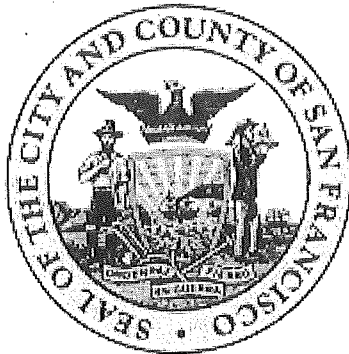


**REPORT ON THE DETENTION OF  
IRANIAN VISITORS ARRIVING AT SAN  
FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
IN AUGUST 2006**



**Human Rights Commission  
City and County of San Francisco  
25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA 94102-6033  
(415) 252-2500  
<http://www.sfgov.org/sfhumanrights>**

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**September 2007**



## I. Complaint

In August and September 2006, the Human Rights Commission (“HRC”) received complaints that a group of Iranian professionals traveling to the San Francisco Bay Area with valid visas to attend a university reunion were refused entry at San Francisco International Airport. After arriving in San Francisco, the travelers were informed that their visas were revoked during or immediately preceding their flights. None of the travelers had been informed of this fact prior to their arrival. Although there was no suspicion of criminal activity, the visitors were interrogated, handcuffed, and incarcerated in the Santa Clara County jail. Visitors who were traveling with family members were separated from their family. Children as young as seven were separated from both parents and incarcerated alone. After suffering humiliation, extreme mental anguish, physical hardship and economic loss, the travelers were forced to return to their countries of origin.

## II. HRC Investigation

HRC is charged with protecting and promoting human rights in the City and County of San Francisco. In order to ensure that those visiting San Francisco are treated with dignity and respect, HRC Chair Khaldoun Baghdadi convened a subcommittee of three Commissioners to review the allegations and to propose an appropriate Commission response. The subcommittee was led by Commissioner Nazly Mohajer and included Chair Baghdadi and Commissioner Linda Richardson.

In December 2006, the subcommittee met with the local United States Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”) officials and agents. CBP verified that thirty Iranian visitors arrived to San Francisco Airport in August 2006 with visas that had been revoked. Fourteen of the thirty travelers left the country within hours after arriving but CBP was unable to arrange outbound flights for sixteen of the travelers. CBP representatives explained that they had no choice but to turn the sixteen individuals over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Detention and Removal who held them in jail while outbound flights were arranged.

CBP offered that the particular situation with the Iranian visitors was “regrettable,” but that it had followed established procedures. Officials explained procedures as follows: “Once an individual is determined inadmissible to the U.S., CBP makes every effort to return that person to their last country of departure on the first available transport. If transport is not available, CBP gives custody of that person to the Office of Detention and Removal (DRO), a division within Immigration and Customs Enforcement.”

CBP estimated that each year, 520 individuals are determined inadmissible on arrival to San Francisco Airport. Approximately 200 of these individuals are accommodated on return flights; 320 are turned over to DRO for transport to the Santa Clara County jail.



CBP agreed to consider alternatives to incarceration for those travelers who are deemed inadmissible due to revoked visas but are not suspected of criminal activity. Proposed options included detaining travelers in hotels or in an airport facility set up for this purpose.

In February 2007, the HRC subcommittee met with DRO representatives. DRO representatives explained that it is their responsibility to transport individuals to detention facilities at the request of CBP and that the closest facility to the San Francisco International Airport is the Santa Clara County Jail. DRO verified that it transported the Iranian visitors to the Santa Clara County Jail in August 2006.

### III. Resolution

In March 2007, HRC Director Virginia Harmon met with Airport Director John Martin, Airport General Counsel and Airport staff to discuss alternatives to incarceration. Director Martin assigned an Airport Operations staff person to survey major US airports and find out how CBP and DRO deal with visitors who are determined inadmissible on arrival to other airports. The Airport staff person was also asked to identify possibilities for a detention facility at the San Francisco International Airport.

Subsequently, Airport Director John Martin identified a vacant "in-transit" lounge with complete restroom facilities in the International Terminal for use by CBP to detain individuals who are determined inadmissible. The Airport further committed to installing suitable vending equipment, furniture, and privacy screens, and evaluating the possible installation of shower facilities.

CBP committed to escorting individuals to the detention facility at the Airport, providing continual guards while the persons are within the facility and escorting the individuals to their next available flight home.

The detention lounge became operational on August 1, 2007. Commissioner Nazly Mohajer visited the lounge and reports that it is clean, quiet, spacious and well furnished with comfortable, fully-reclining chairs and a television. Also, plans are underway to stock it with books and toys. Visitors who are detained for up to five days are able to eat, rest, wash, and pass the time in a safe and comfortable environment.

### III. Conclusion

HRC agrees and concludes that a CBP detention facility located at San Francisco International Airport will result in more humane treatment of individuals who arrive with invalid or revoked visas. HRC is pleased that the various agencies worked together to create an alternative such that visitors who are not accused of criminal activity will no longer be incarcerated on arrival to our City. The solution will protect the dignity and human rights of our visitors and protect San Francisco's tourist economy and image throughout the world.



**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**REPORT ON THE DETENTION OF  
IRANIAN VISITORS ARRIVING AT  
SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL  
AIRPORT IN AUGUST 2006**

*Attachment 1 --- August 14, 2006 letter from Sharif University of Technology Association President to U.S. Secretary of State.*

*Attachment 2 --- List of 121 travelers and letters from 24 travelers.*

*Attachment 3 --- September 26, 2006 letter from Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights.*

*Attachment 4 --- September 14, 2006 HRC letter to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.*

*Attachment 5 --- October 18, 2006 letter from CBP to HRC.*

*Attachment 6 --- Policy for Overnight Detention in Western Region.*

*Attachment 7 --- January 3, 2007 letter from HRC to DRO.*

*Attachment 8 --- March 1, 2007 letter from Airport Commission to HRC.*

*Attachment 9 --- April 4, 2007 letter from Director Martin to CBP.*



SUTA  
P.O. Box 12391  
La Jolla, CA 92039

August 14, 2006

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
US Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

It was our understanding that the stated policy of this administration, as outlined in the President's State of the Union address and many remarks by other high ranking officials including yourself, was to encourage cultural and scientific exchange between the people of Iran and America. Regrettably, we have recently witnessed unnecessarily harsh and humiliating treatment of Iranian professionals upon their recent attempt to legally enter the United States. The Iranian-American community in general, and our association in particular, are puzzled as to how the ill-treatment of these professionals would serve this administration's stated policy.

These professionals and their families were granted visas to enter the United States following State Department's appropriate security clearances to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> reunion of alumni of Sharif University. Upon arrival at the United States borders they were informed that their visas had been revoked. Most of them were detained for over 24 hours and subsequently returned to the country of departure. Some were handcuffed and chained; members of families were separated and incarcerated in very unpleasant conditions along with criminals. Needless to say, we are extremely disappointed and outraged by this unjustified and unnecessary mistreatment of the members of our professional organization.

The Sharif University is, currently the best technical university in Iran and is commonly referred to as MIT of Iran. The theme of our 4<sup>th</sup> International reunion was earthquakes, a natural disaster shared by both California and Iran. We also had seminars on entrepreneurship and venture capital structure. Our first gathering was held in San Diego, CA in 2000 with over 500 attendees, including

Sharif University of Technology Association (SUTA)

- Why were these to-be reunion participants and their families including young children, who were entering legally into the US, subjected to harsh treatments at the U.S ports of entry?

We hope that you kindly review this issue and take steps to rebuild the damaged trust of the Iranian-American and Iranian people by preventing the recurrence of such regrettable and unnecessary incidents in the future.

