

ALCEE L. HASTINGS
23RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
FLORIDA

RULES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE
AND BUDGET PROCESS
RANKING MEMBER

UNITED STATES
HELSINKI COMMISSION
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER

FLORIDA DELEGATION
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN

SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0923

October 6, 2011

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

- 2353 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0923
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-1313
FAX: (202) 225-1171
- 2701 W. OAKLAND PARK BOULEVARD
SUITE 200
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33311
TELEPHONE: (954) 733-2800
FAX: (954) 735-9444
- DELRAY BEACH CITY HALL
100 NW 1ST AVENUE
DELRAY BEACH, FL 33444
TELEPHONE: (561) 243-7042
FAX: (561) 243-7327

www.alceehastings.house.gov

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I write to express my support for the Administration's position with regards to urging the release of Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani from Iranian prison and condemning Pastor Nadarkhani's conviction.

Sentencing a person to death for their religious beliefs goes against everything our modern world stands for. The case of Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani is extremely disconcerting and we must vigilantly fight to raise global awareness about the absence of democracy and human rights in Iran and to bridge the gap between the people of Iran and the international community.

Pastor Nadarkhani is one of many community leaders, students, human rights activists, other dissidents and members of religious and ethnic minorities who are persecuted by the Iranian authorities for expressing opinions or beliefs, which diverge from official viewpoints. I will continue to dedicate my efforts in the fight to eradicate all forms of hatred and zealously defend the fundamental freedoms and rights of all human beings around the world.

It is specifically appalling to continue to witness religious minorities being systematically targeted by Iran's tyrannical regime. Bahais, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Jews all face serious repression. Moreover, Iranians who share a different viewpoint from the government themselves become victims to the same persecution. Political, racial, and religious hatred must be addressed forcefully by the international community.

Speaking out is a necessary step to promote awareness of these injustices and to ensure that a climate of intolerance is not being fostered by the current Iranian government.

Again, I thank you for your continued leadership on this matter. With warm regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alcee L. Hastings".

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State