

CIVIL COURAGE PRIZE

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at great personal risk*

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NASRIN SOTOUDEH BEATEN AND ARRESTED IN IRAN FIVE DAYS AFTER RECEIVING CIVIL COURAGE PRIZE

New York, NY – Nasrin Sotoudeh, one of Iran’s most prominent human rights lawyers and outspoken defender of women’s rights, was beaten and arrested at the Tehran funeral of 17-year-old **Armita Garavand**, who was fatally injured in an alleged confrontation with Iran's morality police over a head-scarf violation. On October 24, Sotoudeh was awarded the 2023 Civil Courage Prize in absentia in New York City, with congratulatory remarks coming from author **Margaret Atwood**, CNN anchor **Christiane Amanpour**, *The New York Times* op-ed columnist **Nicholas Kristof**, and European Parliament member **Hannah Neumann**. Sotoudeh dedicated her award to Garavand in a taped acceptance speech aired during the ceremony.

In a statement on October 29, Sotoudeh’s husband Reza Khandan said:

“Nasrin was arrested and remains in the Vozara Detention Center after being physically assaulted. She will be transferred to the prosecutor’s office at Evin prison tomorrow where a decision about her case will be made.”

*“The eyes of the world turned in support of the resilient Iranian human rights movement this month with the awarding of both the Civil Courage Prize and Penn State’s Brown Democracy Medal to Nasrin Sotoudeh and, of course, the Nobel Peace Prize to Narges Mohammadi,” says **George Biddle**, Chair of the Civil Courage Prize. “The trustees of the Civil Courage Prize demand Nasrin Sotoudeh’s immediate release from prison.”*

Sotoudeh has garnered international attention for representing women arrested for peacefully protesting the compulsory hijab law. She has repeatedly called for the abolition of the death penalty and spoken out against the unjust execution of minors, religious and ethnic minorities, as

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well as protesters. Her clients have also included Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi, Iranian pro-democracy activist Heshmat Tabarzadi, as well as numerous journalists and politicians.

She has been frequently imprisoned, including in solitary confinement, since 2010, and in March 2019 she was sentenced to a total of 38 years in prison and 148 lashes for several national security-related offenses. In July 2021 she was granted medical furlough, and had, until October 29, 2023, remained at home under conditional release after a 46-day hunger strike led to her severely deteriorating condition, which continues to impact her health.

A 10/24 Civil Courage Prize symposium in Sotoudeh's honor entitled ***Iran: Women, Law and the Dream of Justice*** highlighted her groundbreaking work and the resilient women's rights movement in the country. Panel participants included: **Javaid Rehman**, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; **Haleh Esfandiari**, Director Emerita and Distinguished Fellow, Wilson Center, Middle East Program; **Amir Soltani**, writer, filmmaker, and human rights activist. **Philip Alston**, the John Norton Pomeroy Professor of Law, NYU School of Law, moderated the conversation.

The Train Foundation has awarded the Civil Courage Prize since 2000. Recipients have played leading roles in resisting evil and injustice at great personal risk. The late John Train drew inspiration for the founding of the prize from his association with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

For further information about the Civil Courage Prize please visit: <http://www.civilcourageprize.org>.

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