

## **Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders**

### **The Martin Ennals Award 2009 goes to Emad Baghi, Human Rights Defender from Iran (...)**

Baghi, a leading Iranian human rights defender based in Tehran. He founded the Society for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights, and has been a vigorous and outspoken opponent of the death penalty in Iran. His campaigning includes a scholarly examination of Islamic law (shari`a) on the subject, in which he demonstrates the absence of any doctrinal requirement for maintaining capital punishment. In addition, Baghi's inventory of death row prisoners in Iran, including juvenile offenders, has been an important resource for UN human rights bodies as well as human rights groups outside the country. Baghi has spent four years in prison over the past decade for his campaigning against the death penalty and other rights activities. Currently out of jail, he still faces charges relating to his work for the defense of prisoners rights. Baghi suffers from serious heart and kidney ailments; in August 2008 prison physicians declared

his condition critical.

The Chairman of the Jury of the MEA, Hans Thoolen, describes the laureate as “an exceptionally brave man defending human rights despite imprisonment and poor health”.

The Ceremony of the Martin Ennals Award will take place in Geneva in November 2009 (...)

The Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders (MEA) - the main award of the human rights movement - is a unique collaboration among ten of the world's leading human rights organizations to give protection to human rights defenders worldwide. The Jury is composed of the following NGOs: Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights First, International Federation for Human Rights, World Organisation Against Torture, Front Line, International Commission of Jurists, German Diakonie, International Service for Human Rights and HURIDOCS.

For information:

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