Respectfully,



Zahed Sheikholeslami, Ph.D.  
President  
Sharif University of Technology Association  
([Zahed@charter.net](mailto:Zahed@charter.net))

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS WITH NOT GRANTED OR REVOKED VISAS  
SUTA GATEHRING- AUGUST 4-6, 2006

NO	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	DEPARTMENT	GRAD.	EMPLOYMENT - COMPANY - POSITION	COUNTRY
1	AGHABABAEI	GHASEM	MECH	79	PTF GROUP	IRAN
2	AGHAEI	MOHAMMAD KARIM MAHMOUD	MECH	77	IIND co.	IRAN
3	AHMADI POURANARI		IND	88	MOSHANIR Company	IRAN
4	AHMADI TARES	HOSSEIN	MECH	95	NARGAN Company	IRAN
5	AKBARI	HOSSEIN	IND	98	Aryanagroup	IRAN
6	AIZaeili	Jafar	AEROSPACE	2002		IRAN
7	AMIN	SeyedReza	MBA	79	Azad University	IRAN
8	AMIRGHASEMI	FARAMARZ	EE	80	NAMVARAN CONSULTING CO	IRAN
9	Amiri	SeyedHossein	MECH	90	Pars Khodiro Company	IRAN
10	BABAEI HABIB ABAD	HOJATOLLAH	CHEM ENG			IRAN
11	badfee	farhad	IND	94		IRAN
12	BAHARIKIA	MOHAMMAD SHAHRAM				IRAN
13	BAYAT		CIVIL	88	kandovan	IRAN
14	BEHBOUDI	Mohsen	METAL	76	Ircast Metallurgical Eng. Co.	IRAN
15	BEITOLLAHPUR	ABOLFAZL	CHEM ENG	71	OIL DESIGN AND CONTRUCTION CO.	IRAN
16	DADVAND	HOSSEIN	CHEM ENG	71	NESSCO	IRAN
17	DAGHIGHI	MEHDI	CHEM ENG	71	HAMBAF CO	IRAN
18	EDRISSI	ALI	CIVIL	2001		IRAN
19	EINOLGHOZATI	KEIVAN	EE	80	NAMVARAN CONSULTING CO	IRAN

43	JAFARIEH	MAHMOUD	EE	73	TarheSan'at Consulting Engineers	IRAN
44	Jangi	Alireza	MECH	97	Sazeh Consultants	IRAN
45	JAVADZADEH	MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN	CHEM ENG	70	ircast schauenberg company	IRAN
46	KAMRANI	BEHNAM	MECH	98	TECHNICAL CONSULTANT	SWEDEN
47	KASAIAN	ROOZBEH	CIVIL	2003	SUT	IRAN
48	KERACHIAN	YASER	PHYSICS	98	UNIV OF TORONTO, Ph.D. STUDENT	CANADA
49	KHANDAGHI	JAVAD	EE	91	GROUC CO	IRAN
50	Khanjanzadeh Karkoudi	KOOROSH	CIVIL	2000	Boland Payeh Construction Co.	NORWAY
51	KHORSAND MASHHADI	MOHAMMAD	EE	79	kuhestan power & industry/ Managing Director	IRAN
52	KHOSHKBARI	AMIR	CIVIL	2000	Tablieh Construction Co.	IRAN
53	kobravi	majid	EE	75	IranPowerDevelopmentCo.	IRAN
54	KOUHNURI	NASSER	MECH	84		IRAN
55	Koukian	MohammedHossein	MECH	1368	Caterpillar Mitsubishi	JAPAN
56	LOTFI MOHAMMADABADI	REZVAN	IND	98		IRAN
57	MANAJ SICHANI	BIJAN	MECH	79	Teif Sepahan Eng. Co	IRAN
58	MANESHKARIMI	MOHAMMAD REZA	CIVIL	99	schlumberger	IRAN
59	MEHRABIAN	SHAHIN	CHEM ENG	86		IRAN
60	MIRNEJAD JOOYBARI	AHMAD	METAL	1351	payabcontractingcompany	IRAN
61	Mohammadzadeh Fadaiepour	GHAFAR	Philosophy	73	zanjanbronz	IRAN
62	MOINZADEH	FARSHAD	CHEM	94	Pooya Chemical Company	IRAN
63	MONTASER KOUHSARI	ARDAVAN	EE		Director of Novin Computer Consulting	IRAN
64	MONTASER KOUHSARI	ARDESHIR	CHEM			IRAN
65	MORADIAN	ALA	MECH		UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO	CANADA



89	RAHMANSERESHT	RAED	EE	98	Schlumberger Company	IRAN
90	RAHNAMA	HOSSEIN	IND			IRAN
91	RAJAEI	HOJMAN	MECH	95	ASIA QUALITY CONSULTANTS (AQC)	IRAN
92	RASOOLIFAR	RAHI	CHEM ENG	2003		FRANCE
93	RASSIPOUR	RANA	CHEM ENG	2000	CANADIAN NEXEN PETROLEUM YEMEN	YEMEN
94	RASSIPOUR	SARA	CHEM	98	M-I Production Chemicals	UAE
95	RASTI	MORTEZA	CHEM	78	SANAYE FOOLAD- Steel Company	IRAN
96	SADEGHI	ARHAM	EE	96	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NOSAZGAN NIROO ENGINEERING	IRAN
97	SADOUGHI KHOSROSHAHI	ALIREZA	MECH	79	Arian Industrial Group	IRAN
98	SAEBI	MASOUMEH	MECH	92	ISOICO, Ship Design	IRAN
99	SAEED TEHRANI	ELAHEH	CHEM ENG	79	AbFA Company	IRAN
100	SAKHAIE	MEHRDAD	MECH	95	STESGroup Managing Director, his own company	IRAN
101	SALEHIAN	BABAK	EE	91	SUT-PHYSICS DEPARTMENT	IRAN
102	SALEHIRAD	NEDA	IND	2002	UBC, GRADUATE STUDENT, WOOD SCIENCE DEPT.	CANADA
103	SALMANZADEH	SAEED	MATH	2001	BEHNOOR SAFIEY GLASS COMPANY	IRAN
104	SAMIZADEH	RAMIN	IND	92	QODS NIRO COSULTING CO	IRAN
105	SAMIZADEH	REZA	IND	91	ALZAHRA UNIVERSITY, ALUMNI ASSOCIATION	IRAN
106	Sarkeshiki	Fardad	CIVIL	2001		IRAN
107	SATTARI	MARYAM	CHEM ENG	2002	oil&gas projects in the North sea	NORWAY
108	SEPEHRI	MARYAM	COMP		IRAN KHODRO, IT SYSTEM ANALYST	IRAN
109	SeratJannati	MohammadReza	CIVIL	74	AvandDarue	IRAN
110	shahrouzi	navid	METAL	96	Behnoor Safety Glass	IRAN
111	SHARAFEDDIN	NEGAR	CHEM ENG	2003	MBA GRADUATEIN CYPRUS	CYPRUS

Dear Dr. Hojabri:

Greetings, I know that you and other organizers have spent a lot of effort for gathering this gathering, and I cannot find words to thank you for that. But it seems that it was not my destiny to be with you these days.

I talked to you couple hours before my departure. I was the only passenger of KLM flight of August 3 that didn't get the permission to enter U.S. and be with you. They told me that the gathering doesn't take place and you should also return home!  
From 1 PM that I arrived until 10 PM I was alone, then they handcuffed and sent me, together with 9 other participants that arrived with the Lufthansa flight, with a van to a jail.

The next day they handcuffed us again, and brought us back to the airport. I was in treble stress and sick during the whole flight to Amsterdam, so that they took me with wheelchair to a clinic in the airport, but I pleaded them to let me continue my flight to Tehran. In Tehran I went straight to the hospital and remained hospitalized for one day.

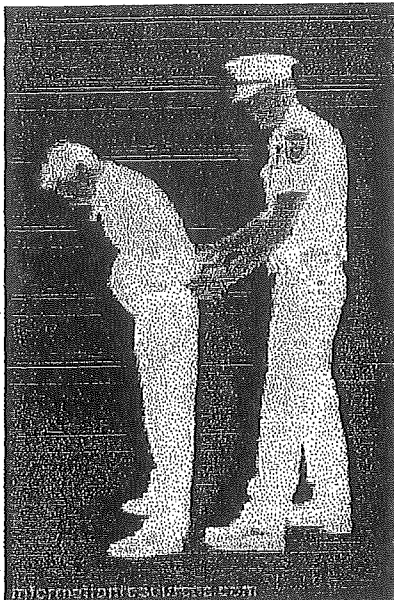
I didn't intend to disturb you and wrote these only to inform you what happened to me. It is only like a young girl talking to her father, if you accept me as your daughter.

Have a nice time at the Reunion and think of us.

We love you,

Arezoo Nehaei

Departing Participants to SUTA Reunion 2006, Santa Clara, August 4-6



It is a pity  
*Iranians detained at San Francisco airport*

August 9, 2006  
*iranian.com*

Dear Dr. Hojabri,

I am one of the deported ones from SF airport. I am sending you this letter to explain what happened in 24 hours of our stay in US. I wish SUTA and Iranian Community in US do something that the others can hear our voice.

Eight of the graduates of SUT [Sharif University of Technology] and their spouses and I (6 men and 3 women) were traveling by LH454 line on 3rd of Aug which reached there at noon.

At the first of our entrances two officers checked the passports of all the passengers, they sent me to the other one who controlled my visa and checked my name by a list. He told me to stay there. Other Iranian came one by one and all of us gathered together.

At the end four officers companied us to the visa control station. We passed the lines and four stations controlled our documents as fast as possible. They told us to go to the immigration office.

