

When Will Obama Make Good on His Promise to Persecuted Pastor Saeed Abedini's Wife?

American Pastor Saeed Abedini is facing renewed torment and hostility suffering in Iran for his Christian faith. He hears fellow prisoners being executed as he tries to sleep. Iranian authorities refuse to allow him the vital medical treatment he desperately needs. The prison guards threaten and torment him.

There is already a framework for a nuclear agreement and U.S. and Iranian negotiators are about to sit down again to begin finalizing the details, but Pastor Saeed is still not home and the situation is getting worse. *Fox News* has an updated report on Pastor Saeed's horrifying condition.

With the United States sitting down with the Iranian delegation again this week, it is essential that our government not forget Pastor Saeed—a U.S. citizen whose been imprisoned in Iran for more than two-and-a-half years. President Obama communicated to Pastor Saeed's wife and children that bringing Pastor Saeed home was a "top priority." We urge the Obama administration to put those words into action. Regardless of the outcome on the nuclear deal, the U.S. government should not leave the table until it has secured the freedom of Pastor Saeed. Let us leave no man behind.

At this critical juncture, Iran has an invaluable opportunity to show the world that it is committed to rejoining the international community—yet, it must take steps to build trust and good faith. Iran should demonstrate its good faith to the world by immediately releasing Pastor Saeed.

Pastor Saeed's wife, Naghmeh, provides further insight into the horrible conditions he faces while in chains for his

faith:

The urgency of getting my husband home has never felt so real. His physical and psychological strength has been greatly weakened throughout his imprisonment. The lack of clean water and good nutrition have taken a toll on Saeed's physical well-being. Psychologically, in the weeks past he has heard the cries of dozens of prisoners who have been executed in his prison. He has faced constant harassment and intimidation, including threats that he will never walk as a free man again as the guards will see that his sentence is continually increased. While this threat is not new, the ability of these words to psychologically torment Saeed has increased as he has seen the reality of this threat come true for fellow prisoners. Guards have repeatedly told him that the price of his freedom is denying Christ and returning Islam—and yet, Saeed's faith in Christ remains strong.

Our government must not forget that Saeed is not being held by the reformists with whom they negotiate but by radical hardliners who oppose what he represents—a Christian convert and an U.S. citizen. We cannot leave my husband's fate in the hands of these radicals. As our government returns to the negotiating table with Iran this week, I implore them to remember the urgency of bringing Saeed home to our family. The reality is, that if our government does not secure his release before the close of the negotiations in June, securing his release will be exponentially more difficult."

Naghmeh is right. The Obama Administration must demand and secure the immediate release of Pastor Saeed and the other Americans held captive.

There can be no deal unless Pastor Saeed is released and allowed to return to his family in America.

We're continuing to aggressively engage across the globe for Pastor Saeed's freedom. We must not be silent while our fellow

American—our brother in Christ—suffers. Join us and have your voice heard.

Time is of the essence. Take action and stand with us as we fight for his freedom.