's family, his health has been severely deteriorated. The calls by Ahmad Batebi's family for proper medical care have been rejected by the judiciary system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Ahmad Batebi was arrested during the student uprisings in July 1999, after his picture, holding a bloody T-shirt over his head, appeared in *The Economist*. In a letter smuggled out of the prison, Batebi explained how he was severely tortured day after day and was denied medical attention. Batebi was initially sentenced to death, but his sentence was reduced to 15 years imprisonment later because of the international pressure.

While on a short break, Batebi contacted Mr. Ambeyi Ligabo, the UN Special Reporter on freedom of opinion and expression last year about the atrocious conditions of the prisons in Iran. This angered the Iranian government and Batebi was kidnapped. His father threatened to burn himself if he did not hear about his son. Later it was reported that he was in prison and since then his already poor health has been deteriorating even further, under severe mental and physical torture. Numerous calls by Batebi's family have remained unanswered and concerns about his health are mounting.

The Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran (CSRI) calls on all the human rights organizations and the United Nations human rights committee to immediately intervene and demand the Iranian government for safety and protection of Ahmad Batebi. We call on the international community to remind the Iranian government about their responsibility under the human rights declaration of the United Nation, for safety of all Iranians, regardless of their political beliefs.

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