When we gathered again, 5-6 officers stood around us and one of them started to talk. At first, he checked if everybody can understand English and if everybody is there because of the SUTA Reunion.

We drove a long way to reach the airport. We didn't see any special sign but we could hear the noise of airplanes. We stayed in the car, under the hot sunshine for 30 minutes till two officers from the immigrant section came. They opened our hands and took us to the same office that we were there yesterday. As we couldn't even drink water, we were not fine and they brought us tea. They gave us all of our personal stuff instead of our tickets and passports.

Near 11 a.m. we gave them some money and asked them to buy us some meal. Around 12, near the landing of Lufthansa plane, which contained around 15 graduates of SUT, they took our stuffs and us out of the office harshly to make it impossible for us to meet them and let them know what's going on. We were in an isolated lounge for one hour and then we went to check in the plane. It is worthy to mention that my return flight was from NY and I paid for the difference of the flight from SF!!!

When we were waiting, 6 lucky people from that flight came and could return with us. I should mention that the Lufthansa personnel were so kind to us and helped us to recover as soon as possible. Now, I am safe in my house and in my country. It is a pity that it could be a memorable and joyful trip for all of us but now it is a nightmare that we want to forget it as soon as possible. I am so thankful because of your kind helps and concerns. I wish I can meet you somewhere else in this big world.

Sincerely,

Shabnam Esmaeelzadeh

...

Greetings:

Hereby, I am writing to you requesting that this letter be read today, at the 4th reunion, during the time slot originally allocated to my presentation. The following is a brief description of what my friends, my wife, and I experienced on our way to join our ex-classmates and Professors at the 4th reunion held in Santa Clara, CA, Aug. 4-6 2006. It is more or less the same story for many other families on route to the same venue. Mr. Naghib, Mr. Khandaghi, Mr. Khorsand, their families, my wife, and I were on the same flight on route to attend the reunion. We arrived at the San Francisco airport at 12pm on Friday Aug. 4th. We were immediately separated from the rest of the arriving passengers and taken away by a special police task force awaiting us at the gate. We were escorted to the airport police station. The officers immediately proceeded to interrogating us individually. Farsi speaking translators were made available on speakerphones to aid the communication process. We were each fingerprinted several times, photographed and were subsequently subjected to several hours of interrogation. Mr. Khorsand, my wife, and I were detained in the airport from noon to midnight. Considering the fact that we had endured 16 hours of air travel prior to the detention, you can imagine the level of hardship.

The summary of what we were told by the officers is as follows: Your visas have been revoked and hence, you have entered the United States illegally. At that moment our main concern was for Mr. Naghib and Mr. Handaghi and their families which included small children. None of us had any news as to their whereabouts, since our joint arrival at the airport. Apparently, they were taken to a different location at the San Francisco airport.

At midnight, Mr. Khorsand, my wife, and I were transferred to yet another police station at the airport. At this point, the rest of our belongings, including my belt, my shoe laces, and my wife's ring and necklace were confiscated. Thereafter, they put us in special police cars and after driving for about an hour we arrived at a final destination which turned out to ironically be Santa Clara. However, to our great dismay, it was not our original intended destination of Hyatt Regency Hotel, the reunion venue, but as we later found out was the Santa Clara County jail.

Upon arrival at the jail, they separated my wife from us and she was taken to a women's prison. I have to admit that this was the lowest point of the entire ordeal for me. At this point, my wife was in tears and begged not to be separated from us. They took her away while subjecting the two of us to body searches. To my knowledge, one has to have had committed a major crime to be subjected to such treatment. Next, there was more fingerprinting, and we were photographed several times. We were subsequently moved to a hall along with several criminals, many of whom were clearly intoxicated. We witnessed police beatings endured by some of our above mentioned hall-mates. Half an hour later, Mr. Khorsand and I were placed in a 3x4 meter jail cell. After about an hour, 13 men were brought into our small jail cell. They were mostly Mexican immigrants brought in for what seemed to be drug and gang related issues. I have to add that our small cell had only one toilet albeit an open one!

Dear Dr. Hojabri:

It all started when I accompanied my two child daughters on 17 May 2006, to apply for a U.S. entry visa from U.S. Consulate in Dubai. I was invited to attend an international gathering held on 4-6 Aug in Hyatt Regency Santa Clara hotel and as far as the papers and documents including an official and acceptable invitation were valid, the three of us were granted a U.S. entry visa in ten days.

Getting prepared ourselves for a delightful trip to the States, I arranged our tickets for 1<sup>st</sup> Aug 2006 from Tehran to San Francisco via Amsterdam.

My children had already traveled to a few European and Asian countries, but traveling to U.S., the so-called New World, as the land of dreams, symbol of freedom and liberty, civilization and most of all, the heaven of children, was totally different, where, to my children it was incomparable with the other countries.

Attending an international gathering of prominent professionals was an excellent opportunity to visit the greatest and the most modern country in the world as well as associating, once again, with the old friends. Children were too excited. They wanted to visit every spectacular place including museums, parks, Disney land, New York City and the Statue of Liberty. And I also appreciated such a trip for having the opportunity to visit those friends of mine some of whom I missed for more than 20 years and we were supposed to get together, have meals around a dinner table, talk about each other's spirits and conditions, being introduced to each other's family, let our children know the others and enjoy our time together after all.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2006 taking KLM flight No. 605; we had a lengthy trip until we landed on San Francisco airport at 13:30. An immigration policeman inquireing ordinary question at our arrival gate took us to visa section where I was asked issues such as my intention of traveling to U.S., the place and the duration of my stay and the cash amount I carried. While the other passengers got the stamp on their visa, we've been driven to Secondary section. I met there two other Iranian ladies whom had been granted the same valid visa as we had.

It was about 17 o'clock since we were asked repeated questions, fingerprinted, photographed, frisked and searched by the personal effects for several times. Five hours later, we've been informed that all entry visas issued for attending the annual gathering has been revoked. I raised the question that while our addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers were available to the officials, why they didn't inform us of the latest state of our visas to cancel the trip and to prevent extra charges as well? They had no reply but kept saying that they were not responsible for that!

~~During these desperate, agitating hours of stress, the three of us and my two children~~ were asked to sign several forms which we signed without considering the content of the same because of the tough time we were facing with. My children were depressed and crying because of such a humiliating situation not knowing the reason behind that; therefore, I would sign any form hurriedly to get rid of that tough time as soon as possible.

Anyhow, the next morning at 7:30 after re-fingerprinting we've been delivered to the airport in criminal's car, being accompanied with criminal men on the back of the car, we in the middle and a dangerous huge man fastened with chain, fetter and shackle in an ironed cage. At the airport, I didn't care for the handcuffs on my hands anymore, I also didn't think that I am a graduate, a chemical engineer who has come to U.S. just for a friendly gathering and promenade and is not deserve cuffs, my only worry and desire was for my cherished children to see them alive, safe and sound. When I once again entered the immigration police office at the airport and saw my daughters weeping and stressed, I embraced and hugged them both and thanked God and begged The Almighty to put an end to this predicament.

After 30 hours of drifting, thirst and hunger as an accommodation of the United State of America, the land of freedom and liberty, without offering even refreshment to the children, they embark us, depositing our Passports and papers with the pilot to return them to us after the flight is done, as it is usually treated towards criminals. And so we got back to Amsterdam. During this period we were not allowed to have any kind of contact such as call, fax, email etc to our relevant inside nor outside the U.S.

Having my Passport in hand, I noticed that the three issued visas are crossed out all over the relevant pages. This would certainly affect on obtaining visa from any other country. Is that the meaning of human rights? Do American authorities have such a right to spoil vacations of innocent non-political people and put some troubles before their chances for applying visa from even other countries with an affection on their possible occupations and studies?

After 3 days, I'm still shocked for what has happened to us. For what crime my daughters and I were punished by American authorities? We submitted valid papers, upon which the visas were issued, and there existed no ineligibility for admission into the U.S. in our case, at least we were not told of such stuff. Since we were not the only ones their visas were revoked, why the involved authorities didn't inform us after visas were issued? Who accepts the responsibilities for the damages both material and spiritual? Who would answer my children why they have been treated so subhuman and brutal? Who would remove the dreadful repercussions of this bitter event from the crystal mind and soul of my children? I, as a mother, who is highly involved with the educating and training of her children, try to find an answer to any question raised by my children, but in this case I am unable to find a persuasive reply to this mess.

I would appreciate if any one kindly takes the responsibility and bravely wants the relevant officials to consider the questions rose in this note and answer accordingly.

Shahin Mehrabian

Dear Dr Hojabri,

First of all I should thank you because of your highly motivated attempts for the reunion. I hoped that you could have a pleasant rest after the reunion but it seems that new problem does not allow you to rest at least for a few weeks.

