



Unitatem et Libertas

Association of Iranian Human Rights & Allies

124 City Road, London EC1V 2NX

UNHCR Turkey
Azizye, Enis Behic
Koryurek Sk. No 15, 06690
Cankaya / Ankara

10th January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam:

We are writing to express our grave concern over the situation of Mr Kamal Pishvand and his son Artin Pishvand. They are Iranian human rights activist and refugee in Turkey, who are facing imminent danger of being forcibly returned to Iran.

Mr Pishvand and his son flee Iran after being injured in peaceful demonstrations, having had two surgeries. They applied for asylum under the international protection of UNHCR in Turkey. They have been persecuted for their peaceful activities in defence of human rights and democracy. They have been involved in various campaigns and protests against the Iranian regime's violations of civil and political rights, especially the rights of women, ethnic minorities, and prisoners of conscience.

Mr Pishvand and his son tried to flee Turkey as they didn't feel safe and they were held to be deported back to Iran, therefore tried to flee Turkey to a third country within EU to be safe, but were arrested and moved to a camp. They have appealed to us to request UNHCR for urgent intervention. They fear that they could be deported at any moment.

We urge UNHCR to take immediate action to prevent the deportation of Mr Pishvand and his son Artin and to ensure their safety and security in Turkey. I also request UNHCR to expedite resettlement process to a third country where they can enjoy their rights as a refugee and continue their peaceful activism and Artin can continue his education.

We would like to emphasize that deportation of Mr Pishvand and his son would be a flagrant violation of the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the forcible return of refugees or asylum seekers to a country where they face persecution or serious harm. It would also contravene Turkey's obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, as well as the European Convention on Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.

We appeal to UNHCR to uphold its mandate and responsibility to protect refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey, especially those who are at risk of being deported to Iran or other countries with poor human rights records. I also call on UNHCR to work with the Turkish government and civil society to improve the conditions and prospects of refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey.

We appreciate your attention and action on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Dr Nazak Tavakoli

Mr Afshin Payravi

Directors of Association Of Iranian Human Rights And Allies