

## THE LATE ALI SAREMI



Remarks by Hon. David Kilgour  
To a protest demonstration at Iranian embassy  
Ottawa  
29 December 2010

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Dear Friends of Ali Saremi,

Welcome especially to those who have journeyed from Toronto and Montreal to join us here this afternoon.

Tragically, our late friend, a political prisoner and father of an Ashraf resident, Akbar, was executed early yesterday in Evin prison in Tehran, following what we understand was brutal and barbaric torture until his final hours.

He had spent altogether 23 of his 63-year life in prison. He was so much loved by fellow political prisoners and many outside Iran that a few months ago Hillary Clinton issued a statement as U.S. Secretary of State condemning his death sentence.

Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, leader of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, said that Saremi's execution "only reflects the regime's inability and frustration in face of the resolute Iranian youths and members of PMOI who are determined to overthrow clerical rule and establish freedom and the rule of the people in Iran."

A media release yesterday by the United States Committee for Camp Ashraf Residents (USCCAR) included the following:

1. USCCAR strongly condemns the vengeful execution today in Evin Prison of Ali Saremi.
2. Ali was a member of the main Iranian opposition group (PMOI). He spent 24 years in prisons of the Shah and the clerical dictatorship.
3. USCCAR offers its deep condolences to Mr. Saremi's family in Iran and his son, Akbar, in Ashraf.
4. Following Mr. Saremi's execution this morning, a number of his family members, including his wife, daughter, and sister were arrested by the security forces outside Evin prison. The international community must act urgently to ensure their safety and well-being.
5. The execution of Mr. Saremi makes it clear that the Iraqi government's nearly two-year long siege of Ashraf and the escalating suppression of its residents at the behest of Tehran – demonstrated by the unprovoked and vicious attack on Sunday, December 26 - is the flip side of Tehran's inhuman executions of PMOI supporters in Iran.
6. USCCAR calls on Secretary Clinton to condemn the execution of Mr. Saremi. It urges immediate action by the United Nations and international human rights organizations to save the lives of other political prisoners on death row in Iran, including the relatives of Ashraf residents Jafar Kazemi, Javad Lari, Mohammad Aghaei, Abdolreza Ghanbari, Ahmad Moghaddam and Mohsen Moghaddam.

7. The continued U.S. inaction over the deteriorating situation in Ashraf, and Washington's refusal to heed a bi-partisan call in the U.S. House of Representatives to end the unjustified designation of the PMOI as a terrorist organization, has further emboldened enemies of Ashraf in Tehran and Baghdad to step up the suppression of PMOI members.
8. The Committee urges Secretary Clinton to remove promptly the PMOI from the FTO list. The listing of the PMOI has not only been a major impediment to democratic change in Iran but has also been used by the governments of Iran and Iraq to subject loved ones in Ashraf in Iraq, and inside Iran, to murder and inhumane treatment.

It goes without saying that all these points are applicable in varying degrees to the Government of Canada as well. It is simply bizarre to continue to list as a terrorist organization the main democratic opposition to the regime in Tehran. As public policy, it shames every Canadian.

The tragic death of dear Ali Saremi is now another reason why the policy must be reversed immediately.

Thank you.