Anyway, this is the report of my travel to US:

I was travelling with my wife Mrs. Laleh Kian. I had another invitation letter from ISSAT to present a paper in a scientific conference. According to what happened to my visa, it could be interesting that I am doing my PhD in association with Bell Labs group in US!!

Our flight was from Shannon airport in Ireland southwest. We were travelling by Delta 112 on 2<sup>nd</sup> of August. We arrived the airport around 9:00. At the first desk a lady checked our passports and Visas. After 2-3 minutes she told us that her computer had a problem (!!) and she should check our passport somewhere else!! We saw that she talked to two other men who later came and checked our luggage. I had a clear-book with myself including all our invitation letters, flight bookings and hotel reservation documents. While one of those two men was checking our luggage, the other one was writing the number of all our flights. They finished their checking, thanked us and carried our luggage to the counter desk and almost leaved us. When the lady at counter desk put our luggage on the conveyor, **they suddenly returned, turned off the conveyor very quickly and took the luggage with themselves (!!!)**. I believe that I could understand the reason later at NYC airport.

As you probably know, the American Border Protection Guards attend and do the last checks at Shannon airport. Before entering the transit hall, an American policeman asked us to wait in front of a room for his colleague to do some other checks. A few minutes later a policewoman came and asked us to follow her in to the small room. She took photos from both of us and asked us for fingerprinting. She also asked us about the purpose of travelling, and some of our specifications like eye colour, etc. I explained her that because I am so busy about my project I cannot probably go to Iran very soon to change my passport and because of the nature of my PhD project I have to travel too many times so I need every single page of my passport. Then I asked her very very politely to stamp our passport exactly on the visas not on the next page. But she shouted me angrily that: "this is an one entry visa, so this is the rule" (!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!), and stamped it somehow that just a small corner of the stamp was on the Visa and the rest of it was on the next clear page. I did not understand about that strange rule at that moment but as I understood it later on NYC airport, I will explain you why that was the rule for one entry Visas!!!

Almost 7 hours later, at NYC airport, **two policemen were waiting for us exactly in front of the airplane exit (!!!)**. They took us to their office and they told us that our Visas were not good! They asked us just for our luggage registration number at Shannon airport counter desk, (and nothing about the luggage specifications), and then **they found**



Two days later I called Dr. Iraj Naserian who is a legal advise in CA and explained him the story. He had just heard some things about the story when I called him. He asked me for my Tel number to call me back later. He told me that he would try to do something because he feels a deep sympathy with SUT as he had previously had some cooperation with SUT, a long time ago, of course.

If you prefer to talk to him, his office number is: (001)-3105632170

Best regards  
Bahman Honari

---

Dear US General Consulate in Dubai, UAE:

Referring to my entry visa issued on my passport (Control No.:  
20061265810008 PASS No.: E1931272 Issue date: 27 JUN 2006 clearance received: 24 MAY  
2006 type B1, I would like to draw your attention to the followings:

- 1) I requested to reconfirm my visa before my departure by E-mail submitted on wed 2 Aug 2006 but unfortunately I did not receive any response even by Now.
- 2) I traveled to SFO on 3 AUG via Frankfurt by LH airline and although I had a valid entry visa unexpectedly was faced with a different and unpleasant condition, which I could never have imagined, and against what was in my Mind about the hospitality and respect to human rights by the U.S immigration authorities.
- 3) Without any allegation I was kept in an insulting Condition and under custody for one night and Cancellation of my visa, so that not only I could not participate in SUTA reunion but also made me morally very much embarrassed.
- 4) Kindly note that I am an educated person and a university lecturer as well as a manager in a power-engineering consultant and have during the past 30 years of my experience have traveled to many countries and have never faced such a behavior, which has deeply affected me.
- 5) Considering the foregoing, you are kindly requested to take necessary action as:

A-To eliminates any negative effects arising out of Cancellation of my visa as to future visa Applications for the USA or other countries.

B- To provide me, if possible, with the reasons for such an action by the US immigration authorities considering the locally governing laws and Regulations.

Your kind attention to the matter and informing me of the results would be highly appreciated.  
Best regards

Mahmoud Ahmadipouranari

Dear Dr. Hojabri,

We have arrived to the Chicago Airport On August 3<sup>rd</sup> and experienced visa cancellation. Fortunately, the authorities were very compassionate and cooperative and managed to catch a return flight quickly. We took our flight back after about 4 hours of stay at the Chicago Airport.

It was a very unfortunate behavior by US Government. They could prevent it by informing us about visa revocation through either phone or the airliner.

We would very mach appreciate your pursuant of the matter.

Best Regards,

Ali Nownahal

---

Dear Dr. Hojabri:

I am Marzieh Sadat Azimi, the spouse of Mr. Javad Khandaghi. My spouse and I together with our little daughter, Jasmine, returned on Friday from the SFO airport. As we arrived in SFO, after several tiring flight from Tehran, as they saw our Iranian passport they took us to a place that the family Hamzeloui, and family Naghib were also there. They asked us if we have come for the conference, then they checked our names from a list and took us to airport police. My husband's feet were hurting because of injury during the trip, and we asked for a wheelchair. They told us that we should have requested a wheelchair in Frankfurt.

My husband and our daughter were sitting in a corner and they took me to another room. After picture taking and fingerprinting they started with questioning, that I had difficulties understanding the exact meanings of the questions. For example there were asking me if I responded 'voluntary' or 'freely', and I didn't know the difference, and asked for a translator. After asking me some not important questions, they told me to ask for political asylum, that I refused. They emphasized that we will have problem when we return home and they would lash us. Then they told me either you take you visa application back or you will be deported forcefully and you cannot return to U.S for 5 years. Then they said if you return voluntary you could immediately apply for U.S. visa! The questioning was not yet finished that they told us that the airplane is about to depart. We had to run to catch the plane, while our little daughter was crying, and I had to help my husband with walking. In Frankfurt we had to wait another 24 hours to take the flight to Tehran, not together but separately.

In addition to a huge financial loss, we had psychological shock. Our daughter that is only seven year old, was scared when she saw herself surrounded by the police, and she still is asking us: "what did we wrong?" I have myself a good position in a bank, my husband has his own engineering design company, and thanks God, we have a respected social standing. This behavior of the United States proved to us one thing: what they say is no more than empty words.

Still we thank God that we didn't need to stay over night in the immigration detention center, like other participants.

Again we thank you very much for all your efforts,

With many thanks,

Family Khandaghi



Dear Dr. Hojabri:

We never forget you, your family kindness, also your endeavors for all previous and recent gathering. Unfortunately despite our sent e-mail to consulate of DUBAI asking if our visa is still valid, checking visa condition with LUFTHANSA at Tehran and Frankfurt airports, we were not allowed to enter U.S.

4

On 3rd of August 2006 at airport of San Francisco (LH - FLIGHT NO. 454), we all participants (Kobravi, Ahmadipouranari, me and other totally 9 persons), faced with forced deportation, with one night custody (shared with criminal people in one room).

So the SUTA is kindly requested to:

1-THROUGH LEGAL ADVISORS TO COMPENSATE ALL THE LOSSES OF DEPORTED PARTICIPANTS, WHICH SHALL BE BEARD BY U.S. (EMBASSY, CONSULATE OR STATE)

2-FORCING THE DEPARTMERNT OF STATE TO APPOLOGIZE IN THIS REGARD.

3-TO REINSTATING ALL VISAS AS PER STRONG REASONS AND EVIDENCES, WHICH ALL PARTICIPANTS HAVE FOLLOWED AS PER US REGULATION

Seyyed Mohammad Reza Ghafari

Subject: Our arrival to San Francisco Airport - Aug 2nd  
Date: 8/6/2006 2:49:12 A.M. Pacific Standard Time  
From: [rana\\_rassipour@yahoo.com](mailto:rana_rassipour@yahoo.com)

Dear Dr. Hojabri and SUTA Board of directors:

Hope all has gone extremely well during the reunion event in Hyatt Regency hotel which is still on going as we speak.

You all know by now that quite a few participants for the reunion holding Iranian passports were sent back home from different airports in US. We (Sara and Rana Rassipour) also arrived to San Francisco airport on Wednesday August 2<sup>nd</sup> at around 13:00 midday. At the passport control counter, we were asked to go to the immigration office (Secondary office) at the back of the passport control desks area. Not expecting any problems and knowing that we would be stopped to answer some questions as a typical procedure for Iranians first visitors to US, we took it a normal procedure and head for that section.

But what happened to us for the next 24 hours is something we will never be able to put words for it and explain the feeling that we had due to what went on with us there. We happened to meet Ms. Shahin Mehrabian a graduate of Chemical Engineering and her 2 daughters Sadaf and Aida who flew to SFO in the same flight from Amsterdam.

