



UNITED STATES SENATE

September 26, 2013

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20500-0005

Dear President Obama:

Today marks the one year anniversary of the wrongful incarceration of Pastor Saeed Abedini by an overtly anti-Christian Iranian regime, and this letter serves to follow up on my original request of January 30, 2013. Pastor Abedini's only "crime" was practicing his Christian faith -- and for that, he was sentenced to eight years in prison.

I was disappointed you failed to use the United Nations General Assembly's Opening Session this week to press the case of Pastor Abedini. Not only does the extremist Iranian government need to hear your voice on behalf of Pastor Abedini, but also do tyrants around the world who would persecute individuals for their practice of Christianity.

I appreciate Secretary Kerry's recent demand that the Iranian regime overturn Pastor Abedini's sentence. That was an important step. While I fully recognize the myriad national security issues posed by the fanatical theocracy in Tehran, I believe the case of Pastor Abedini deserves your full attention and engagement. To this end, it is imperative that you personally add your voice to those calling for Pastor Abedini's immediate and unconditional release. There is no better symbol of American values, specifically freedom of religion, or demonstration of loyalty to the welfare of our citizens abroad than vocal and sustained support directly from the President of the United States.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request. I hope that this letter gives voice to the thousands of Christians and Christian missionaries here and abroad whose own safety is threatened daily for their belief in God. These men and women pray every day for Pastor Abedini's safe release and immediate return to America and I am asking you to help see that their prayers are realized.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lindsey O. Graham".

Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator