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A Crime against Humanity Told through the Eyes of Victim's Sons

A Cry from Iran is First-of-Its-Kind Documentary Raising Awareness about Religious Freedom in Iran

Los Angeles- JFA Productions is proud to announce the world premiere of *A Cry from Iran*, a documentary offering a first-ever look at religious oppression in Iran. The premiere will take place on Thursday, September 6, 2007 at 8:00 PM at the Laemmle Grande, Los Angeles.

“This is the story of not only my father, but also of the victims who have been killed and continue to be tortured for their choice of religion. It is an example of the many stories that are happening as we speak,” said film director and producer Joseph Hovsepian.

A Cry from Iran is the true story of Christian martyrs killed callously for the right to practice their chosen faith. It has been nominated for several film festivals, including the 6th Annual Route 66 Film Festival, and is the winner of the Best Documentary Feature at the Faith and Film Motion Picture Festival and the Audience Award at the Leith Film Festival.

Rewind 14 years to 1994: the documentary highlights the story of Haik Hovsepian, the leader of Evangelical Christians in Iran. After an Islamic judge in northern Iran condemns a zealous Christian convert, Mehdi Dibaj, from Islam to death, Haik chooses to speak out and launch an international campaign for Dibaj's sentence to be overturned. Haik's campaign is successful, and Dibaj is released a few days before his execution date. However, in January 1994, Bishop Haik Hovsepian disappears. Twelve days later his corpse is identified by his son. The body has been stabbed 26 times. Haik would not be the last to be martyred. Since then, numerous Christians have been brutally tortured and put to death.

Fast forward to present: after production in five countries, interviews with 40 political and religion experts, family and friends, 42 months of production and 200 hours of archive footage, the sons of Haik Hovsepian deliver the story of one victim who serves as an example for the many who have suffered the same senseless tragedy.

Speaking to the timely issue of religious radicalism on the global stage and the current climate of repression in the Middle East, Dr. Ravi Zacharias, author of *Light in the Shadow of Jihad*, examines the intersection between faith and extremism, “When for example the Quran is quoted that there is no compulsion in belief, it ought to be understood in a very real way then. Is a person in Iran free to disbelieve? Is a person in Malaysia free to disbelieve? Is a person in Indonesia free to disbelieve? If you are not free to disbelieve in a certain faith, then there is compulsion in that faith.”

"This film is the first opportunity of its kind for believers and non-believers, for activists and non-activities, for politicians and non-politicians and for the general public to get a personal look at the human and historic story of leaders punished for their beliefs. It is an issue of human rights," said Dr. Anis Shorosh, author of *Islam Revealed*.

About JFA Productions (www.josephfilms.com)

JFA (Joseph Film & Animation) Productions was founded in 2000 by Joseph Hovsepian. It was soon expanded into a full production house when Joseph's two brothers joined the company. Today, JFA offers full audio and video services, while regularly producing TV programs, music videos, and documentaries, most of which have spiritual themes and a powerful message to communicate. www.acryfromiran.com

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