

Date: 9 may 2017

From: Paul Hulshoff, former UNICEF Representative to the Islamic Republic of Iran (2009-2011) and citizen of The Kingdom of The Netherlands

To: The Right Honourable Judge presiding in the case against Mr Karan Vafadari and Ms. Afarin Neyssari

Your Honour,

It is with great regret that I recently learned of the arrest and imprisonment of Mr Karan Vafadari and Ms. Afarin Neyssari and the charges laid against them now under your consideration.

With your permission, I would like to address some of these charges. As someone who befriended and visited Mr Karan Vafadari and Ms. Afarin Neyssari on various occasions at their home and their gallery during my official stay in Tehran from 2009 to 2011 as a citizen of The Kingdom of The Netherlands and Representative of UNICEF Iran, I can speak with direct experience to these charges and must confirm that they have no basis in fact.

Specifically, I would like to address the following;

1. The charge of espionage:

At no point in time during our interactions did I discuss or share information, knowingly or otherwise, with either Mr Karan Vafadari or Ms. Afarin Neyssari related to government affairs or official UNICEF business. Our friendship developed and was sustained by our mutual interest in the arts, architecture and daily life in the Islamic Republic of Iran which consequently were the sole topics of our discussions.

Similarly, Mr Karan Vafadari nor Ms. Afarin Neyssari ever sought to attract or introduce foreign agents or spies to me, my government or my employer.

Any statement or account to the contrary is simply false and ought to be dismissed accordingly.

2. The charge of "immoral acts":

On various occasions I attended receptions at Mr Karan Vafadari and Ms. Afarin Neyssari residence and official openings at their gallery. The nature of these gatherings were without exception of good standing and can in no reasonable way be described as "parties". At no point in time during these occasions was ever I witness to any immoral acts let alone acts of "prostitution". Any allegations to this effect are quite honestly preposterous and are not deserving of any serious consideration.

3. The charge of alcoholic beverages:

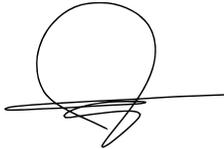
On two occasions during my tenure in the Islamic Republic of Iran, I ordered alcoholic

beverages for my own private consumption and to be served at official receptions hosted for foreign dignitaries as I came to experience as customary. Just prior to my departure from the country, a small stock was left which I offered as a parting gift to Mr Karan Vafadari (not Ms Afarin Neyssari). At no point did he ask for this, nor did he exchange any money for this gift. The former would go entirely against his nature, the latter I would simply not have accepted, after all a gift is not a gift if it's bought for.

As a final comment, I would kindly submit to you that throughout my tenure in the Islamic Republic of Iran, I got to know both Mr Karan Vafadari and Ms. Afarin Neyssari as two highly respected individuals whom I both continue to hold in high regard as did anyone who I have met and knew them as well. Their character can not be described as any other than highly decent and honourable and could not be further removed from the charges laid against them.

I kindly urge you to consider the facts as I have presented them here and submit to you that to dismiss the charges against both Mr Karan Vafadari and Ms. Afarin Neyssari and their subsequent immediate release from detention is the only act that would let justice prevail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized circular loop followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish at the end.

Paul Hulshoff

Citizen of The Kingdom of The Netherlands,
Former UNICEF Representative to the Islamic Republic of Iran