



THOMSON REUTERS  
FOUNDATION

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**STATEMENT FROM THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION CEO  
MONIQUE VILLA IN RESPONSE TO THE LATEST NEWS ON NAZANIN  
ZAGHARI-RATCLIFFE**

The latest injustice to fall upon Nazanin, who now learns that the temporary release she was promised has been withdrawn, forces me to call upon the new Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt to act immediately before her health fails completely.

Nazanin has been under medication for depression for more than a year and is now suicidal.

It's tragic that this innocent colleague of mine, whose human rights have been repeatedly violated and who is used as a political bargaining chip by the Iranian Judiciary, should stay in jail and be separated from her family because the UK government refuses to reach an agreement on the arms deal which was made four decades ago with Iran.

In this instance, all that Nazanin was asking for was to get parole to spend time with her daughter Gabriella in Tehran. And she did everything to get that parole, which all the others prisoners receive after serving half of their sentence. She has been a model prisoner. And now she learns from the judge that any application for parole or early release will fall on deaf ears until 'the money is paid that the UK owes to Iran'.

The Prime Minister Theresa May and the Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt cannot defer action any longer. A conclusion to the negotiations related to the payment of the interest on the debt owed to Iran -or whatever else that is blocking Nazanin's release- must be reached.

Richard, his family, our lawyer and I have requested a meeting with Jeremy Hunt.

**Monique Villa, Thomson Reuters Foundation CEO**