



Woodrow Wilson  
International  
Center  
for Scholars



## **Help Free Haleh Esfandiari, Director of the Woodrow Wilson Center's Middle East Program**

**Haleh has been incarcerated in Iran's  
notorious Evin Prison since May 8.**

**The Wilson Center's plea to the Iranian  
government is simple: Let Haleh go. Let her  
return to her husband, her family, and her work.**

Haleh Esfandiari, a cherished friend and colleague, and a beloved wife, mother and grandmother, is an Iranian national and naturalized American citizen. She has lived in the United States for over 25 years, at first teaching the literature of Iran at Princeton University, and in recent years directing the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The work she does here at the Center is open and non-partisan, designed to improve dialogue and understanding between the United States and the Middle East, between the United States and Iran.

Over the years, Haleh has continued to travel throughout the Middle East and especially to Iran, where she has family. Her most recent visit was in December 2006, to be with her 93-year-old mother who is in poor health.

On December 30, on her way to the airport to return to Washington, Haleh's taxi was stopped by three masked, knife-wielding men. They threatened to kill her, and they took away all of her belongings, including her Iranian and American passports.

Between January 4 and February 14, Haleh was subjected to over 60 hours of interrogations, focused almost entirely on the activities of the Middle East Program at the Wilson Center. Repeatedly during the interrogation, she was pressured to make a false confession or to falsely implicate the Wilson Center in activities in which it had no part, but she refused.

On May 7, Haleh was summoned to Iran's Ministry of Intelligence once again. When she arrived for her appointment on May 8, she was put into a car and taken to Evin prison. She has been incarcerated there ever since.

On May 29, Iran's judiciary spokesman issued a statement that the Ministry of Intelligence has accused (or charged) Haleh with espionage, actions against national security and propaganda against the Islamic Republic. To date, no one has been able to see her, and she continues to be denied access to her legal defense team, headed by Nobel Peace laureate Shirin Ebadi.

For more information, please visit [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org). To get involved in the campaign to free Haleh, send a letter to Iranian leaders on her behalf by visiting [www.freehaleh.org](http://www.freehaleh.org).

Please spread the word and help Haleh return to her family, her work, and her friends.