At the beginning we were asked questions like why we are here, what we do as our jobs and how easy or difficult we were granted the visa to come to US and from which consulate etc etc. As the time passed the questions were more intense, insulting and lead to our suitcases and bags being searched piece by piece and paper by paper. They went through every single piece of our belongings and documents and questioned about every paper they found in our bags and made a copy of all of them not even missing one! They even went through my (Rana) camera's pictures and contact numbers that I had saved in my cell phone probably trying to find something that they could accuse us of, which they didn't.

What hurt the most was their attitude and behavior towards us. It was obviously felt that they are investigating bunch of criminals and no matter what you answer them, they just simply don't believe it and ask the same questions over and over in a sense that what you just said is a crap and you need to tell me again because I don't believe you!!!!

Then it went to few times of taking our pictures and fingerprints and making us to sign on different filled up forms and questionnaires which all that went on and on till midnight! (for about 12 hours). As a result each one of us had a thick binder of file in record with all the documents which we have no idea what impact the whole thing will have on our future applications to go to US either for higher education or further visits.

Then we were told that we are going to spend the night in jail till the next morning. Sadaf and Aida simply because of their age were sent to a juvenile place where we had no idea

Dear Dr. Hojabri,

In reply to your e-mail, I am pleased to inform you about the required information as follow:

**Personal data:**

1. Name: Mehrdad Golshan
2. Passport No.: H2717479
3. SUTA Member, Metallurgical engineering dept.
4. Current job: founder and managing director of Parsian Group Co. ([www.parsiangrp.com](http://www.parsiangrp.com) - [golshan@parsiangrp.com](mailto:golshan@parsiangrp.com))

**Short Description of What Happened:**

1. I arrived in LAX airport via Virgin Atlantic flight No. VS0023 through London (Heathrow) on 1st of Aug. The immigration officers (INS) kept me in INS office for more than 5 hours and then I have been sent to an other LA terminal on that night. I met two other participants, Mr. Ali Edrisi (and his wife) and Ms. Bahareh Eizadfar, who were kept there as well as me. *They were investigating from Bahareh and also they have copied all her documents that were found in her luggage.*
2. I have been asked by Officer Chin from 2 AM till 6 AM and the main question they insisted to ask me was "Do you afraid to go back to Iran?" During the investigation, officer Chin contacted DOS several time to ask for a reason, but she failed.
3. Then, they took finger prints and portrait photo from me (and also two others) and sent me back to the locked room.
4. The day after (on 2nd of Aug.), two officers took me to the first terminal (I think LAX) and sent me back via Virgin Atlantic to London.
5. *The main question I asked them several time was "what is the reason that you kept me here as you only say this visa is cancelled?" and they just replied me that the Department of State (DOS) has ordered INS to keep these travelers.*
6. I explained that my visa has been officially issued and the security checks had been done by the US authorities. My case number was also found in the US Consular in Dubai web site, before issuing the visa. (20061368486, interview date: 16-May-06, [http://dubai.usconsulate.gov/dubai/Visa\\_Status.html](http://dubai.usconsulate.gov/dubai/Visa_Status.html)) Please check this link, my case number is still in the website!
7. I noted that SUTA members are invited to attend in a seminar in a business class visa, but INS reaction to us was like a criminal case, without any explanation of any logical reason.
8. In addition to attending the SUTA seminar, I explained that I have planed to visit my families, specially my father, who has Lymphoma cancer and he is 75 years old (Mr. Iraj Golshan). They even refused my request to meet them even for a second.
9. I also noted that I have hotel booking in Santa Clara and they didn't want to hear anything about my requests.
10. As far as I know, on the same arriving date (1st of Aug.), three gentlemen were allowed to enter the US to attend the seminar. ~~They were with Bahareh in the same flight of Russian airline.~~ This seems strange also. On the other hand, Mr. Edrisi's wife was allowed to be entered to the US, but the main applicant (Mr. Edrisi as her husband) has been deported.
11. My fly back to Iran was planned for 16 of Aug.
12. I am seriously seeking for the reason to find out how this disaster could be compensated emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, and economically. Please advise.

||

Dr Fredun Hojabri

Hello,

As you know I couldn't participate in Reunion 2006 due to visa canceling at SFO Airport on 4th Aug 2006, when I arrived by flight LH454 from Frankfurt.

The visa for entry was granted to me by USA consulate in Dubai on June 2006 according to invitation letter of SUTA.

About your question:

- I am the managing director of KUHESTAN POWER and INDUSTRY Co. Our company is one of the first 20 companies of manufacturing electric panel-boards and switchgears in Iran. Our products have been installed in more than 100 Industrial projects consisting of power distribution, control systems and Motor Control Centers.
- I personally am a member of Iranian Association of Official Expert and be invited by the courts to make professional consulting and declaration about the subjects.
- I am also a member of Iranian Construction Engineers Organization and have the 1st grade designing and observing professional license for electrical installation.
- I am shareholder and chairman of Dadeh Kavi Iran Co. from year 1989, which is a software developing company in the field of typesetting and developed " latex parsi ", encouraged by professor Donald Kenuth. Many of technical publishing have been prepared by our software for many years and for last few months we submitted our software to be open-sourced. We are now a partner of ((studying about the Persian language)) project.

Kamran Khorsan Mashhadi

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Dear Dr. Hojabri:

Referring to your e-mail dated 7th of Aug 2006 please be informed that I am Ahmad Mirnejad Jooybari graduated from SUT in mechanical engineering in 1971.

Now I am working as vice president and shareholder of Payab contracting company, private joint stock.

I arrived with my wife, Nosratolmolouk Yousefi Jooybari at SFO airport on Aug the 3rd, 2006 by LH 454 airline and we were two persons of nine as it was explained in details by Ms. Shabnam Esmaeelzade in her e-mail dated Aug 8 2006, exactly with the same cases and adventures.

Best Regards

A. Mirnejad Jooybari

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Dear Dr, Hojabri

I, Ghaffar Mohammadzadeh Fadaiepour, arrived in LA airport on 3rd of August with my wife Faigheh Shirkoubian. We both had our legal visas, which had already been checked at Heathrow Airport. Fortunately, we were not mistreated, however, we were kept there at the airport for about 48 hours. Of course, being deported and handing our passports to the airline's staff in front of the others and the way people were looking at us were humiliating. We were told at the LAX that we could sue the American Embassy in Dubai and get the money that we had paid for the tickets. We paid 46.000.000 RIs (5000 \$) plus Dubai tickets, embassy's fee and invitation papers. Please advise.

Dept. Metallurgical Engineering  
Job. Manufacturer (Producing Feromolybdenum)  
Maneging Director  
Address. No.42 South Kamranie st. Sadr Freeway  
Post Code: 1951878844

Best Regards  
Ghaffar Mohammadzadeh

Dear Dr. Hojabri

I was kept waiting for 3 hours at Vancouver Airport, but after all they canceled my visa, whereas I am resident of Canada and Visa has been issued to me in Vancouver!

There was no objection for my family members accompanying me, to enter US for attending same reunion as they had Canadian Passport.

Apparently, there is some restriction for Iranian Citizen to attend this reunion, as other Iranian passengers holding Iranian pass were allowed to enter US at the same airport.

Dr. Hodayoun SANII  
Associate Professor at SUT 1972-1980  
Resident of Canada  
Director of SATURN Enterprises Corporation, BC, Canada

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Dear Dr. Hojabri:

my name is Parvin Ghoreishi-Madiseh

I am graduated in INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING in 1987.

Now I am a stockholder and a member of the board of directors of a private industrial engineering consulting company by the name of PARDAZESH, and also the chief of the board of a new manufacturing company by the name of ARTMANSANAT.

**I am a strong believer on democracy.**

**I hate terrorism.**

**I never support any kind of aggressive action.**

this is the story :

my visa was issued on 25th of July. I entered in Chicago airport on 30th of July.

An officer exactly out of plane was checking passports. He told me to follow him to an office. after about 15 minutes an officer called me to a room . he told me " I am sorry your visa is revoked . " at first he didn't tell me the reason . he said that department of states called us to turn you back . I told him " but my visa was issued only 4 days ago, what has happened in these 4 days?" "is this really U.S. that I always admire its democratic values?" I told him.

He really felt sorry and told me "because you are a nice lady I am trying to do something for you." After about 15 minutes he came back and said he called Washington and they confirmed revoking.

I told him "I should take part in a reunion in Santa Clara on 4th of August."

He told me that he knew that, and because of this reunion my visa was revoked! He showed me the list of participants of reunion and showed my name in that list, the same list that SUTA had sent for us.

