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May 2012

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street
Qom
Islamic Republic of Iran

Appeal for Mohammad Soleimani Nia

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), the International Federation of Translators (FIT) and Red T, a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of translators and interpreters at risk, we call for the release of Mr. Mohammad Soleimani Nia.

According to our information, Mr. Soleimani Nia responded to a summons to appear before the Revolutionary Court in Tehran and was detained on January 10, 2012. Since that time, we understand that he has been subject to prolonged periods of solitary confinement in Tehran's Evin prison and that his health is in jeopardy.

Iran is a country with a long history of literary creation. It is also a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We call upon Your Excellency to uphold Article 19 of this Covenant, which states: "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice." As a recognized literary translator and developer of a professional networking site, Mr. Soleimani Nia exercised his right to freedom of expression and assisted literary creators. His fate is the subject of international concern, including ours, as colleagues in the linguistic professions.

We urge you to release Mr. Soleimani Nia without delay.

Sincerely,

Linda Fitchett
President, AIIC

Marion Boers
President, FIT

Maya Hess
President, Red T