

# MEMO

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## **Rezaian Case Highlights Iran's Human Rights Abuses**

On Oct. 11, Iranian state media reported that detained Washington Post correspondent Jason Rezaian was convicted of espionage charges. The ruling marks the latest example of Iran's complete disregard for due process and international legal norms. The United States must continue to press Iran to end its ongoing human rights abuses.

### **Rezaian's case has made a mockery of due process.**

- Following his July 2014 arrest in Tehran, Rezaian was denied access to an attorney for nearly eight months.
- Rezaian was tried in secret and the verdict announcement was withheld for more than two months.
- Rezaian has been held for nearly 450 days, longer than any Western reporter in Iran since the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Rezaian's detention is also longer than the 444 days that the U.S. embassy hostages were held from 1979-1981.



While Rezaian was convicted two months ago, Iranian state media only reported the ruling this week.

### **Iran remains one of the worst violators of press freedom in the world.**

- According to the [Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index](#), Iran currently ranks 173 out of 180 countries in press freedom.
- According to the same index, there are currently at least 50 journalists and netizens in Iranian prisons.
- Iran was the world's top jailer of journalists in 2009, and has been ranked second every year since, [according to the Committee to Protect Journalists](#).
- The [2015 Freedom House Freedom of the Press Rankings](#) ranked Iran as one of the "Worst of the Worst" for press freedom. The rankings noted that Iran consistently uses its legal system to censure any media that is not in line with the regime.

### **Iran's human rights abuses are far reaching.**

- In addition to Jason Rezaian, two other Americans are currently detained in Iran—Marine veteran Amir Hektami and pastor Saeed Abedini. Iran is also believed to have information on the location of retired FBI agent Robert Levinson, who disappeared during a trip to Iran in 2007.
- Former U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Chair Katrina Lantos Swett said that since 2013, "the Iranian government has imprisoned more than 350 people, including 150 Sunni Muslims, 100 Baha'is, 90 Christians, and at least a dozen Sufi Muslims, for their beliefs. The number of Christians imprisoned has nearly doubled over the past year."

- In a [Feb. 2015 report](#), United Nations (U.N.) Sec. Gen. Ban Ki-moon highlighted the abysmal state of women’s rights in Iran, citing that two-thirds of Iranian women have faced domestic violence.
- According to [The World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index 2014](#), Iran ranks 137 out of 142 countries and Iranian men earn close to five times more than Iranian women.
- According to an [Aug. 2014 report](#) by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, child marriage remains legal for children as young as nine years-old.
- Amnesty International [reported](#) that Iran executed 694 people in the first six-and-a-half months of 2015, stating that Iran’s execution rate “paints a sinister picture of the machinery of the state carrying out premeditated, judicially-sanctioned killings on a mass scale.” This is nearly double Iran’s rate from 2014.
- According to a March 2015 [report](#) by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, Tehran executed 753 people in 2014, including 13 juveniles. Many of these executions were for drug-related offenses and other non-violent crimes.