Finally they printed my fingerprints and took a photograph and they gave me some paper and form to sign. I signed all forms. They changed my ticket .I had to fly in the same plane for another 12 hours. They didn't hand me my passport and ticket until we arrived in Istanbul after checking passport.

The next day I went to U.S. consulate and talked to lady, she told me "there is nothing in our computer and in your file." After some minutes she told me that this is because of the reunion. She felt sorry and told me if I bring another invitation letter they would issue me another visa. I turned back first of August late at night to Tehran.

Dear Dr. Hojabri,

My wife had a flight to US through Amsterdam 08/03/2006 and this is what happened for her: She was stopped and questioned at Amsterdam and was refused to be given a flight card. She can't speak English well so she asked for a person who knows Farsi. Since there were none available, she asked to go with the security in the airplane and find an Iranian. She did so and that Iranian who was a man of about 30, after checking his passport was asked to pack his luggage and come outside. The man asked why he should take his luggage and they told him he might come back after a short time again. Anyhow, they were both taken in a hall and two other Iranians were also sitting in the chairs there having the same problem. They told my wife and that fellow that their visas have been denied and they cannot leave. The rest of the story is that the young man was angry since he thought if he went, he could pass but one of the two people sitting in the chair told him that that's not true and they showed him a print of your email two days ago. The three Iranians (other than my wife) had a good English, They discussed for long to pass and they were denied. My wife took the next flight back to Iran.

I didn't receive my clearance so I had to cancel my flight. About my job and position, I have graduated with a MS in Mathematics and Computer Engineering and worked several years as a researcher in PSTN Switches software in ITRC (Iran Telecom Research Center). I am currently running a company, Jahankavosh Ertebat, in communication field.

Sincerely,

Mohammad H. Jahanbakht

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Dear Dr. Hojabri

When we reached S.F. airport the officer led us to secretary office of

Immigration; after 10 minute the first sentence they said: " you can't stay in US and should return." We asked why and he said, "Your visa has been canceled by the State Department." After that they prepared a form for us, one of items was that we return by ourselves. The officer said to us: "you have two choices, return by yourself or we do it by force! "

After that they took picture of us and also our fingerprint! We preparing to return and can't understand

why they do that ) .

They gave our passport to cabin crew of return flight and we received our passport in Tehran.

Hamid Reza Hafez Aghili

Electrical Engineering Department

Project Manager in Niroo Research Institute (NRI )

Dear Dr. Hojabri

My name is Hossein Hassanzadeh Manaman & I have graduated of electrical engineering department (1994). I am managing director of Simin Sanat Pouya Co. My friend, Mr. Mohammad Reza Kianmehr, and I were in flight no. 321(AEROFLOT) which landed in Los Angeles airport at 5 p.m. (4 Aug). Before passport control station, two guards exited us of queue and took to secondary section. We waited there until 8 p.m. without knowing what would happen after that, the guards directed us to the police station (CBP) in the airport. After many questions they took photos of us and printed all our fingers. This process lasted till 1 a.m. (5 Aug). At this time, we were told that our visa had been revoked and we must go back to Iran with first flight. Then they directed us to a room.

At 4 a.m. they wanted me and gave a copy of my investigation (interview!!). All this time, we were under observation and everywhere out of the room, we were accompanied by the guards. This condition continued till 7 p.m. when we were directed to the airplane. They gave our passport and tickets to the airplane's guards and returned it to us in Moscow airport. Our baggage was sent to S.F and it hasn't come back yet.

Regards,  
H.Hassanzadeh  
[h\\_hassanzadeh\\_m@yahoo.com](mailto:h_hassanzadeh_m@yahoo.com)

Dear Dr Hojabri

I am sending you this message to describe the whole conditions under which we 10 SUTA reunion participants spent on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of August, 2006.

As soon as we stepped out of the gate from flight LH454 on 08.03.06 at about 1230 P.M., INS officers gathered us in a corner and guided to immigration office of SFO airport. They told us that our visas had been revoked by State Department and they were not aware of the reason. They claimed to be surprised of no advance notification to us. They gave us two options to take: withdraw our visa application voluntarily and leave US on next available flight or refer to judge and be deported that would lead not to apply for US visa for at least five years. All of us took the first option. After being questioned and recording sworn statement, they told us that they were trying to find places to return us on Lufthansa flight via Munich that evening. The attempt failed. Afterwards, they told us that they had succeeded to arrange for our return on the next day at 1400 from San Francisco to Frankfurt. Two of us whose return ticket in hand had been booked from New York, were asked to pay for the cost difference.

Then, we were asked to pass our valuable things such as money, rings, watches or jewelry since we were going to spend the night in a detention center, probably with illegal immigrants. Our protests were not found effective and they announced that they were not able to hold us in the airport for the whole night since SFO was not a 24-hour airport. However, they reassured us that we would be kept separated from others.

At about 6 or 7 P.M. two other participants arrived. After being exposed to same procedure as ours, they were lucky enough to find seats to return immediately.

INS offered us to have some soup to dine upon our request for food. Further to our denial, they took our orders to buy us food from airport's restaurant on our own expense. This made us feel better. At about 9 or 10 we were moved to another INS office in the SFO airport where we were asked to give in our shoe laces, belts, pens and any other belonging regardless of its value. Another SUTA reunion participant named Arezoo was waiting in this office under very bad physical and mental condition. She felt so glad to join a group with similar destiny.

After about an hour two ICE officers came with sets of handcuffs to transfer us to jail. They announced that they understood we did not deserve to spend the night in jail but since there was no other place to hold us in the airport, they had to that. Fortunately they decided not put handcuffs to ladies' hands. They also recommended us not to argue with the jail officers since they were more restricted than INS and it might worsen our situation.

We spent a terrible night in a correction center near San José, as they declared, located about an hour south of airport on 101 highway. However, the ladies were transferred to another jail at about 6 in the morning (this time with handcuffs on) and moved back at about 800. We were back to the airport at about 0930 or 1000, all with handcuffs and waist chains. After handing our belongings back to us, once again they took our orders to buy us lunch. At about 1200 or 1230 and after having the lunch suddenly they took us to another place to wait for the boarding passes of flight 455 to Frankfurt. We found out that 15 other SUTA reunion participants were arriving on the similar flight of ours that day, 08.04.06 and INS officers did not want the two groups face each other. After about 30 or 40 minutes they took us to the gate where six of the just arrived ones joined us to take the same flight back to Frankfurt. We don't know what happened to the other nine.

It is worthy to mention that INS officers performed two completely different behaviors to us. Their personal behavior was totally polite in spite of their functional behavior which was in the contrary and disrespectful.

Obviously, we have deserved to be notified by the consular officers about the visa cancellation in advance. Frankfurt security officers could have prevented our departure if notified.



Dear Dr. Hojabri

I m kambiz Mostowfi Darban, one of the 10 people of men and women that we have been sent to the horrible jail on 3rd of Aug night from airport of SFO, the jail of Santa Clara that there were full of murderer, smuggler, and drug addicts.

In the jail they treated with us exactly like the criminals. They took us into a horrible cell with several criminals, saved times took our fingerprints, and insulted and treated us like criminals. It was clearly against the Human rights.

We all had legal visa with at least 3 -4 weeks FBI check for clearance. At Luffhansa airline they checked our visa carefully in Tehran and Frankfurt airports and they were ok.

I am a project manager in Tehran Comprehensive Traffic and transportation Studies Company with MS degree in civil engineering field from Sharif University of technology.  
My email address is [airkmd@yahoo.com](mailto:airkmd@yahoo.com)  
Thanks,  
Kambiz Mostowfi Darban

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Dear Dr Hojabri

Hoping you and all Reunion organizing committee have been able to hold the gathering in the best way and once more all the efforts should be appreciated.  
Wishing this well organized and powerful NGO will progress all the time.

Unfortunately and unbelievably me and lots of participants could not enter USA even we had a valid visa. We were 9 and were directly guided to secondary office of ICE at San Francisco airport and were told that state department had cancelled the visas and we don't know the reason and you must return to your country after the procedure, which will be done when any of you is called by one of my colleagues.

After a while the police asked me for interview and told, if you withdraw your application voluntarily then you can apply in future otherwise you couldn't even apply for at least 5 years. Then she asked some questions about SUTA and at the end she asked me to sign all the related printed papers which was ended with this question and answer: Has any body forced you to answer these questions? NO.

After finishing all the procedures they told us since we could not book the returning flights and you must wait until tomorrow and during the night you cannot stay in the airport so you will be transfer you to some place with bed.

