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STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE OF SARAH SHOURD

The families of the three American hikers held without trial for more than 13 months in Iran today issued the following statement regarding the release of Sarah Shourd.

“All of our families are relieved and overjoyed that Sarah has at last been released but we’re also heartbroken that Shane and Josh are still being denied their freedom for no just cause. We applaud the Iranian authorities for showing compassion in Sarah’s case and again call on them to do the only right thing and release Shane and Josh immediately. Shane, Sarah and Josh are all innocent. They were traveling together, and were arrested together. We’re certain that Shane and Josh share our great happiness that Sarah is finally coming home. They deserve to come home too. Iran has no grounds to deprive them of their liberty a moment longer. We extend our deepest gratitude to the countless people around the world – friends, supporters and many persons of goodwill – who have worked so hard for so long to try to obtain the release of Shane, Sarah and Josh. The work is not over and, as we prepare to welcome Sarah home, we will not rest until Shane and Josh are home too.”

Nora Shourd, Sarah Shourd’s mother, added: “I’ve hoped and prayed for this moment for 410 days and I cannot wait to wrap Sarah in my arms and hold her close when we are finally together again. Sarah has had a long and difficult detainment and I am going to make sure that she now gets the care and attention she needs and the time and space to recover. Sarah is incredibly strong but without Shane and Josh there to support her, and their brief daily meetings in the yard of Evin Prison, I am not sure how she would have coped. I can only imagine how bittersweet her freedom must be for her, leaving Shane and Josh behind. I owe it to all of them, to Sarah, Shane and Josh, to keep pressing until they are all home free. I urgently appeal to Iran not to delay granting Shane and Josh’s families the same joy and relief that I now have in knowing Sarah is finally free.”