

H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
President, Islamic Republic of Iran
Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

April 29, 2010

Dear President Ahmadinejad,

We write to you with hearts broken by nine months of fear and worry for our children, Shane Bauer, Sarah Shourd and Josh Fattal. Our children are mentally distressed, physically ill and so devoid of hope that they are contemplating the extreme measure of a hunger strike.

Please Mr. President, when you travel to the United States this weekend invite our children to leave the darkness and despair of their prison cells and join you on your journey. It would be a most noble act of mercy and compassion, at a time when the world so desperately needs such acts. We encourage you to speak with them as you travel and discover what extraordinary young people they are. Our dream is to embrace them and welcome them home, and you have the power to make this dream come true.

We know that the relationship between our countries is fraught with deep tensions. But these political issues have nothing to do with our children and they do not deserve to suffer for policies over which they have no control. We gave birth to our children in the United States, but this fact does not define them. Please see our children for who they are, caring individuals committed to improving the world and who yearn to be reunited with their families.

Mr. Ahmadinejad, this is not the first time we have asked you personally to return our children to us. On September 17, we asked you to "fill the emptiness their absence leaves in our hearts" by bringing Shane, Sarah and Josh with you on your previous visit to New York. Our prayers were not answered but our spirits soared when you said you would ask the judiciary to treat our children's case expeditiously and with maximum leniency. More than seven months later, they are still in prison.

We implore you to board your plane to New York with Shane, Sarah and Josh. We hope to be able to extend our thanks for your kindness in person when you arrive in New York with our children.

Sincerely,



Cindy Hickey



Nora Shourd



Laura Fattal