About 11 PM two polices from the Santa Clara jail came and transferred us there just like any dangerous criminal. We spent a terrible night there, which I could never believe and still I think I was dreaming at that night. My position is head of system study and transformer group in Moshanir power engineering co. Holding Ms in Electrical engineering with almost 30 years experience,

For further information my web can be viewed : [www.moshanir.com/ahmadipour](http://www.moshanir.com/ahmadipour)  
My e-mail address is: [m\\_ahmadipouranari@yahoo.com](mailto:m_ahmadipouranari@yahoo.com)

Best Regards  
MAHMOUD AHMADIPOURANARI

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**Dear Dr. Hojabri**

Hope you and your colleagues in SUTA are in good health. As you know, my wife, me and our two children arrived San Francisco Airport on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> of August after a long flight and our visas has been revoked immediately. Although my family and me were lucky enough to come back to Iran right after our arrival but we are still suffering the bad impression of the events occurred and as we know so many other friends had spent a horrible night in jail and had been sent back the day after. Last week we had a meeting, and the participants of our meeting wanted to know:

- 1- What was the main reason of these events?
- 2- How will the remarks in our passports be corrected in order not to influence our future requests for visa to any other country?
- 3- Who will be in charge to solve all these inconveniences made for Suta members?  
We expect US authorities to explain and apologize for there inhuman behavior.
- 4- They should take the responsibility of our financial loss?
- 5- We don't wish to make the case a political case.

Thank you in advance for your efforts and wish to meet you here in Iran.

Best regards

**Ali Nghib**

Dear Dr HOJABRI

You are kindly informed that my visa, GHASEM AGHABABAEI ALAVIJEH was revoked at Amsterdam airport on August 3, and my friend BIJAN MANAI and I returned to Iran on August 4.

My present job: Director Manager of FTG Co, a Construction & Engineering Company.

Department at SUT: Mechanical engineering.

Mailing address [gh\\_ghababaei@ptfgroup.com](mailto:gh_ghababaei@ptfgroup.com)

In addition: In this year I was very busy therefore preparation for Reunion created many problems for me and I missed a lot of time and money for this trip.

Thank you for your great effort.

Gh aghababaei

---

Dear Dr. Hojabri:

Greetings, I, Hossein Rahnama, Sharif University graduate arrived with my souse and my daughter on August 2, 2006, with Aeroflot in Los Angeles airport.

My position in Iran:

- General Manager, member of the Board and major stock holder of Farayandsazan Energy Company, a consulting company in designing Petroleum and Petrochemical projects.
- Graduate of Sharif University in Industrial Engineering in 1990

Position of my wife, Faranak Mahmoudi:

- B. S. in Hospital Management
- General Manager and member of the Board of Ramzineh Company

Since we are under great physical and psychological for what happened to us at the immigration at LAX, please advise us how can we pursue our case to get answers and compensations for:

- Restoring our good name and dignity for treating us like criminals.
- The reason for canceling our visas and why the consulate did not inform us before our departure.
- Physical stress due to 40 hour flight, spending one night at terrible condition at LAX under questioning, then one night at Moscow transit terminal because of non availability of connecting flight to Tehran. My child has to be treated for a long time.
- Psychological stress due to insults and humiliation at the immigration and in front of other passengers.
- Consequences of having visa cancellation stamps in our passports for traveling to other countries that we need to do because of our jobs.
- Financial losses for airline tickets, hotel reservations, transit visa fees for other countries for all 113 of us.

With many thanks,

Hossein Rahnama

# CIVIL RIGHTS

of the San Francisco Bay Area

S. F. HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION  
06 SEP 27 AM 10:18

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Virginia Harmon  
 San Francisco Human Rights Commission  
 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 800  
 San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Ms. Harmon,

We are writing to share our concerns regarding the treatment of arriving passengers by immigration inspectors at San Francisco International Airport. Unfortunately, there is a long history of misconduct by immigration agents at San Francisco airport, which include the following, high-profile incidents:

- In July 1999, a United States citizen of Nigerian descent was unlawfully detained at SFO. She was accused of lying, threatened with jail, and shackled to a chair for hours by immigration officials who refused to believe that she was a United States citizen. One immigration official complained that "*these people*," referring to Africans, will do anything to get into the United States, and several immigration officials ridiculed her statement that she, a woman of African descent, was a medical doctor.
- In January 2000, an Algerian asylum-seeker arrived at SFO and confided to immigration agents that he would be killed if he returned to Algeria. But, the immigration agent refused to allow him to seek asylum and told the man that he would be summarily returned. The man became so frightened and distraught that he smashed a coffee mug and stabbed himself with one of the broken fragments. Only after he permanently scarred himself was he allowed to meet with an Asylum Officer and have his case heard by an immigration judge, who granted the man asylum.
- In September 2000, a Nicaraguan tourist was stopped at SFO and accused of carrying a fraudulent tourist visa, based solely on an immigration supervisor's stereotyped assumptions. According to the supervisor, "*All Latinos who are able to get visas come running to the United States as often as they can and stay as long as they can.*" The woman was taken in handcuffs to a local jail and released thirty-six hours later, without an apology. The supervisor was infamous among his co-workers for his extreme interrogation tactics and racist stereotyping of immigrants, particularly Filipino and Latino immigrants. An immigration detention officer described the supervisor as "very confrontational" and confided, "when he used the word 'Filipinos,' ...it was kind of said in a sarcastic, demeaning way." The supervisor also referred to Mexicans in "a demeaning manner" - "It was phrased with '*You know how these Mexicans are*'; '*... these South Americans.*'"

**Emeritus Director**

1 Falconer

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María Blanco

**Legal Director**

Robert Rubin

**Associate Director**

Oren Sellstrom

**Staff Attorneys**

Philip Hwang

Helen Smolinski

Diana Tate

**Equal Justice Works Fellows**

Elisa Della-Pianna

Shirin Sinnar

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Nicholás Espíritu

1400 Market Street, Suite 400

San Francisco, CA 94105

Tel: 415.543.9444

Fax: 415.543.0296

E-mail: info@lccr.com

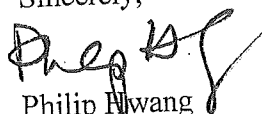
Website: www.lccr.com

inadmissible immigrants in local jail facilities, where immigrants may be placed in cells with individuals facing serious criminal charges and routinely strip-searched upon arrival, in violation of their constitutional rights.

In sum, we thank the Human Rights Commission for investigating how arriving passengers are treated at San Francisco International Airport, and we urge the Commission to work with the Department of Homeland Security to implement these recommendations at SFO.

If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at (415) 543-9444, ext. 201.

Sincerely,

  
Philip Hwang  
Staff Attorney

City and County of San Francisco

Human Rights Commission

Contract Compliance  
Dispute Resolution/Fair Housing  
Small and Micro Business Enterprise  
Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender & HIV Discrimination

Gavin Newsom  
Mayor

Virginia M. Harmon  
Executive Director



HRC 091406 Item 11

COMMISSIONERS

September 14, 2006

Khaldoun Baghdadi  
Chair

Cecilia Chung  
Carlota del Portillo

Mark Dunlop  
Yoel Kahn

Faye Woo Lee  
Nazly Mohajer

Pat Norman  
Ellouise Patton  
Linda Richardson  
Sandra Sohcot

Mr. Richard F. Vigna  
United States Customs and Border Protection  
555 Battery Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Re: Denial of Entry to Iranian visitors

Dear Mr. Vigna:

The San Francisco Human Rights Commission is tasked with ensuring that human rights are respected in the City and County of San Francisco. We consider it our obligation to ensure that all San Franciscans and those visiting San Francisco are treated with dignity and respect.

As you are aware, San Francisco International Airport welcomes visitors from throughout the world on a daily basis. We are therefore deeply concerned about recent reports that a group of Iranian professionals, traveling to the San Francisco Bay Area with valid visas to attend a reunion, were refused entry.

Some of these individuals report that they were interrogated, handcuffed, separated from other family members (including children), and incarcerated in the Santa Clara County jail. Ultimately, none were charged with any crime, but instead were returned to Iran without explanation.

These reports raise many questions, including:

- 1) Were the visas originally granted by Consulates of the United States pursuant to established procedures, including security clearances?
- 2) If the visas were subsequently revoked or otherwise determined to be invalid, why were the individuals permitted to board airplanes to San Francisco?

The reported treatment of these individuals upon arrival in San Francisco is very troubling. It also raises serious concerns that visitors to our City will be subjected to disparate treatment based solely on their country of origin.

