



Reporters sans frontières

International Secretariat
North Africa Middle East Desk

5, rue Geoffroy Marie
75009 Paris-France
Tél : (33) 1 44 83 84 71
Fax : (33) 1 45 23 11 51
E-mail : moyen-orient@rsf.fr
Web : www.rsf.fr

PRESS FREEDOM ALERT

10 September 1999

Iran: journalist missing for a year

In a letter sent today to President Khatami, Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) voiced its concern over the disappearance of **Pirouz Davani**, a political opponent and editor-in-chief of the independent periodical *Pirouz*. It seems that the journalist has been reported missing since the end of August 1998. RSF reiterated "its demand to see the Iranian authorities endeavour to find out what happened to the journalist" and added that "impunity of crimes is an ominous signal sent to independent leading journalists and intellectuals who should feel protected by the rule of law."

The international press freedom watchdog pointed out that "the absence of results of the investigation into this disappearance calls into question the commitment of the Iranian authorities to guarantee the safety of press freedom activists".

The concern about the fate of Pirouz Davani is reinforced by the spate of murders of five intellectuals and journalists in November and December 1998. Investigations are still under way into the assassination of Darioush and Parvaneh Forouhar two emblematic figures of the liberal opposition, Majid Sharif, editorialist for the monthly *Iran Farda*, Mohamad Mokhtari and Mohamad Jafar Pouyandeh, two influential writers in liberal opposition circles and contributors to several moderate newspapers.

Reporters Sans Frontières defends jailed journalists and press freedom throughout the world, that is, the right to inform and be informed, in accordance with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Reporters Sans Frontières has seven branches (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland) representatives in London, Washington, Abidjan and Istanbul and more than a hundred correspondents worldwide.