



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 10, 2020

Hamid Gharagozloo  
International Organization to Preserve Human Rights in Iran

Dear Mr. Gharagozloo:

Please accept my heartfelt condolences for the passing of Gonabadi Sufi spiritual leader Dr. Noor Ali Tabandeh in Iran.

I was encouraged to hear from you at the State Department event on December 19<sup>th</sup> that Dr. Tabandeh's health had improved, so I was particularly saddened to learn that he succumbed to his illness on December 24<sup>th</sup>, following years of mistreatment in Iran. Nobody should suffer abuse because of their faith. Dr. Tabandeh's steadfast advocacy for peace and human rights in the face of such adversity was an inspiration to us all.

I think we honor his memory by continuing to fight for the right of Gonabadi Sufis – and all people in Iran – to follow their beliefs in peace. Let us keep working together on this crucial issue. Our thoughts are with you during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sam Brownback", written in a cursive style.

Sam Brownback  
Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom  
U.S. Department of State