

US House Approves Resolution Demanding Release of Nadarkhani

The U.S. House has approved a resolution **condemning Iran** and calling for the immediate release of Christian Pastor **Youcef Nadarkhani**.

The resolution sends a powerful message that human rights and **religious freedom** transcend political and religious differences, according to the American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ).

Friday marks the 872nd day of Nadarkhani's illegal detention. Authorities arrested him in his home city of Rasht in October 2009 on charges that he questioned obligatory religion classes in Iranian schools. After finding him guilty of **apostasy**, the court of appeals in Rasht in November 2010 issued a written confirmation of his charges and death sentence.

"The truly bi-partisan support in the House to stand up for Pastor Youcef and demand his release is extraordinary," says Jordan Sekulow, executive director of the ACLJ. "Iran is violating international law with its detention and promised execution of Pastor Youcef."

The resolution, . 556, was spearheaded by Representatives Joe Pitts (R-PA), an evangelical Christian conservative, and Keith Ellison (D-MN), the first Muslim in Congress. It generated tremendous support in the House. A similar resolution is now being introduced in U.S. Senate and the ACLJ will continue to work to urge members there to stand in support of Pastor Nadarkhani.

The ACLJ, which heard from more than 180,000 Americans urging House members to approve . 556, says it's Tweet for Youcef

campaign is now reaching nearly 1 million Twitter accounts worldwide calling for the release of Nadarkhani. More than 3,500 people have signed on to send one Tweet a day on behalf of Pastor Nadarkhani. The Tweet for Youcef campaign has attracted the attention of celebrities and media representatives worldwide.

International soccer icon Ricardo Kaka, the 17th most followed person on Twitter in the world with over 8.8 million followers, is promoting the Tweet for Youcef campaign. Also lending support to the Twitter campaign: Donald Trump, Ann Coulter, Michelle Malkin, Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, and actresses Patricia Heaton and Julie Benz.