

Statement on Kylie Moore-Gilbert's return to Evin prison, attributable to the FreeKylieMG group

30 October 2020

After a stressful six days, we're relieved that the Australian government has finally managed to locate our friend Kylie Moore-Gilbert in Evin prison. But make no mistake: this is not a victory, nor does it suggest that progress is being made in Kylie's case.

Kylie is very familiar with Evin prison, having already spent nearly two years there in solitary confinement. Although it is a physically safer facility than Qarchak prison where she was held for the past three months, she is thought to be detained in a section of Evin known as Ward 2a. Prison cells in 2a have no mattresses and span just 2m x 3m. Lights are kept on 24 hours a day. Ward 2a is controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), which makes it a far harsher place than the already notorious general wards in Evin prison. Kylie's transfer back to Evin is hardly a mercy.

On August 3 last year, Kylie commenced a hunger strike to pressure the Iranian authorities to transfer her from Ward 2a into a general prison ward at Evin. In a letter to Iranian prison officials the day before, she [wrote](#): *I can no longer take this extremely restrictive detention center (I've been here for 11 months now!). I will reject all my medications and food until a decision is reached to transfer me to the normal ward.*

Our hearts break thinking about how psychologically difficult this return to Evin prison must be for Kylie, and how lonely and abandoned she must feel. Despite being so strong and brave for the last 778 days, she is still so far from freedom. This is nothing more than a return to the status quo.

The Australian Government must concede that it has failed Kylie. Not only did they lose an Australian citizen in the Iranian prison system for the second time in three months, but 778 days after her arrest, Kylie is back at square one in the prison where she was originally held. Australia has achieved no progress in Kylie's case in more than two years, despite maintaining that their strategy is working.

If quiet diplomacy was working, Kylie would not be treated worse than any other foreign national held in Iran. The Iranian regime is running circles around the Australian government and this case is a shambles. It is time that all diplomatic options are put on the table and difficult decisions are made.

Several members of the FreeKylieMG group are available for further comment. Please contact freekylieMG@gmail.com to arrange.