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THREE AMERICAN HIKERS DETAINED IN IRAN RECEIVE SECOND CONSULAR VISIT FROM SWISS DIPLOMATS

Hikers Are Held in Evin Prison; Now Detained for 91 Days

*Families of Shane Bauer, Sarah Shourd and Josh Fattal Urge Iran to Let
Them Speak to their Children and Release Them without Delay*

Shane Bauer, Sarah Shourd and Josh Fattal, the three American hikers detained in Iran for the past three months, have received a second consular visit from Swiss diplomats in Tehran, their families said today. The 40-minute visit took place on Thursday at Evin Prison in Tehran, where Bauer, Shourd and Fattal are being held.

“We were informed via the State Department that Shane, Sarah and Josh are in good physical shape and we’re obviously happy they received another visit,” the families said in a statement. “Today marks exactly three months since our children were detained and we urge the Iranian authorities to let our children speak to us directly. Every time our telephones ring, we hope they it is them calling to tell us they’ve been released.”

Swiss diplomats also brought some clothes and other supplies, including books and writing papers, to the three Americans. Bauer, 27, Shourd, 31, and Fattal, 27, were detained on July 31, 2009, when news reports say they accidentally strayed across an unmarked border into Iran while on a hiking trip in Iraqi Kurdistan.

“Shane, Sarah and Josh went hiking at the height of summer and they had very few clothes since they had planned to be on vacation for only a week. It’s hard to believe it’s now almost the winter and they still haven’t been released. We see no reason why Iranian authorities continue to hold them,” the families said.

The Swiss Embassy in Tehran represents U.S. interests in Iran in the absence of diplomatic relations between Iran and the United States. Swiss diplomats last visited the three hikers on September 29, 2009, two months into their detention and the only other time they have received consular access.

“We are deeply grateful to Ambassador Livia Leu Agosti and her colleagues at the Swiss Embassy in Tehran for their support and compassion. We hope the next time they meet Shane, Sarah and Josh will be very soon and it will be to put them on a flight home,” the families said.