



THOMSON REUTERS
FOUNDATION

London, January 22, 2017

**STATEMENT FROM THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION CEO MONIQUE VILLA
IN RESPONSE TO THE UPHOLDING BY THE APPEAL COURT OF NAZANIN
ZAGHARI-RATCLIFFE'S 5 YEAR SENTENCE:**

"The appeal court has upheld the five year sentence for national security related crimes, originally passed by the Revolutionary Court in September, of my colleague Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

I am outraged by this new mockery of justice. At this appeal, they have brought two new accusations against Nazanin. The first being that she was Head of Recruitment for BBC Farsi, and the second that she was knowingly married to a British spy.

Nazanin has never worked for BBC Farsi. She served in a junior capacity as a Training Assistant for BBC Media Action, the charitable arm of the BBC, from 2009 to 2010.

Her husband, Richard Ratcliffe, is not a spy but a reputable accountant in the UK.

I am fully convinced of Nazanin's innocence, and would like to reiterate my total support to her and her family in these terrible circumstances they are living through.

I call on the Iranian authorities to release her as soon as possible, so that she may be reunited with her family.

It has now been over 9 months since Nazanin's imprisonment. She was arrested while on a holiday to visit her parents in Iran with her two-year old daughter Gabriella.

We continue to work very closely with Nazanin's husband, the UK Foreign Office and the British authorities to secure her speedy release."

Monique Villa, Thomson Reuters Foundation CEO