As the individual responsible for securing the Port of Entry at the San Francisco International Airport, we respectfully request that you or a representative address our concerns at our next regularly scheduled Commission meeting, September 28, 2006

25 Van Ness Avenue  
Suite 800  
San Francisco  
California 94102-6033

TEL (415) 252-2500  
FAX (415) 431-5764





U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

October 18, 2006

Mr. Khaldoun Baghdadi, Chair  
San Francisco Human Rights Commission  
25 Van Ness Avenue  
Suite 800  
San Francisco, California 94102

Dear Mr. Baghdadi:

This office has received your letter of September 14, 2006, within which you expressed concerns regarding the treatment of certain Iranian nationals who arrived at SFO on August 2, 2006. While we cannot disclose details of individual cases, we can give a general explanation of the process by which individuals are admitted into the United States.

One of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) core missions is determining the eligibility of individuals seeking admission into the U.S. All persons seeking to enter the U.S. are required to prove that they are doing so under valid circumstances, regardless of the travel documents in their possession. In all cases where an individual is denied admission to the U.S., CBP provides a full explanation for the denial.

CBP does not issue, nor does it revoke, non-immigrant visas to enter the U.S.; the United States Department of State (DOS) performs this task. Because issuing and revoking visas is the DOS' responsibility, any questions or comments regarding this issue should be referred to that agency; CBP is not involved in this process in any way.

Once an individual is determined inadmissible to the U.S., CBP makes every effort to return that person to their last country of departure on the first available transport. If transport is not available, CBP gives custody of that person to the Office of Detention and Removal (DRO), a division within Immigration and Customs Enforcement. All questions or queries regarding individuals held in DRO custody should be directed to that office.

If you have further questions or comments regarding this issue, or would like to arrange a private meeting with my staff and me, please call Supervisory CBP Officer Edward Low at (415) 782-9204.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Vigna". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Vigna  
Area Port Director  
San Francisco





U.S. Department of Justice  
Immigration and Naturalization Service  
Western Regional Office  
Office of the Regional Director

WRODRO 10/9.1.1

P.O. Box 30080  
Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-0080

SEP 29 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRICT DIRECTORS

FROM:

~~WESTERN~~  
*Johnny N. Williams*  
Regional Director

SUBJECT: Policy - Overnight Detention for Airport Refusals

Recent incidents within the Region regarding the detention of inadmissible applicants for admission at airports have demonstrated a lack of a clear Regional policy in the handling of such cases. Many of these cases involve minor paperwork discrepancies and involve businessmen or family groups. Most of these cases are resolved and the applicants returned on a foreign flight the same day of entry. In some cases, detention of up to 5 days has been necessary while awaiting the next outbound foreign flight. In these cases, it has been the norm to place the alien in overnight detention, possibly in a local jail facility. This is not appropriate in non-criminal cases, and has caused problems and embarrassment for the Service on several occasions.

The Western Regional Detention and Removal and Inspections Branches developed a policy for handling these types of overnight inadmissible cases, which I have attached for your compliance. Please institute this policy immediately.

If you have any questions, please contact Assistant Regional Director Robert Hodgson of my staff at (949) 360-2988.



Gavin Newsom  
Mayor

Contract Compliance  
Dispute Resolution/Fair Housing  
San Francisco Disadvantaged Business Enterprise  
Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender & HIV Discrimination

Virginia M. Harmon  
Executive Director

January 3, 2007

Ms. Nancy Alcantar  
Field Office Director, San Francisco  
630 Sansome Street, Rm 590  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Re: Denial of Entry to Iranian visitors

Dear Ms. Alcantar:

The San Francisco Human Rights Commission is tasked with ensuring that human rights are respected in the City and County of San Francisco. We consider it our obligation to ensure that all San Franciscans and those visiting San Francisco are treated with dignity and respect.

As you may be aware, the San Francisco Human Rights Commission has been investigating reports that a group of Iranian professionals, traveling to the San Francisco Bay Area with visas to attend a reunion, were refused entry at San Francisco International Airport in August 2006.

Some of those who were denied entry reported that they were interrogated, handcuffed, separated from other family members, including children and incarcerated in the Santa Clara County jail. Ultimately, none were charged with any crime, but instead were simply forced to return to Iran.

As a result of our inquiries into this matter, we now understand that once an individual is determined inadmissible due to an invalid visa or otherwise, Customs and Border Protection attempts to return the individual to their last country of departure on the first available transport. If transport is unavailable, Customs and Border Protection gives custody of the individual to your agency, the Office of Detention and Removal.

The August detentions raised several questions, including

Does the Office of Detention and Removal have policies relating to the treatment of detainees, including policies related to interrogation and incarceration?

Does the Office of Detention and Removal exercise any discretion in determining whether and where to detain individuals, where it is not possible to immediately return the individual to their last country of departure?

How many visitors to San Francisco are detained by the Office of Detention and Removal annually?



25 Van Ness Avenue  
Suite 800  
San Francisco  
Calif



TEL (415) 252-2500  
FAX (415) 431-5764  
TDD (415) 252-2550  
ov.org



S. F. HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

San Francisco International Airport

2007 MAR -7 PM 3:33

P.O. Box 8097  
San Francisco, CA 94128  
Tel 650.821.5000  
Fax 650.821.5005  
www.flysfo.com

March 1, 2007

Honorable Khaldoun A. Baghdadi, Chairman  
San Francisco Human Rights Commission  
25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Commissioner Baghdadi:

AIRPORT  
COMMISSION  
CITY AND COUNTY  
OF SAN FRANCISCO

GAVIN NEWSOM  
MAYOR

LARRY MAZZOLA  
PRESIDENT

LINDA S. CRAYTON  
VICE PRESIDENT

CARYL ITO

ELEANOR JOHNS

RICHARD J. GUGGENHIME

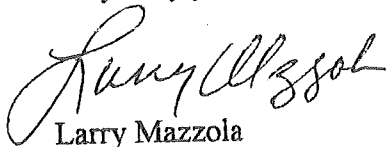
JOHN L. MARTIN  
AIRPORT DIRECTOR

We have learned of the Human Rights Commission's concern about possible unprofessional treatment accorded to non-U.S. citizens by the customs agents of the United States Homeland Security Department. Please know that the Airport Commission shares your concern.

I write to tell you that we, as officials of the City and County of San Francisco, have no direct, or indirect, jurisdiction over the policies and/or conduct of the customs agents.

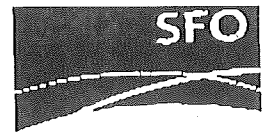
May I respectfully suggest that you address your concerns to the members of our congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. I know that Senators Feinstein and Boxer and Speaker Pelosi would take interest in agent behavior that reflected poorly on the United States.

Very truly yours,



Larry Mazzola  
President  
Airport Commission

cc: Virginia Harmon, Human Rights Commission



San Francisco International Airport

P.O. Box 8097  
San Francisco, CA 94128  
Tel 650.821.5000  
Fax 650.821.5005  
www.flysfo.com

April 4, 2007

Ms. Laticia Romero  
Assistant Port Director  
Customs and Border Protection  
P.O. Box 280551  
San Francisco Int'l Airport  
San Francisco, CA 94128

2007 SEP 19 AM 10:10  
COMMUNICATIONS

AIRPORT  
COMMISSION  
CITY AND COUNTY  
OF SAN FRANCISCO

GAVIN NEWSOM  
MAYOR

LARRY MAZZOLA  
PRESIDENT

LINDA S. CRAYTON  
VICE PRESIDENT

CARYL ITO

ELEANOR JOHNS

RICHARD J. GUGGENHIME

JOHN L. MARTIN  
AIRPORT DIRECTOR

Dear Ms. Romero:

It was a pleasure meeting with you, Mr. Vigna, Mr. Aycox and Ms. Adams today. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is a vital government agency at San Francisco International Airport and a key partner in the successful growth of our international business.

I am pleased that one outcome of our meeting was an agreement to accept my offer to utilize an existing space within the Federal Inspection Area for short-term accommodations, normally less than 24 hours, of arriving passengers that are inadmissible to the United States. The unused In-Transit Lounge located on Level Two of Boarding Area G will be a far superior facility to house individuals or families than the jails now utilized by CBP. In most of the cases where CBP has to detain persons until the next flight back to the originating country, the problem is with their lack of proper entry documentation. In those situations, the In-Transit Lounge provides a secure facility within the control of CBP officers where people can be detained in a quiet, hospitable and secure environment. I understand that there will continue to be instances where persons attempting to enter the country are more properly detained in a jail cell rather than the Airport's In-Transit Lounge. In those cases, I trust that your department will make the appropriate judgment in making this distinction.

You can begin utilizing this facility immediately. The Airport will install suitable vending equipment and provide pillows, blankets and sleeping cots. We will also begin designing some sort of privacy screens and evaluate the possible installation of shower facilities associated with the existing men's and women's restrooms. The entire facility will, of course, continue to be smoke-free.