**Five-Year Prison Sentence Upheld Against Christian Convert for Missionary Activities**

April 3, 2017

Iran Human Rights

https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/five-year-prison-sentence-upheld-against-christian-convert-for-missionary-activities/

The five-year prison sentence against Christian convert Ebrahim Firoozi for his alleged missionary activities has been confirmed by the Appeals Court in Tehran, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) has learned.

The ruling, issued on January 15, 2017, also requires Firoozi to spend two years in exile in the village of Sarbaz in a remote part of Sistan and Baluchistan Province, according to an informed source who spoke to CHRI on the condition of anonymity.

The 32-year-old welder has been held in Ward 12 for political prisoners in Rajaee Shahr Prison in Karaj, 32 miles west of Tehran, since 2014. He has been prosecuted three times since 2010 for converting from Islam to Christianity and allegedly organizing Christian religious meetings.

When he was first arrested in January 2010, interrogators offered Firoozi freedom if he declared himself a Muslim. He chose prosecution and was convicted by the Revolutionary Court in Karaj of “propaganda against the state” for his religious conversion and alleged missionary activities and sentenced to five months in prison with an additional five-month suspended prison sentence.

Firoozi was freed on June 8, 2011, but on March 8, 2012 he was arrested again for allegedly “attempting to create a website teaching about Christianity” (in order to convert people) and again charged with “propaganda against the state.”

He was sentenced to one year in prison and two years in exile by Judge Hassan Babaee of the Revolutionary Court in Robat Karim, 16 miles southwest of Tehran. The decision was upheld on appeal.

The third arrest took place on September 16, 2014. During interrogations in Evin Prison’s Ward 240, Firoozi was put under intense pressure to issue a false confession in return for freedom, but refused, according to an informed source.

In April 2015, Firoozi was sentenced to five years in prison for allegedly “creating a group with the intention of disturbing national security” by Judge Mohammad Moghisseh of Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court.

Based on the decision by the Appeals Court, Firoozi will remain incarcerated until 2019.

Despite President Hassan Rouhani’s pledges during his election campaign in 2013 that “all ethnicities, all religions, even religious minorities, must feel justice,” the targeting of Christian converts has continued unabated under his administration.